Smink Studio

Installation advice

Photography: Miranda Koopman

Installation

Smink Studio tiles are suitable for most interior and exterior applications, including residential and commercial walls, counters, showers, bathrooms, saunas, swimming pools, spas and fountains. We also produce handmade floor tiles which are 40% thicker than our wall tiles and pressed to make them more robust. We recommend matt glazes for use on the floor.

Because the purchase of Smink Studio tiles represents an important investment, proper installation and maintenance is essential.

01

Understanding handmade tiles

Smink Studio ceramic tiles are different to mass-produced tiles. They are formed by hand from wet clay rather than being pressed from dust, as most mass-produced tiles are. The following features are considered inherent in handmade tiles and, properly installed, contribute to their beauty.

Size and length variation Because our tiles dry fully formed, there can be a small difference in the size of the tiles.

Lengthwise bowing and surface undulation The drying process can result in slight bowing of the edges of the tiles.

Colour and Glaze Variation Shade variations are inherent in all our glazed products and screen-printed colours in particular have an almost watercolour effect with a wide degree of variation.

02

Arrival of the tiles

The tiles arrive in boxes of 24 and are normally sorted into tiles of the same design and colour. More than one type of tile may be present in a single box. The reference numbers of the tiles design and colour are on the outside of the box and refer to the reference numbers on the layout design that we created for you. We strongly recommend working with a tiler who has experience in installing handmade tiles.

Sorting the tiles

Begin by removing and sorting the tiles, looking to evenly distribute those tiles which may be slightly different in size or screen-print depth. Aim to balance these with other tiles.

Laying out the tiles

Then lay the tiles out on the floor, following the layout design that we created for you. This offers the opportunity to see the final result (and make any last minute changes if required) before the tiles are stuck onto the wall. It also helps the tile installer to make sure every tile ends up in the right place.

03

Grout type

Choosing the right adhesive and grout will impact the final result.

We recommend Mapei and suggest contacting a Mapei specialist for more information about their products.

Adhesive:
- Interior walls (wet and dry areas): Mapei Keraflex
- Exterior walls and swimming pools: Mapei Keraflex Extra S1

Grout:
- Interior walls and exterior walls: Mapei Ultracolour
- Swimming pools: Mapei Kerapoxy CQ

Photography: Fred Howarth @fh_otography

04

Grout colour

For grout colour, our recommendation depends on the tile installation

If you don't want the grout to stand out, we recommend a colour that is a shade darker than the base colour or main colour of the tiles.

If your tile installation has multiple main colours, we recommend a shade darker than the lightest colour.

