

Skip Tile

Installation Guide



Wall and Floor tiles Installation and Care Guide

Alusid tiles are a range of composite ceramic and glass tiles made from recycled glass and ceramic. They contain no resins, cements or chemical bonding agents. All tiles are 100% UV stable they can be used in most applications where traditional ceramic wall tiles are used. Available in a range of finishes and colours this general advice covers installation of our tile products. For specific advice relating to specific finishes please contact the head office.

Health and Safety

Like all ceramic tiles or natural stones Alusid contains silica, this is totally harmless in its natural state, but if inhaled as a dust can cause problems and prolonged long term exposure can cause silicosis. We therefore recommend that care is taken at all times to reduce the creation of dust when cutting Alusid products. Alusid tiles can be cut with standard ceramic tile cutting tools by scoring the glaze and breaking with a suitable tile cutter.

We would recommend that appropriate safety goggles or glasses are used and safety instructions supplied are followed. As with all aspects of an installation the quality of the tools will have a bearing on the end result so we do recommend professional tools are used. Your professional installer will be able to advise on appropriate tools for cutting your chosen tile.

If none of these options are available it is still possible to cut tiles dry, but operatives must use appropriate dust protection, such as respirators.

Alusid tiles are not intended for use as food preparation surfaces and should not be installed for this application.

Installation - Bonding (Wall)

Most Alusid products are, by their nature heavy, weights will vary depending on product but they can weigh up to 25kg per m² so we only recommend installing on a suitable substrate. We recommend using **Mapei Keraflex Maxi** as an adhesive to bond all Alusid products but other suitable cementitious or resin based adhesives will also work provided they are used according to the manufacturers guidelines.

The recommendation for an adhesive is provided for standard wall constructions internally and externally, for non standard construction applications please refer to Mapei Technical Department for further information. All installations must be carried out to the relevant section of BS 5385 – code of practice for the installation of tiles. All aspects of the installation should be carried out to British Standards and current MAPEI (UK) LTD guidelines.

We make every effort to ensure that colours are as accurate as possible, however due to the nature of the

material, some colour variation is inevitable between batches, we therefore recommend mixing batches and taking tiles from several boxes as the wall is created. This way any variation is evenly distributed and an even appearance is created.

It is important to use a notched trowel to apply the tile adhesive on to the wall as would normally be the application method used for laying tiles. When fixing tiles it is necessary to start the bottom row on a level line to maintain a consistent level as you work up the wall. It is also important that they rest on a secure base such as a concrete floor or footing to help carry the weight and ensure the level stays consistent until the adhesive has cured. When installing ALUSID products use a generous amount of the recommended adhesive and ensure that each tile has sufficient adhesive, slightly rotating each tile as it is applied. Remember to keep the joints tight between each tile because this will provide a neat appearance.

Sand & Cement Render or blockwork – Alusid products may be applied over properly prepared masonry / cementitious surface such as fibrous cement board, concrete block, brick, cement, Pre-cast concrete slabs, for interior applications, wooden board and stud work can be used. We only recommend applying in a bonded system up to a maximum height of 2.74mtrs. If you require installation at greater heights please contact the head office to discuss pre-fabricated systems and your individual requirements.

Waterproof Backerboard - There are various construction boards/tile backer boards available, generally they are cementitious, glass-fibre reinforced or extruded polystyrene, and are either water resistant or waterproof. They are available in various thicknesses, which will all have a varying weight bearing capabilities. When suitably screw fixed to walls they should provide an approximate load bearing facility of 40 - 50kgs/m², which is generally adequate load bearing substrate for all of our products. Individual manufacturers should always be contacted for the relevant information on load-bearing capabilities.

Plywood - 18mm exterior grade WBP plywood and other timber such as MDF, chipboard etc, may be used but only in dry areas. Seal all sides/faces and edges with Priming Agent before being suitably batten fixed with vertical and horizontal wooden supports at 300mm centers and screwed firmly at 150mm centers at all joints and edges, this is generally capable taking up to 30kg/m². Please note: please refer to the manufacturer's guidelines and suitability for tiling.

Painted surfaces -must be sandblasted, or otherwise stripped of paint before installing and if a new wall needs to be built, or layer added to an existing wall, the most suitable product for these purposes is fibrous cement sheeting such as Hardie™ backer board.

