

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.

B

BAL

Building Adhesives Limited, and BAL, its renowned brand, were both born in the 1960s when the British Ceramic Council, researching emerging adhesive products, created the company. It began manufacturing at its Stoke-on-Trent base in 1966 and remains the market leader in tiling adhesives and grouts. It offers a huge product portfolio catering for every type of tiling application, operates a free technical advice line which answers some 40,000 questions annually and leads the industry in tiling training, provided via its own specialist centres and training centres nationwide.

BAL INSIGHT

A nationwide team of Technical Support, both office based and out in the field. All of our field-based team are ex tilers and have a wealth of practical experience. If you're ever in need of advice give us a call.

B

BACK BUTTERING

The primary method of applying adhesive is directly to the wall or floor using a notched trowel. When a substrate is not completely flat or the back of the tile has deep indentations or a raised profile, it can become necessary to apply additional adhesive to the back of a tile using a buttering trowel, known as back buttering.

BAL INSIGHT

The notched trowelling and back buttering method is recognised as an industry best practice both to enable wet on wet adhesive connection to aid with bedding of the tile and as tiles are becoming larger and larger to ensure the correct adhesive coverage is achieved i.e. solid bedding.

B

BACKING

A backing may refer to any material used as a substrate over which tiles are to be fixed or may refer to backing material placed onto the backs of mosaics or some natural stone

BAL INSIGHT

Commonly found on mosaic sheets but becoming more common with the introduction of thin tile panels with a panel thickness $\leq 5.5\text{mm}$. For mosaics, the backing material and its adhesive should not occupy more than 25% of the area of each tesserae, deteriorate whilst in service and be compatible with the tile adhesive bed in accordance with the manufacturer's instructions. This also applies to natural stone with a resin bonded mesh backing.

B

BACKING BOARD

Proprietary tile backing boards are installed, usually onto existing substrates and are available in a variety of materials and vary in thickness. The correct backing board should be selected for the suitability of tiling to the relevant on-site conditions.

BAL INSIGHT

There are many different types of backing boards, some are light weight and waterproof, some are for over boarding timber floors, others are used to improve the weight carrying capacity of a substrate.

B

BATTENS

When fixing tiles to a wall, wooden battens are used to align the tiles horizontally and vertically and to support their weight while the adhesive dries. These should have perfectly straight edges and should be secured to the wall checking with a spirit level to ensure correct alignment.

BAL INSIGHT

Some modern cementitious adhesives can eliminate the need for time consuming battening. More time tiling, less time needed on the job.

B

BED DEPTH

The depth of applied adhesive or mortar into which tiles are to be laid.

BAL INSIGHT

Bed depths are important. If adhesives are used outside their recommended range problems can occur with drying times or more importantly shrinkage during the curing process.

B

BONDING AGENT

A substance applied to a suitable substrate to create a bond between it and a succeeding layer such as a rendering, screed or plaster application.

BAL INSIGHT

There are different chemical types of bonding agents available. It is important to check with the manufacturer to ensure suitability for its intended purpose. It is also important to ensure that the bonding agent does not re-emulsify or breakdown whilst in service.

B

BORDER TILE

Any tile differing in appearance to the field tiles and used to frame a central body of tiles to add colour or texture to the tiling scheme.

BAL INSIGHT

Border tiles are a common feature of Geometric Victorian-style floor tiles, like traditional Minton floors, which is making a comeback as people opt for heritage-style floors.

B

BS 5385 Parts 1-5

British Standards relating to wall and floor tiling:

Part 1 is a code of practice for the design and installation of ceramic, natural stone and mosaic wall tiling in normal internal conditions.

Part 2 is a code of practice for the design and installation of external ceramic, natural stone and mosaic wall tiling in normal conditions.

Part 3 is a code of practice for the design and installation of internal and external ceramic and mosaic floor tiling in normal conditions.

Part 4 is a code of practice for the design and installation of ceramic and mosaics tiling in specific conditions.

Part 5 is a code of practice for the design and installation of terrazzo, natural stone and agglomerated stone tile and slab flooring.