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## WET AREA INSTALLATION OF SALTILLO AND CEMENT TILE GUIDE

Handmade Saltillo or Cement tiles are not rated to withstand freezing conditions. Generally, the more porous a tile material is, the more susceptible to damage it will be, especially under wet and/or freezing conditions. Porosity in Clay Imports tile ranges from very high (Saltillo or cement), to low (Terrazzo) or virtually negligible (clay). That said, clay is the most suitable tile material for such conditions. However, if Saltillo or cement tile are properly sealed and installed in wet areas, whether it is in a pool or a shower, they will endure decades of great use. Please follow these steps for optimal results.

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### INSTRUCTIONS

- 1) Confirm that the surface that you will be installing your sealed clay tile on has been properly water-proofed. We recommend waterproofing with [Laticrete 9235](#).
  - 2) Prior to the installation of your Saltillo or cement tile, seal every tile piece with an adequate penetrating sealer. We recommend [Prime-A-Pell 200](#). The most effective method for sealing your tile is to dip the entire body, one piece at a time, into a bucket of the sealer. Leave the tile submerged for approximately 5 seconds, then remove and lay it face-up on a flat surface. Allow the tile to dry for at least 1 hour.
  - 3) Adhere the tile with a latex/polymer, fortified thinset mortar. Ensure that you evenly spread the mortar on the back of tile, leaving no air pockets. The TCNA ([The Tile Council of North America](#)) does not specify the types of tile that latex/polymer-modified mortar is most suitable for, but it does say that latex/polymer additives allow “specific properties to be imparted to the cement; commonly, freeze/thaw resistance, improved flexibility, and improved adhesion. There are also polymers used to make the cement waterproof or sufficiently elastic so that it acts like an anti-fracture membrane.”
  - 4) We recommend installing the Saltillo or cement tile with a 3/16” grout joint. Grout the joints with a polymer-infused mortar. [Mapei UltraColor Plus](#). **Keep in mind** that this is a fast-drying grout, so do not allow the grout to rest on the tile surface, when applying it, for too long. To be safe, apply the grout in small sections to reduce the risk of over-drying.
  - 5) Once the Saltillo or cement tile has been installed and fully dried, apply 2 to 3 additional coats of the penetrating sealer to the finished surface. Make sure to wipe away excess sealer from the surface prior to drying. Because Saltillo and cement tiles are our most porous tile materials, we recommend regular upkeep of the tile by resealing it at least twice a year (every 5 months or so).
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**Reading through and following these proper steps will ensure a successful Saltillo or cement tile installation. If you, or your installer, have any remaining questions or concerns, please feel free to contact or visit us during our hours of operation.**