



# CEMENT TILES

Manual for installing, treating and maintaining  
cement tiles





# INSTALLING AND TREATMENT GUIDE

**Type:** Cement tiles are handmade tiles that are produced using a press technique. They are not baked and therefore they remain porous.

**Materials:** Cement and colored marble powder.

**Features:** Small imperfections and color differences are inherent to the product and should be considered normal.

**Variants:** Cement tiles & Marocca's

**Where to apply:** Both inside and outside, walls and floors.

**Extra attention:** Cement tiles are more sensitive than other tiles because they are not fired in an oven. They are porous and must be treated with an impregnation agent. Be careful with acidic (cleaning) agents. Cement tiles should be placed with extra attention and preferably by someone with experience.

*The step-by-step plan and advice may differ per space or area of application. Below we give our advice for the most common placement of cement tiles. Please read the important tips at the bottom of the step-by-step plan and contact us if you have any questions.*

## What do you need to install cement tiles?

- Primer
- Flexible tile adhesive suitable for natural stone
- Flexible grout suitable for natural stone
- 2 mm tile spacers
- Water-cooled tile saw
- Joint trowel, grout tub, glue comb with 8mm teeth
- Acid-free Descaler
- Azure Impregnating agents
- Impregnation pad or roller, tray, sponge and bucket
- Lint-free cotton cloth



# STEP-BY-STEP PLAN

**Before you start tiling, make a plan of how the tiles should be placed. For example; are there patterns with borders (border tiles) or should everything be neatly centered in the room? Measure everything well in advance for a good result!**

## Priming

Is the surface on which you will be tiling absorbent or untreated? First make sure that you treat the surface with the correct primer. This can usually be applied with a block brush or paint roller. Follow the instructions and allow the drying time of the respective primer.

## Gluing tiles

Always glue the cement tiles on a flat surface with a flexible tile adhesive that is suitable for natural stone. Use a 6 to 8mm glue comb and 2mm tile spacers. (thicker doesn't look nice, thinner is almost impossible to grout) **Remove excess glue and dirt on the tiles immediately!** Let the glue dry for at least 24 hours before starting the next step.

## Cleaning

Clean the tiles with water and use a sponge and / or cloth. If necessary, mix a little bit of Acid-free Descaler into the water. This ensures better cleaning. The tiles must not get too wet! If any dirt remains, repeat this step until all the dirt, dust, or tile adhesive is gone. The tiles must be completely clean before they can be impregnated. Now let the floor dry thoroughly. Note: The tiles are very prone to stains at the moment, so cover them with breathable foil or only walk over them with clean socks.

## Impregnate base layer

Always impregnate the tiles with Azule Tile Sealant before grouting. This ensures that the grout cannot penetrate into the tile and thus provides initial protection. When applying the impregnation agent, use an impregnation pad (or paint roller) and a clean dry sponge. Always apply the impregnating agent to about 10 tiles at a time by gently rubbing it over the tiles with the impregnating pad. Use the sponge to wipe away any foam bubbles, without applying pressure. Repeat this step until all tiles have been treated.





If the tiles absorb the impregnating agent quickly, you can choose to apply a second layer. This may be applied immediately after the first coat, as soon as it has been absorbed. Then give this treatment at least 6 hours to dry before moving on to the next step. The impregnating agent will penetrate the pores of the cement tiles and harden there. Azure Tile Sealant is transparent and colorless. Make sure you have good ventilation as the impregnating agent contains solvents!

## Grouting

When grouting, use a flexible grout that is suitable for natural stone. We advise to use a silver gray, gray or jasmine white grout. Never use an anthracite colored or black grout with cement tiles, as these will cause serious stains. When grouting, immediately remove the excess grout from the tiles. When the top layer of the grout is nearly dry, the tiles can be further sponged and cleaned with Acid-free Descaler, maintaining the proportions of the bottle. Repeat this step until all of the veil is gone. Drying of the joint has to do with various factors such as temperature, joint width, brand of the grout and moisture. To prevent grout from drying into the cement tiles and causing discoloration, it is important to keep a

close eye on the above process. The sooner you can start cleaning the better!

You can only clearly see if all grout veil has disappeared when the floor is dry. Better to clean 1x too much than 1x too little. Grout veil that has not been properly removed may become visible after the tiles have been re-impregnated in the last step. So it is very important that the tiles are completely clean and dry and that there is no grout left in the pores of the tiles before you start on the last step. Let the grout (and floor) dry for at least 12 hours.

## Impregnation top layer

When the tiles are completely dry and clean, the last layer of impregnating agent, the top layer, can be applied. Apply the top layer with the impregnation pad. If the tiles absorb all of the impregnating agent immediately then apply an extra layer. Let the floor dry for at least 12 hours before using the room.



**Depending on the space, use the following impregnation agent for the top layer:**

#### **Azule Tile Oil**

Space: Kitchen, hall, living room. Tile oil deepens the colors of the tiles and may yellow slightly on white tiles. Apply the Tile Oil, per 10 tiles at a time, by gently rubbing it over the tiles with the impregnation pad. Scrub the tile oil well with a lint-free cotton cloth within 15 minutes of application.

