

# Natural Stone Installation Specification.

*All tips and guidelines should be taken as general advice and should be used in addition to the relevant Australian standards. These tips and advice are given in good faith. In no way do these replace the service of professional contractors / consultants.*

# Installation tips.

## Before installation

Stone tiles are often packed into crates very tightly, are wet at the point of production and may have some residue from the various finishing processes used. Because of this it is recommended that stone tiles are washed and are allowed to dry completely before every stage of the installation process. They will often lighten in colour as they dry.

It is necessary tiles are dry prior to installation. Dry tiles will show any unusual tonal markings which will indicate where tiles should be placed. At the point of installation always ensure that stone tiles are mixed to ensure an even and consistent distribution of varying patterns. This will mean opening all crates or pallets of materials supplied.

Minor damage such as edge chipping is often caused in packing or unpacking tiles, and should be expected. It is deemed normal practice for these to be used as cuts during the installation.

Stone tiles need to be graded prior to installation; the thicker tiles will dictate the nonlevel and should be installed first. Thinner tiles should be bedded with an appropriate adhesive.

Slight variations in size and thickness can occur with most stones and are deemed acceptable characteristics. All stones should be clean, dry, and free of dust, grease and any loose material before installation.

Make sure that you have discussed your requirements fully with your installer and that they are familiar with the product that is to be fixed.

*Please note: All stone should be inspected prior to installation. Stone will have natural occurring variations in colour, texture, chipping and surface finishes. It is these imperfections that make the product unique.*

Any tile with excessive chipping, sizing and variation may be subject to a warranty claim. This needs to be done before installation.

## Adhesion

All Stone tiles must be solidly bedded, with 100% adhesive coverage.

Tiles should occasionally be lifted during the laying process to ensure that sufficient compaction and full bed adhesion has been achieved.

We recommend Mapei or Laticrete products for the installation process (There are many reputable companies)

[au.laticrete.com/](http://au.laticrete.com/)

[mapei.com/au](http://mapei.com/au)

Fast setting adhesives are advisable to avoid issues with the moisture retention of some tiles.

Some tiles require the use of specific adhesives to ensure problem-free fixing; please speak to manufactures directly to discuss the requirements of your tile choice.

Light Coloured materials require fixing with white adhesives to prevent possible discoloration within the body of the stone. Flexible adhesives, combined with further substrate preparation, are required when the substrate is wood, or floor. For uncalibrated stone tiles, the appropriate Large Format

Floor Adhesive should be used to accommodate the variation in tile thickness and associated increases in the adhesive bedding. The variation in tile thickness will be most noticeable if laying a mix of sizes in an uncalibrated material.

## Grouts

The purpose of grout is to help maintain the stones in their place, create a water tight seam that prevents liquid from seeping into the substrate/adhesive - to its best ability - and to minimise breakages from expansion and contraction.

When grouting it is always recommended to use a high-quality grouting compound that is suitable for the application. Grouting products can be found below.

[au.laticrete.com/](http://au.laticrete.com/)

[mapei.com/au](http://mapei.com/au)

Please speak to a professional when selecting the correct grout for colour, suitability and durability.

## Substrates/foundations/ underfloor heating

The key to preventing problems occurring after tile installation is the correct preparation of the substrate prior to fixing. All substrates that are to be tiled on, floor or wall, should always be suitably prepared. They should be clean, flat, level, free from movement and free from anything which could be deleterious to adhesion.

Correct identification of the substrate is vital to ensure the correct advice and ancillaries are provided. With the increasing use of large format & Split face materials on walls, it is imperative to ensure that the substrate has a suitable weight bearing capability to accommodate the desired material.

For guidelines on fixing to specific substrates please call us for further information. We have a team dedicated in natural stone installations who can help contact the relevant professional (Engineer, architect, building consultant) to produce a work method statement to be specified for the correct substrate, foundations and underfloor heating.

All information required about the stone weight Per/m<sup>2</sup> can be obtained by contacting us directly.

## Cutting

Stone is best cut with a bench saw with a diamond blade. The stone should be washed after cutting to remove all dirt and cutting paste.

*Please note that silica dust can be found in natural products and is recommend that safety and health-cautions are used whilst cutting.*

## Storage

All stone is best stored in a dry area where it will not be affected by the weather. At the very least ensure coverage with a tarp.

## Crystalline silica

Commonly known as silica dust this is found in sand, stone, concrete, mortar and variety of products in the construction industry including bricks and plastics. Silica dust particles if exposed can cause health issues.

To prevent and reduce this protective equipment must be worn whilst using tools to cut, grind, drill or other any other procedures that involve manipulating the stone. Safety guidelines relating to silica must be obeyed. For more information, please see the link below.

[safeworkaustralia.gov.au/safety-topic/hazards/crystalline-silica-and-silicosis](https://safeworkaustralia.gov.au/safety-topic/hazards/crystalline-silica-and-silicosis)



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