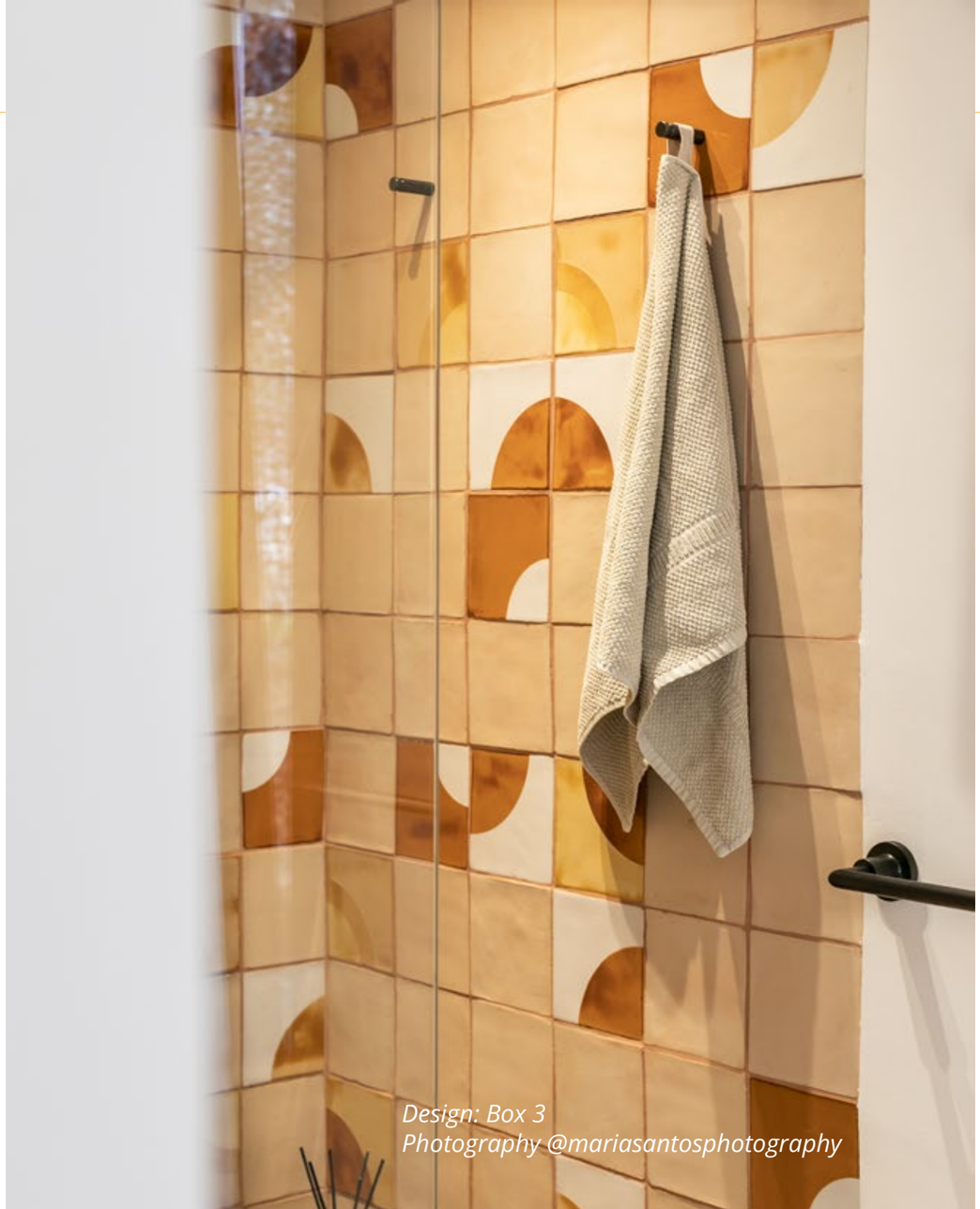
If you want the grout colour to give your tile installation an extra accent, you can opt for a dark colour or an accent colour.

05

Applying the grout

IMPORTANT!
Handmade tiles can sometimes have hairline cracks in the glaze. These are almost invisible and occur after the firing. When using grout and particularly a darker colour grout, it is important to first seal the tiles with a protective oil or wax. This prevents the grout colour penetrating the tile through the hairline cracks and leaving a dark line.

Due to size variations, we recommend a grout joint width of 2-3mm / 1/16-1/8″ to allow for adjustment and a balanced layout.



Design: Box 3
Photography @mariasantosphotography

06

Maintenance

Smink Studio tiles are relatively maintenance-free and require little ongoing care beyond regular cleaning. To maintain the beauty and performance of your tiles, follow these recommendations:

- For everyday cleaning, use a pH-balanced natural cleaner diluted in warm water.
- To clean stubborn spots or grout joints use a stiff natural bristle brush.
- Always avoid the use of abrasive cleaning pads or products containing bleach, ammonia or paint thinner.
- Never scrub with rough materials, such as hard brushes or wire wool, which may scratch the surface.
- Cooking oil splatters should be cleaned as soon as possible as oil may darken some tiles.

07

Outdoor installation

When installed properly, Smink Studio tiles are suited for temperatures down to -20ºC / -4ºF.

It is very important that the tiles are applied in a way that ensures that no water can penetrate the unglazed back or sides of the tiles. A free-standing wall that is tiled on one side, for example, will need to be waterproof on the other side and edges.

If water penetrates the back or sides of the tiles, there is a higher risk of structural cracking or glaze damage due to the expansion and contraction of moisture in the tiles.

As mentioned, we recommend applying an oil or wax treatment before applying grout, particularly if the grout is a darker colour.

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www.smink.studio