#### **Azule Color intensifier**

Space: Bathroom, WC, wet rooms. Slightly deepens the color and applies a resinous top coat. Apply the color intensifier, each time per 10 tiles at the same time, by gently brushing it over the tiles with the impregnation pad.

For a matte result; rub immediately with a lint-free cotton cloth.

For a satin finish; do not rub.

Recommended on a shower floor but might get slippery.

#### **Azule Tile Sealant**

Space: Hall, living room and all other areas inside and outside. Azule Stain Stop is transparent and color less. Apply the Tile Sealant per 10 tiles at a time by gently

brushing it over the tiles with the impregnation pad.

#### **Azule Nano Spray**

Azule Nano Spray is an extra addition for vertically placed tiles, eg behind a hob. Nano Spray is transparent and colorless. Repeat every 3 to 6 months. Hold the Nano spray aerosol at 20 cm from the workpiece and spray in horizontal lines. Don't stop in the middle but keep making lines.





# CLEANING AND MAINTENANCE

## Necessities:

- Acid-free descaler (cleaning agent)
- Azule Tile Soap (cleaning and maintenance product)
- Sponge, bucket and scrub brush
- Lint-free cotton cloth

## Weekly maintenance

Clean the tiles periodically (approx. 1x per week) with Azule Tile Soap and water. This agent is acid-free and contains a concentration of greasy soap that functions as a natural impregnation agent. By regularly mopping with Azule Tile Soap, the tiles get an increasingly beautiful and fuller in appearance and also better protected against stains.

## Maintenance in shower room

Clean cement tiles in the shower area 1x per week with Acid-free Descaler Also suitable for taps and shower doors. Rinsing and afterwards drying works to the advantage of the tiles. Our advice is to apply a new layer of Color Deepener once a year, if necessary.

## Stains due to Azule Color intensifier

Azule Color Intensifier is an impregnating agent with resins. If not evenly distributed, it can stain or leave a sticky surface. The solution is to treat the tiles per 10 at the same time with Azule Tile Sealant. This product contains a lot of solvents and will dissolve the resins. Leave on for 30 seconds and then rub well with a cotton cloth. Possible to repeat if not all stains or stickiness have disappeared. This may also be done mechanically with a suitable polishing machine. It is a great way to distribute the resins evenly over the surface of the tiles.

## Strong pollution

If the tiles are very dirty, we recommend cleaning the tiles first with Superboen. This is a very powerful cleaning product that must be mixed with water and then applied to the tiles with a scrub brush. This may be used on both untreated and impregnated tiles. Always rinse thoroughly with clean tap water. If the pollution is below the impregnation layer and therefore in the tiles, then first strip the tiles (remove the old impregnation layers)



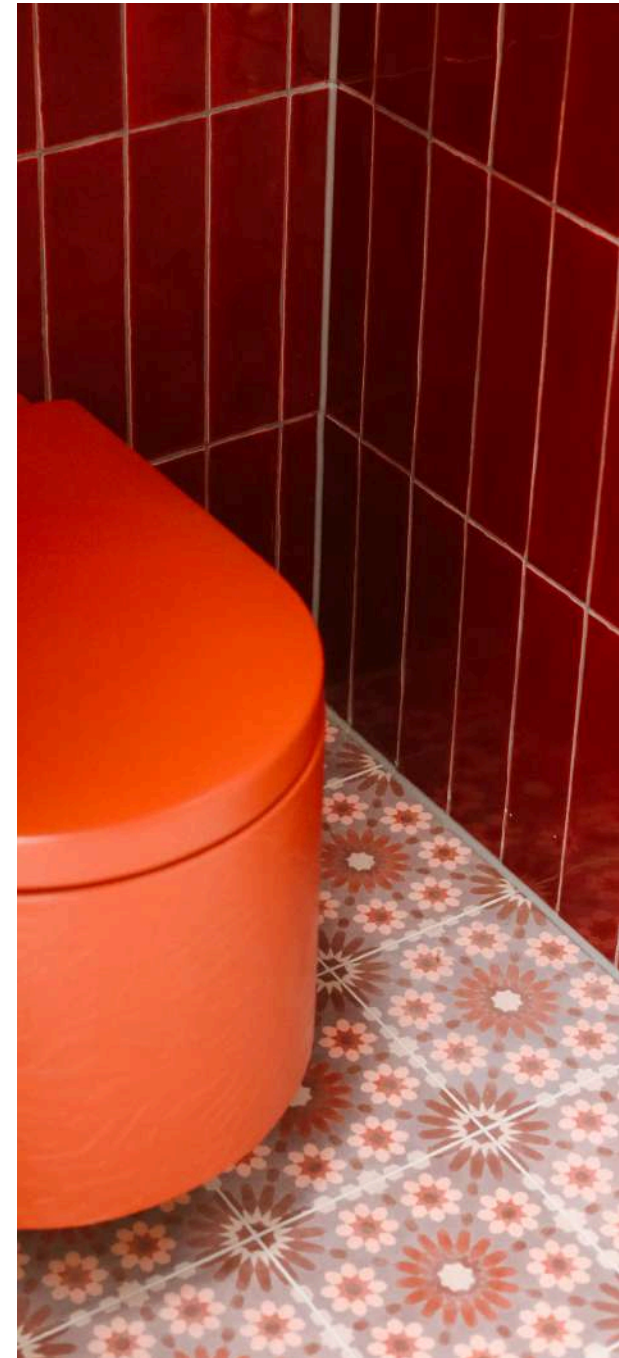
with Azure Losefix and then clean with Superboen.

