



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

Tile and Stone Glossary

Adhesive – a substance used for bonding tile to surfaces. Other common names thinset, glue, mud, mastic, mortar, and paste.



Backing - material used as a base over which a tile is installed.

Battiscopa - a floor trim also known as bullnose that has a finished edge on one side.

Broken Joint - tile installation where each row is offset for half of its length. Also known as brick joint or staggered pattern.

Bullnose - a trim tile with a finished edge.

Caulk - waterproof filler used to seal joints and make tile joints watertight.

Cement Board - a panel normally ¼" or ½" thick made of cement, reinforced with fiberglass used as a substrate for tile installation.

Coefficient of Friction (C.O.F) - the measurement of resistance to friction as related to be effect of how smooth or rough a surface is to prevent material to "slip" across the surface.

Cove Base - a trim tile having a convex radius with a flat landing on the bottom edge. See also Sanitary Base.

Cure - the time period that a tile installation setting material must be undisturbed and allowed to set for it to reach full strength.

Epoxy Adhesive - a two part adhesive system consisting of epoxy resin and epoxy hardener. Used for bonding ceramic tile or stone to backing material.

Epoxy Grout - a two-part grout system consisting of epoxy resin and epoxy hardener. Made to have impervious qualities, stain and chemical resistant. Used to fill joints between tiles.

Feature Strip (Border) - a narrow strip of tile with design, texture or contrasting color that creates a design concept.

Field Tile - the primary tile used to cover a wall or floor.

Floor Tile - a tile durable enough to withstand traffic and abrasion.

Grout - a mortar used to fill the joints between tiles.

Glazed Tile - a tile that has an impervious facial finish composed of glaseous ceramic materials fused to the surface of the tile.

Granite - hard igneous rock consisting chiefly of quartz, orthoclase or microcline. This material can be in tile or slab form.

Limestone - sedimentary stone that could have fossils or shells. This material can be in tile or slab form in a variety of finishes.

Listel or Listello - a decorative border, primarily for walls.



Marble - a natural stone product quarried from the earth. This material can be in tile or slab form in a variety of finishes.

Mastic- a wall tile adhesive used to bond tile to wall substrates.

Mosaics - ceramic, porcelain, glass, metal or stone tile less than six square inches. May come in squares, octagons, hexagons or random shapes mounted for ease of installation.

Mud - a slang term referring to thick-bed mortar consisting of sand and cement.

Porcelain Tile - mosaic or paver tile composed by the dust-pressed method. Characterized by a dense and impervious body.

Quarry Tile - Dense unglazed tile that is generally 6" or more in surface area and less than 3/4" thick. Use mostly in commercial spaces because of its slip resistant qualities.

Sanitary Base - a trim tile having a concave radius on one edge and a convex radius with a flat landing on the bottom edge.

Sealer - a penetrant applied to prevent the absorption of liquids or other debris. Used with porous materials including: quarry tile, grout, and natural stone. Sealer is not necessary for glazed ceramic tile.

Slate - a natural material that is known for its dynamic colors and "earthy" appeal. Slate is used outside as well as inside because of its natural look and wonderful colors. Because slate is a product of nature, it is characterized by a high shade variation.

Spacers - cross-shaped plastic pieces that are used in installation to evenly separate tile. Manufactured in various thicknesses and shapes.

Thinset - an adhesive used to attach tiles to a substrate.

Threshold - a raised member of the floor within the doorjamb.

Travertine - similar composition to limestone but with holes created by hot springs. This material can be in tile or slab form also in many different finishes.

Trim Pieces - various shaped of bases, caps, corners, moldings, angles, etc.

Unglazed Tile - a hard, dense tile of uniform composition.

Wall Tile - glazed tile with a body suitable for interior use. Not expected to withstand excessive impact or be subject to freezing/thawing conditions.