Dry wall, Sheet Rock, Gypsum board or Plaster board are not suitable substrates
Alusid tiles can be heavy, therefore it is critical that they are adhered to appropriate substrates. The substrate and wall should be structurally sound, secure and capable of supporting the weight of the product.

To ensure safety, strength and permanent fixing, all work should only be performed by a qualified and licensed contractor or builder.

Installation Advice (Flooring)

As with all tiles ensure that you have sufficient tiles to complete the whole job. Ensure that all the tiles are from the same batch and pay attention to the calibre. You can find this information on the box.

When laying Alusid tiles it is recommended to mix from several different boxes as you lay the tiles to ensure an even distribution of any slight variations in the tone and texture.

Prepare Your Area and Substrate

It's important to start with a completely clean and prepared area, so go ahead and remove all unnecessary objects, furniture, and materials from the room you're tiling. Once you've done that, go around the room and thoroughly clean it. It's also a good idea to keep the windows open while working to keep the air fresh. You then need to prepare the surface on which you'll lay the tiles. If you have a concrete floor in good condition with no moisture, you can choose to apply the tiles directly onto that. If your subfloor is plywood, you'll need to install cement boards on top of it first. Ideally you want to ensure that there is no flex in the floor or this will cause issues with grouting. If there is flex you will need to use specialist grouts.

Complete a Dry-Fit With the Tiles

Since the tiles you're laying will be semi-permanent, you want to ensure you place them down correctly. By that, we mean the pattern but also that the tiles are in order and distributed evenly. It's ideal to start in the centre point of the room and work your way out to the walls to ensure you place them down correctly. The only time when you might want to deviate from this is if the room is quite large. In that case, you can start at one side of the room and work your way across if the tile pattern makes sense to do it that way.

So, use two chalk lines to find the room's centre point and then place the tiles down to see how they'll fit.

Crucially, this will allow you to understand what you need for the edge pieces. It's important you plan the way you will install the tiles so you are not walking on the tiles after they are installed, so don't paint yourself into a corner.

Spread the Thinset Mortar or Tile Adhesive

When you're happy with the pattern and how the room will look, it's time to lay the mortar. Using either a margin or notched trowel (at this time, use the flat side at a 45-degree angle), spread a decent amount of mortar across an area larger than the size of one tile. Then, take the notched trowel and hold it at a 45-degree angle as you press into the mortar you've laid, which will evenly distribute the mortar by combing it into lines.

Laying and Setting the Tiles

Take your tiles and start laying them as you did on the dry lay. When you do this, press the tile into the mortar and twist it gently as you do. The goal is to flatten the mortar underneath completely so there are no more ridges in it. If you're unsure if you've managed that, you can lift a tile and check, and if required, add mortar directly to the tile before placing it.

As you go around the room, leave tile spacers between each one to ensure they're evenly distributed. Also, ensure to leave a quarter-inch gap between the last tiles and walls, cabinets, or other fixed objects in the room, and don't put mortar down here.

Finally, use a bubble level on several tiles to confirm they're level, and then lightly tap each tile with a mallet.

Preparing and Cutting Edge Tiles

For the tricky edge, corner, and pipe tiles, use a rail tile cutter, a wet tile saw, or a tile nipper to get the required shape and cut. Whenever you use any cutting equipment, wear protective equipment such as gloves and glasses. The rail tile cutter is best if you only need to cut a few tiles. For any more than that, opt for a wet tile saw, which will give you the most accurate lines. The tile nipper is used most efficiently for cutting around pipes, toilet bases, etc.

Leave at least 24 hours for the mortar to dry before grouting.

Frequently Asked Questions

Do You Need Underlay for Ceramic Floor Tiles?

If the subfloor you'd like to tile upon is made of cement and it's in good condition with no moisture, you can lay ceramic floor tiles directly onto it. However, if you have a plywood subfloor, you'll need to put down cement boards before laying the tiles.

Grouting Alusid tiles:

It is important to have a grout joint between tiles to allow for movement in the structure. We would not recommend installing without the use of a suitable grout. Please note wherever one plane of tiling meets another or another material, or where a waterproof sealer is required, silicone sealer must be used as opposed to grout.

IMPORTANT: with White coloured tiles we would not recommend the use of a very dark or strong contrasting grout, especially the use of black grouts as some staining can occur.

