



When it comes to flooring, We've got you covered.

## Selecting The Right Tile

### Deciding On Durability:

#### Porcelain / Ceramic

The ceramic tile industry makes it easy for you to determine which tiles are suitable choices for your application by using a rating system, known as the PEI scale. This system rates the surface of a tile from Class 1 to Class 5 ("1" being the least resistant to abrasion and "5" the most resistant). While any tile can be used on the wall, floor tiles take a lot of abuse and need to be manufactured to withstand this "wear and tear". For light traffic on residential floors, a Class 2 or greater is a good choice, but for higher traffic areas such as kitchens and entryways a Class 3 or greater will hold up the best. See the Specifications tab in our Ceramics/Porcelains section to find out how the tile you choose is rated.



#### Natural Stone

Because natural stone is not man made, it cannot follow this rating system. However, stone has been used for thousands and thousands of years, and much of this flooring is still holding strong today. Our trained consultants have the knowledge to guide you through which options will give you a long lasting durable floor with the beauty and character you can only get from a natural stone.

#### Other Choices

Everyday, we are exploring new materials that expand your choices for flooring options. We have options ranging from cork to recycled concrete to glass tiles that are all made specifically for flooring applications. Come in to one of our showrooms to learn more about these new and exciting options.

### Choosing A Size:

Tiles are available in many sizes from small 3/8" mosaics to 24"x48" slab tiles and everything in between. We have seen a recent shift toward larger tiles for floor and wall applications. 13" x 13" has been our most popular size for floors and 8" x 10" the most popular for walls. The up and coming sizes are 16" x 16" for floors and 8" x 12" for walls. Most of our tiles are imported from Europe and the current trend there is even larger tiles with clean straight edges. As a result, we have started to show many 12"x24" tile options for floors and wall. The reason? Larger tiles make a space appear... larger. Many floor tiles also come in multiple sizes, which allow the creation of interesting patterns (see our exclusive versatile patterns in our stone section). Just tell us the look and feel that you want for your room and we'll help you design it.

### The Rules of Color:

Of course, only you can decide what color is right for you, but here are a few basic rules to remember: Lighter colors make a space appear larger. Darker colors add warmth and hide dirt well. Neutral colors allow you to change your accessories but if you love a trendy color, go for it! Just keep in mind it will be with you a long time.

While some tiles look almost identical from piece to piece, many will have color and shade variations to give the over-



all look more depth and character. Both manmade tiles as well as natural stone will vary each time they are produced or quarried. If you require a specific shade, we recommend viewing multiple pieces of the current shade lot. Especially when dealing with natural stone, tiles will vary so it's always a good idea to see a couple of pieces. Any questions or concerns about your tile selection should be clarified prior to installation.

### **Texture Tips:**

Generally speaking, textured or matte finish tiles are less slippery than smooth or shiny tiles - something to keep in mind when choosing floor tiles, especially in areas prone to moisture, like kitchens, bathrooms, and entryways. With that said, many people still use polished marbles and porcelains in these areas and feel the look achieved with these products outweighs the lack of slip resistance. While many products can be shopped for online, tile is one of those things that you need to literally come in to "touch and feel".

### **Selecting A Style:**

Rustic or stone-looking tiles are extremely popular because they fit in with any decor and are excellent at hiding dirt. Marbleized tiles lend a more formal look. Tumbled marble is a timeless look that fits with many different styles. White "subway" tiles are still just as popular as ever. Newer products such as glass and metal tiles are now frequently used in conjunction with ceramic tile and natural stone to create a unique and striking installation. Visit one of our showrooms and let a design consultant show you how different materials can be combined to make your project special.

### **Choosing A Grout:**

Grout is available in a wide variety of colors. Using a grout that matches the tile tends to make the grout lines disappear; usually this is the recommended method for a clean and cohesive aesthetic. Using a contrasting color makes the individual tiles stand out for a more dramatic look. Also ask your design consultant about stain proof grout for those hard to keep clean areas and grout colorants to rejuvenate old or dirty grout.