

## FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

### How do I clean my tile?

Most American Marazzi Tile glazed ceramic and porcelain tile require minimal maintenance. Either can generally be cleaned with clear water and/or a neutral pH liquid cleaner (soapless). Follow with a clear water rinse and wipe dry to prevent film formation. As with most porcelains, spilled liquids may stain the light-colored products if not promptly removed. Neither sealing nor acid cleaning is recommended for any of American Marazzi Tile's glazed ceramic or porcelain tile.

The tile should be thoroughly cleaned of grout after installation (following the grout manufacturer's instructions) to assure ease of maintenance in the future. Tile, whether glazed ceramic or porcelain, should be maintained on a regular and frequent basis to prevent build up of soil, grease, residue, soap detergents, sealers, dampness, liquids, etc., to keep the surface clean and lessen slippery conditions.

For heavily abrasive tile, i.e. tile with a wet C.O.F. of  $\geq 0.70$ , the following maintenance equipment and procedures may be required:

**Wash Group:** One five gallon plastic pail, one deck brush (10 inches wide with two inch bristles) and one mop (rayon).

**Rinse Group:** A standard mop bucket with a mop wringer and one mop (rayon).

**Procedure:** Fill the five gallon Wash Group pail with hot water and p.H. neutral liquid cleaner (soapless) in concentrations according to manufacturer's recommendations. Half-fill the Rinse Group mop bucket with clear hot water.

Immerse the Wash Group mop in the five gallon pail of cleaner solution. Working in ten foot by ten foot sections, spread the cleaner solution to cover the ten square foot section. Scrub well with the deck brush.

Following the scrubbing, rinse the area with the mop and water from the Rinse Group. Proceed to the next ten square foot area and repeat these procedures until the floor is cleaned, changing both the wash solution and rinse water frequently as they become dirty.

## **What do “shade” and “caliber” mean, and why do they matter?**

A tile's shade (dye lot) refers to the coloration and reflectivity of a tile. A tile's caliber refers to its facial dimension (size) and is measured with a tool called a caliper (often the terms are confused). Marazzi carefully selects its tile and indicates on every box the particular shade (dye lot) and caliber to offer customers consistency throughout an installation. Since natural materials are used in both the body and glazes of the tile, slight variations in shade and caliber are normally inherent from one production run to the next. Typically, Marazzi shades (dye lots) are indicated by a three- or four-digit numeral (i.e. 289, 3408, 423, etc.) while caliber sizes are normally shown as 07, 08, 09, 00, 01, 02, etc.

It is important to purchase tile that has the same shade (dye lot) and caliber, if at all possible, to ensure a pleasing aesthetic appearance as well as consistent grout joints. Using different caliber sizes result in a variation in grout joint widths. Normally, with Marazzi products, two adjacent calibers (i.e. 07 with 08 or 08 with 09 - not 07 with 09) can be used in an installation if the installer is aware of the variation before the installation is begun because the slight difference can be adjusted within the grout joint. It is generally not acceptable to begin an installation with one size and abruptly change to another at some point.

## **My tile looks dull, why? My tile retains dirt, why?**

These questions are often interrelated. If the surface appearance of the tile differs significantly from uninstalled pieces left from the installation there are several possible explanations.

The tile may appear dull if a grout haze remains on the surface of the tile. This often happens when the grout is not thoroughly cleaned from the tile surface immediately following installation. Since grout is a form of cement, it becomes very difficult to remove after drying completely. This can be avoided by grouting only manageable sections at one time and cleaning each well before moving on to other areas. This step is particularly important when working with textured, natural stone-like tile that feature crevices or clefts.

When grout remains on the surface, it attracts and holds dirt, thus making it impossible to restore the original sheen to the tile. Products exist in the marketplace to remove grout haze; these products often contain acids that can damage the surface of the tile. Since the surface of tile is essentially a layer of glass, it can be easily etched by acid. Marazzi does not recommend acid cleaning for any of our glazed products. Any effort to remove grout haze with an acid-based product should be cautiously undertaken by a professional contractor and utilized with extreme caution. Improper use of acids that etch the glaze also results in loss of light reflection and dirt retention that diminishes the sheen of a tile.

Additionally, normal wear and tear can result in scratches that, over time, retain dirt and reduce sheen. Culprits can be sand or gravel adhered to shoe soles, chairs or bar stools that are repetitively moved across a tile surface, children's toys with abrasive finishes, loaded carts or other conveyances, etc. Always consider a tile's durability classification when choosing a product for specific areas.

## **Why doesn't tile last forever? I've heard about the tile in European cathedrals and Oriental palaces that has been there for centuries. Why is Marazzi warranted for one year?**

This question directly relates to question #3 above. A tile's ability to withstand wear is determined by many factors, i.e. glaze composition, surface texture, traffic levels, maintenance procedures, etc. Marazzi's standard limited warranty addresses the issue of a tile's conformance to industry standards regulating First Choice products. Any variation from those standards would be evident within a one-year period.

You can bet that the tile in those ancient installations looks much different now than it did when it was installed. More than likely, the edges are chipped; the surface is scratched and worn (in many cases through to the body); there are impact chips and structural cracks - all of which may seem acceptable in an historic site but less so on your kitchen floor!

## **Will tile burn?**

Firing temperatures for ceramic tile products in general are 1800° F. Marazzi products are fired at temperatures greater than 2001° F.

There is no relevant test that relates ASTM E84.75, i.e. Steiner Tunnel Test, to measurement of performance of ceramic products for combustion, flame spread or toxicity. Maximum temperatures for conducting this test range only from 1202° F to 1562° F. It was developed to evaluate softer construction materials ranging from carpet to lumber because these products to ignite and may release deadly chemicals when burning. The fact that ceramic products actually originate at much higher temperatures renders such a test in the 1472° F range useless.

Tests conducted within the industry have shown bathrooms with tile tub surrounds that are left standing after the entire room has been burned.

## **Why doesn't the tile I purchased for my room addition match the tile (same series & color) I purchased last year?**

Question #2 addresses this issue because such a situation is generally the result of receiving two different shades (dye lots) of tile that were produced at different times, possibly fired in different kilns, with slightly different glaze components. Many natural components are used to produce both the body and glaze of Marazzi products.

Each time raw materials for a glaze are obtained from a supplier, each time the components of the tile body are mixed, each time a tile is pressed and fired slight variations may result. Generally, this presents no problem because a customer receives the same shade (dye lot) for each purchase; however, in an installation that evolves over a period of time, it may not be possible to obtain the same shade as originally installed. In such an instance, be sure to request the original shade (dye lot). If not available, request a sample of current shades for comparison before purchase or installation.

If your question is not answered above, please Email: [contact@marazzitile.com](mailto:contact@marazzitile.com)