Some Alusid glazed surfaces display a surface crackle, which can be enhanced or reduced through the application of sealants prior to grouting. Prior to sealing, the adhesive bed should be dry and the grout joints clean, dry and free from adhesive residues, dirt, dust and other loose debris. Grouts may lodge in the crackled surface of the tiles or in small , which will highlight the crackle effect - ideal if an 'antique look' is required. If not, the tiles should be sealed on the face and edges **especially those which have been cut** with 1- 2 applications of LTP Crackle Glaze Protector, this is in addition to any applied before cutting. Using a soft cloth wipe any surplus LTP Crackle Glaze Protector off the tiles before it dries. Leave to fully cure for a minimum of 48 hours prior to grouting. Be led by your professional installer.

Preparation for Grouting:

Prior to grouting the adhesive bed should be dry and the grout joints clean, dry and free from adhesive residues, dirt, dust and other loose debris. Various factors including: adhesive type, substrate, tile type, temperature etc. will affect the drying time of the adhesive. Grouts can contain strong colour pigments and this should be taken into consideration when selecting the colour for your chosen tile. **Lighter coloured tiles can be affected by dark coloured grouts bleeding into the tiles resulting in dark patches around tile edge or possibly over tile face if slurry grouted which may permanently stain the tile.**

Always test a small area of tiles prior to grouting the entire area.

For floor tiles we would recommend using a flexible grout and sealing the tiles after including the grout to give the longest life.

Application:

Using a soft rubber squeegee or float apply with diagonal sweeping movements to the grout joints taking care to fully compress the grout into the full depth of the grout joints so that no air pockets exist and the joints are fully filled. A timber dowel of an appropriate diameter can be used to compact the grout within the joints.

Work in manageable areas and clean off any residues when the grout has begun to firm up in the joints, but before it sets on the tile face. Cleaning with a damp but not overly wet fine textured foam sponge will provide the best results. Do not over wash the grout as this may cause a white bloom (efflorescence) and discolour the grout. Ensure your grouting is completed in one continuous sequence, to avoid colour

variation. Changing the cleaning water regularly will also aid cleaning. When the grout has set, any remaining grout dust can be removed from the surface with a clean, damp cloth. Finish by polishing with a soft, clean, dry cloth.

Should efflorescence form, these salts can be removed once the grout has fully dried and cured by frequent washing with clean water or suitable efflorescence cleaner.

The surface of some tiles can be easily scratched so the application and cleaning of the grout must be carried out carefully.

Ensure that any tools used for grouting are completely clean and free of any hardened grout etc.

All perimeter joints must be finished with a good quality silicone sealer and not with grout. This will allow for expansion and contraction in the tiles during normal heating and cooling cycles.

Further Sealing of Crackle Glazed Tiles:

Once grouting is complete and fully cured, apply a further application of **LTP Crackle Glaze Protector** to the front face of the tiles and the grout, in the same way as before. Using a soft cloth wipe any surplus **LTP Crackle Glaze Protector** off the tiles before it dries.

Maintenance

Alusid are easy to care for, the glazed surface will resist most stains and will not require any long term maintenance.

Floor tiles should be kept clean of dirt and dust where ever possible especially in entrance areas, any build up of grime and dirt will affect the tile slip resistance value.

Cleaning

We would recommend cleaning spillages as soon as possible. The best cleaning method is a diluted detergent mix with water. **IMPORTANT: Do not use any acid based cleaners on the surface of Alusid tiles as these may cause discoloration and or damage the surface of the glaze.**

Once the tiles are firmly bonded use the detergent solution and a sponge or soft bristle brush to clean any residue. We would recommend testing an inconspicuous area before attempting to clean an entire surface.

Please note that care should be taken to avoid scratching the glazed surface with abrasive cleaners, and ensure that any sponges or cleaning equipment is clean and free from grit prior to cleaning.

For exterior applications jet washes can be safely used to clean the surface if grime builds up.

We recommend that you treat a spare tile with the appropriate sealer and/or finisher prior to installation to ensure you have achieved your desired appearance.

Read the instructions on the packaging of Adhesives, Grouts and Sealants very carefully.

No complaints regarding the appearance of the product will be accepted by the company once the tiles have been installed.

Disclaimer

The specifications and technical information given in this publication are intended for guidance and although they are to the best of our knowledge correct, they are given without warranty.

We cannot accept any responsibility for reliance placed upon the advice contained herein since practical expertise and site conditions are outside of our control. Neither do we accept liability for the performance of the product arising from such use. This does not affect your statutory rights.

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