

A-Z OF TILING

Every week as part of our “Stay Positive, Back Stronger” campaign we will be providing you with our A-Z of Tiling Terms. Get in-depth description of many of the common tiling terms, plus some expert insight or top tips from our team.

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FAST SETTING

BS EN 12004 defines a minimum early tensile adhesion strength development after not more than 6 hours. However, in practical terms, as a general rule, if tiles are ready for grouting within two to three hours of fixing, the adhesive used is deemed to be fast setting.

BAL INSIGHT

The mixing of water with a cement-based powder adhesive creates a complex ‘chemical’ reaction (cement hydration). As with any chemical reaction, the speed at which it takes place will very much depend upon the site conditions and the temperatures involved at the time of mixing and applying. The hydration of cement is also an ‘exothermic’ reaction i.e. gives out heat.

Therefore, in warm weather, when using a rapid setting tile adhesive, it is important to ensure that the cement-based powder is stored in a cool dry place before use. Keep the gauging water chilled and ensure good ventilation in the working area. Mix smaller quantities up at a time and when using a drill mixer, always use the slow speed to reduce additional heat generation.

FIELD TILE

The main base tile used in covering a floor or wall, which may be complemented by inset tiles of a differing colour, pattern or type. It may also be bordered by tile trim.

BAL INSIGHT

Consideration when using other/different tile to be used for the design (thickness/size).

FINGER GRIP

A tile designed to be used at the edge of a swimming pool to aid swimmers in climbing from the pool. It typically has a raised edge for gripping and is made of unglazed, anti-slip porcelain.

BAL INSIGHT

The back of the tiles normally will be required to be filled and left to dry before fixing into position. The use of a thick-bed rapid-setting adhesive is normally used.

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FIXER

A professional layer of tiles: a householder laying tiles at home during the weekend may be fixing but, unless he or she lays tiles for a living, cannot be called a fixer.

BAL INSIGHT

As ex-fixers themselves many of our field-based Training and Technical Support can offer a wealth of “real world” advice and guidance. Don’t be shy in giving them a call.

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FLOATING FLOOR

A floating floor is a floor that does not need to be nailed or glued to the subfloor. The term floating floor refers to the installation method but is often used synonymously with laminate flooring.

BAL INSIGHT

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FLOORS

Generally, a floor comprises a room's lower horizontal surface and the supporting structure beneath it. In tiling, a floor will be both the sub-floor upon which tiles are laid and the tiles themselves.

BAL INSIGHT

The trend of installing highly efficient boilers combined with heated screeds and larger format tiles on floors means that uncoupling systems and movement controls are becoming far more important. In many cases these are a recommendation or a best practise.

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FROST RESISTANCE

The ability of a ceramic tile to resist frost, dependent upon its porosity and water absorption levels, is tested against the standard EN ISO 10545-12: This determines frost resistance for tiles intended for use in freezing conditions where water is present.

BAL INSIGHT

As part of testing for compliance with BS EN 12004 for tile adhesives, one test involves measuring tensile adhesion strength after freeze-thaw cycles.

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FULLY VITRIFIED

The degree of vitrification of a material describes the extent to which its porosity has been reduced by firing or other processes. A fully vitrified material would normally be regarded as impervious, completely resistant to water penetration. BS EN 14411 defines a floor and wall tile with a water absorption lower than 0.5% as being fully vitrified (or porcelain).

BAL INSIGHT

This is another term used such as a porcelain tiles.