

What you should know prior to installing your glass tile.

Knowledge is key when it comes to any type of tile installation. Glass tile can present its own set of challenges, making it especially important for you to familiarize yourself with the products and techniques you'll be using in your project. Please read through this entire guide prior to starting your project. If you have questions, please don't hesitate to contact our Contractor Department at 860-704-0268, Monday-Friday 7:00am-4:00pm.

INSTALLATION INSTRUCTIONS

Before starting your project, make sure to inspect your tile for defects such as chipped edges or scratched surfaces. You'll also want to look at the shade variation of the tile. Installation constitutes acceptance of the product and no claims will be accepted after installation. It's critical you inspect for defects and make sure the product meets your expectations PRIOR to installation.

Setting

WHAT TO USE For setting tiles/mosaic sheets, we recommend using a high performance, white thin-set mortar. Examples include: TEC SuperFlex; Mapei Adesilex P-10; Laticrete 253 White (modified with polymer or latex, compliant with ANSI 118.4).

WHAT NOT TO USE We strongly recommend NOT using organic adhesives (mastic). These may become yellow over time and their bonding strength is generally weaker.

SPECIAL NOTE: Glass tile tends to expand and contract more than ceramic or porcelain tile. This movement needs to be accommodated for in the installation, particularly in settings where frequent temperature changes occur. Be sure to use flexible sealant/caulk joints anywhere tile abuts restraining surfaces such as perimeter walls, inside corners, dissimilar floors, curbs, counters, backsplashes, columns, pipes, ceilings, cabinets, or any projection through the tiled surface.

Tools and Techniques

For the installation of glass tile, we recommend using a 1/4" x 1/4" square-notched trowel (or the trowel specified by the tile manufacturer). All trowel ridges in the thin-set must be smoothed out using the flat edge of the trowel before setting the tile. Un-mounted individual tiles should be back-buttered with a thin, continuous layer of mortar. (NOTE: When back-buttering glass tile, do NOT overbuild the mortar. As the mortar cures, shrinkage may occur that can crack the glass tile.) Work in small areas of 4-6 square feet. This will assure the bonding mortar remains fresh. Any thin-set mortar that has pushed up into the joints should be removed.

Drying

Glass tile is non-absorbing. The moisture in the setting materials cannot migrate into the glass, meaning it must slowly evaporate through the grout joints. This process requires a longer cure time. You should allow the mortar to dry at least 36 to 48 hours before grouting.



Grouting

When selecting a grout color, you should take into consideration that some of the tile edges may be transparent and the color of the grout will be visible from these edges. Using a white, un-sanded grout that is similar in color to the bonding mortar will help minimize these visible differences. (We recommend using an un-sanded cement grout, modified with polymer or latex, which is compliant with ANSI 118.6.)

SPECIAL NOTE: Due to the angled back edges on side-view glass tile, care should be taken while grouting. Fully pack the joints as space between the tiles becomes wider on the backside.

After installation, we recommend cleaning the tile with a generally accepted grout cleaner. Examples include: Miracle Residue Remover, TEC Banish Grout Haze Remover, or Aqua Mix Grout Haze Clean-up. Wipe off the heavy grout residue with a clean white nylon scrub pad or with a clean cheese cloth. Finish with a clean grout sponge or damp terry cloth towel. It's important to always use clean white cloths if possible, as some fabric dyes may color the grout joint. Also, some grout cleaners may change the color of the grout. If in doubt, test a small inconspicuous area first.

Cutting and Drilling

Protect your eyes! Always wear safety glasses when cutting, drilling, or grinding glass tile.

CUTTING Use a glass cutter (score and snap) with a new scoring wheel, or a wet saw with a new diamond rimmed blade which is designed to cut glass. Blades designed for cutting ceramic tile should **NOT** be used as they can make a course cut, causing unwanted chips and irregularities along the cutting line. To maintain consistent smooth cuts you should redress the diamond blade with an abrasive dressing stone in order to expose a fresh layer of diamonds on the blade rim, or replace the blade all together. Any sharp edges and corners that remain after cutting should be smoothed and dulled with a diamond hand pad or similar abrasive tool.

DRILLING If possible, you should always drill your holes before installing the tile, drilling from both sides. A new diamond tipped core bit with a low speed drill (200 to 300 RPM) will give the best results. Continuously spray water on the drill bit and the glass surface that is being drilled. If you're drilling holes for anchoring bolts, keep the hole at least 1/8" larger than needed to avoid stress transfer from the anchor and/or bolt to the tile; otherwise this stress may lead to cracking or chipping.

Care and Maintenance

Normally it is sufficient to wipe the glass surface with a damp sponge or cloth. When stronger cleaning is necessary, any standard, non-abrasive floor, wall, or glass cleaner can be applied with a non-abrasive sponge or cloth. Residue from hard water can be removed with specific cleaners (such as vinegar-based products) however, these cleaners may affect colored grouts so a test should be performed in an inconspicuous area prior to use.