### Moisture stains

Cement tiles are porous and absorb moisture. It is possible that the subfloor still contains moisture, for example if the adhesive was too wet, or if the tiles were still wet before the impregnation started. This can cause white dots, spots or circles. This is lime that is taken up by the moisture. Once the tiles are impregnated, it will be difficult to remove these stains. You can let this dissolve naturally by waiting several months. The lime will slowly but surely disappear. Regular mopping with Azure Tile Soap will contribute to a faster solution. It is also possible to strip the tiles, or to remove the impregnating agent with a solvent such as Azure Losefix. Then the tiles can be cleaned with Acid-free Descaler to remove the white rash as far as possible. As soon as the tiles are clean and dry again, they must be impregnated again with the impregnating agent for the top layer. Moisture / lime stains often have to do with the water hardness in your area.

### Greasy stains

Grease stains such as caused during cooking or due to mayonnaise, olive oil or other greasy products can largely be removed with Azure Oil-ex. Pour Azure Oil-Ex on the stain and let it soak in and dry. The Oil-Ex eventually turns into a white powdery substance that you can easily wipe off with a damp cloth. It is usually necessary to repeat this step several times for good results. It is not necessary to re-impregnate your tiles.





## TIPS AND TRICKS

- Always read the instructions on the packaging of the treatment products.
- Work in a clean and well-ventilated area.
- Never use underfloor heating during the installment.
- If underfloor heating is used under the tiles, we recommend installing it in the cement screed so that it is 6 cm below the tiles. Use the heating mode of the underfloor heating to let it warm up very gradually over the period of 1 month.
- The underfloor heating must never be connected to heating pipes without a separate thermostat and must never be heated to a temperature higher than 30 degrees.
- Check the tiles in advance for color differences. It is best to mix tiles from different boxes. Never use tiles if you are unsure of the color. Do not think that it will improve afterwards, but contact us first for advice.
- To cover the tiled floor during the renovation, use air-permeable foil or a colorless sheet. Never cover the floor with plaster, plastic or cardboard, as this will scald and cause stains.
- Never use cleaning agents that contain acids; sanitary, all-purpose cleaner, bleach, vinegar and chlorine damage the surface of the cement tiles.
- Allow as little dirt as possible to penetrate the tiles when they are not yet impregnated. Glue, grout, construction dirt, dust and footprints can penetrate into the tiles.
- Make sure that the surface on which is being tiled is flat and dry. With new cement screeds, extra drying time must be taken into account! Please allow a drying time of 1 week per 1 cm of the cement screed.
- Use an acid-free lute for any sealing in the bathroom and kitchen. Always wipe applied lute with water in which a few drops of Azule Tile Soap have been dissolved.
- Never let Azule Tile Oil dry on the cement tiles. Scrub the tile oil well with a lint-free cotton cloth within 15 minutes of application.
- Materials with drying tile oil can ignite when heated: unfold used cloths and let them dry outside. Store in a closed container or under water if necessary.



- Never impregnate cement tiles before installation. This closes the tiles, moisture can no longer breathe out after gluing the tiles.
  - To check whether the tiles are really dry, an A4 piece of paper can be placed on the tiles for 10 minutes. If the A4 paper has not absorbed moisture, the floor is dry enough to impregnate, for example.
  - There should be no movement in the subfloor to which the tiles are glued. The floor must be solid, rigid and provide adequate support. If there is movement in the subfloor, tiles can come loose or joints can crack.
  - If cement tiles are used outdoors, never place them directly in the sand, but always on a paved surface. It is also important that cement tiles are not placed in the open air where weather such as rain and sun affect the tiles. It is best to place cement tiles under a canopy or veranda.
  - Always read the instructions on the different products you need to install tiles such as glue, grout and impregnation.
  - Make a good plan / sketch in advance on how you want to place the tiles, for example use our online floor planner
- If you are unsure about the correct treatment or if you have any questions about the treatment schedule, please do not hesitate to contact our helpdesk. We are happy to advise you and help you getting best results.
  - Work safely! Always use the correct protective products such as gloves, safety glasses and hearing protection. When cutting or grinding tiles, pieces can come loose and cause painful injuries. Make sure you always have a first aid kit within reach.

### Questions?

Available on workdays (mo-fri from 10 till 17h) By phone: +31 (0)85-300 11 11  
Email: [info@designtegels.nl](mailto:info@designtegels.nl)

