Pebble Tile Installation Guide

Pebble Collection »

Pebble and stone mosaic tiles can be used in an extensive variety of installations. They are appropriate for both indoor and outdoor applications. Commercial applications include flooring, feature walls, bar surfaces, and walkways in projects ranging from restaurants to medical facilities, public parks, and corporate offices. Residential installations include pools and pool decks, patios, landscaping, fountains, water features, kitchen backsplashes, flooring, shower floors, bath and powder room floors, entryways, fireplaces and BBQ areas.

Recommended tools for installation.

Apply thinset with a trowel.

Place tiles on the thinset. Take extra care to get each tile close together using their interlocking shape.
Lightly tap down the tile without pushing the pebbles into the thinset.

Seal the tiles with a good quality penetrating sealer. Color and shine enhancers can also be applied to vary the finish of the pebbles.

Apply a sanded grout on 2" x 2" sections at a time until the entire installation is covered.

When grout has dried for 30 minutes use a stiff bristled brush to remove the excess grout.
Repeat sponging off the grout until the desired look is reached. Look for narrow grout lines between the pebbles. Once the grout has completely dried seal the tiles a final time.

**Preparation and Installation**

- Installation of these tiles is similar to any other natural stone product.
- For best results, we recommend a qualified tradesperson who is experienced in the laying of natural stone product.
- The tiles are sold in a 12" x 12" size.
- All tiles interlock on all sides.
- Sort tiles before installing to ensure an even color layout.
- For a vertical or contoured surface, smaller pebble sizes should be considered as well as a polymer based adhesive with a short hydration period, i.e.: glue setting time.
- The area of application should be flat, clean, dry and free of contaminants. For wet areas the use of reinforced waterproof membranes is suggested. In the case of flooring, a fall to the drainage point of no less than two inches is required.

**Adhesive**

- Use only a high quality thinset mortar. The manufacturer's literature will outline if it is appropriate for indoors or outdoors as well as for floors and walls.
- It is important that each pebble is embedded in adhesive. However, they should not be pressed deeply into the adhesive.
- Select a product suitable for application with a 0.25" notched trowel and apply no more than 3 square feet of adhesive at a time.

**Sealing and Grouting**

- It is recommended that the stones be sealed before and after grouting. For the best results use a good quality penetrating sealer. These types of penetrating sealers ordinarily do not change or alter the color of the pebbles.
- In order to enhance the color of the stones to a deeper matte or glossy finish, it is suggested you use natural stone color enhancer or natural stone color and shine enhancer prior to applying the penetrating sealer.
- A sanded grout that is suitable for external or internal conditions (which ever may be the case) is recommended.
- Generally grouts are a water mix, but a latex additive or similar should be used in the water where some flexibility is needed.
- It is important to wait the interval recommended by the adhesive manufacturer before grouting to minimize dirt ingress between the pebble and avoid the opportunity for dislodging of pebbles.
- Grout a small area at a time.
- When grout has dried, use a stiff bristled brush to scrub excess grout.
- After removing most of the grout with a brush, use a grout sponge to continue removing grout until the desired finish is achieved.

**Control Joints**

- Joints can be easily formed with two angles, sealant and bond-breaker between them.
- Designers may show points at which joints are needed and they are certainly required where tiles join walls or some other building material in the substrate.
- A tile saw may be used to fit edges or corners.
• You can also flip the tile over and cut the desired edge or shape with a sharp cutting instrument or take individual pebbles off the mesh to fill the gaps.
• Ordering extra sheets of tile may be useful for this.

**Sealers and Cleaning**

• It is recommended that the pebbles be sealed with a quality impregnator before grouting and again after the grout has dried completely.
• To maintain ease of maintenance of natural stone, it is recommended that sealants be applied every 2-3 years.
• Whenever using sealants and cleaners, ensure you follow the manufacturers recommended method of application.
• The pebbles can be cleaned with neutral mild detergents.
• The porosity or water absorption in pebbles (natural stone) varies, and therefore staining will occur in different degrees if the stone is unsealed. Consequently, any spills should be cleaned quickly to lessen the degree of the stain and sealers are highly recommended.

**Standing Pebbles Installation Guide**

**Standing Pebble Collection »**

The pebbles and stones are a natural product, meaning that no two pieces are exactly alike. It is not unusual to find veins and lines of separation in the pebbles. This is generally a desired feature of the product. Before installing the tiles, please inspect your tiles for algae or yellow discoloration. This is a result of climate change and can be easily remedied by wetting the tiles and placing them outside in direct sunlight for eight hours.

**Substrates**

All substrates should be flat, clean, dry, free of any contaminant and firmly fixed in place. Deflections should be a maximum of 1/360 of the span for walls. Use in wet areas requires special attention involving appropriate substrates (e.g.- concrete, cement boards-compressed sheet-and treated plywood). Use reinforced waterproof membranes.

**Waterproof membranes**

Waterproof membranes prevent the leakage of water through to framing and or habitable spaces behind. Attention must be paid to carrying the membrane up the wall, outside of shower boxes, installation of bond breakers, and sealing around penetrations. It is strongly recommended that membrane systems are used in all wet areas. Some systems involve the use of a primer.

**Adhesive**

Use a product that is suitable for your project. We recommend using a latex-modified thinset to adhere the tiles. One brand in particular that is readily available at any Home Depot is Vesabond by Custom Blend, an acrylic-based thinset that is a highbond adhesive. Lay a 1/4" layer of the adhesive and press the tile carefully into place, as the adhesive should ooze through the mesh and contact the back side of the pebbles. It is important that each pebble be firmly imbedded in the
adhesive. Use a product suitable for application with a 1/4" notched trowel, and apply no more than 3 square feet of the adhesive at a time.

**Laying and Joint Hiding**
For best results, butt tiles together and do not leave the traditional 1/4" to 3/8" grout gap that is left for laying traditional ceramic tiles. Interlocking pebble liners are designed to create a seamless look. Before installation, inspect tiles to make sure all pebbles are properly installed. Remove and re-adhere any pebbles that may have been placed incorrectly. For best results with the standing pebble liners, it is crucial to alternate and stagger the pieces in each row so that seams do not line up from one row to the next. This will ensure that the seams do not show.

**Grouting**
Grouting is optional for this product. For most applications, grout is not used, in order to emphasize the natural appearance of the stone.

**Sealing**
To protect the application and bring out the true color of the stone, it is recommended that the pebble tiles be sealed with a quality professional-grade sealant following installation. We recommend using DryTreat sealant, which is a non-yellowing porosity or water absorption in the pebbles varies and therefore staining may occur in areas that are subjected to water if the tiles are left unsealed.

**Cleaning your pebble tile**
The pebbles may be cleaned with a neutral mild detergent, a vinegar solution, or a 10% hydrochloric acid solution mixed with water. Apply with a stiff bristled brush and then rinse off with water.