

TERRACOTTA

Installation Guide

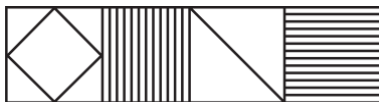
For appropriate terracotta tile installation, it is important that the installer carefully read this guide before starting the task. The installation must be made by a duly qualified installer.

1. Considerations prior to Terracotta installation

- 1.1. For a perfect application of the terracotta tile, the surface where it will be laid must be perfectly regular and dry in depth. We recommend to apply your terracotta tiles over a screed base. Make sure that the screed is completely cured and dried thoroughly to avoid transferring moisture to the terracotta tile. In moderate climates, we recommend 4 weeks to dry the screeds, but adjust this time according to your location.
- 1.2. In case the base screed is in direct contact with the natural soil, apply a waterproofing agent, for example a liquid membrane with a rough finish, prior to installing the terracotta tile. This procedure must be done to prevent the rising of moisture from the soil to the terracotta tile.
- 1.3. Before installing the terracotta tile, study the space and plan the shape or stereotomy how the terracotta tile will be applied in order to guarantee the desired pattern or rhythm. Predict where the pieces will be cut. As a rule, cuts should be in hidden or less visible areas.
- 1.4. Also before starting to install the terracotta tile, we recommend that you observe all the faces of the terracotta tiles and mix them together. This procedure ensures a balanced distribution of the different shades that may exist in your batch of terracotta tiles.

2. Terracotta tile laying process

- 2.1. The installation must be carried out by applying adhesive cement with a wide notched trowel on the support surface and on the terracotta tile (double bonding). This ensures the best adhesion and avoids possible voids that may cause the terracotta tile to break or detach.
- 2.2. The laying of the terracotta tile must be done by manually levelling piece by piece according to its application. For this purpose and if necessary, a soft rubber mallet can be used but never tools that by its nature can damage the material.



- 2.3.** The grout joint size between the terracotta tiles must be at least 3mm, and can reach 20mm, depending on the desired look.
- 2.4.** At the end of the terracotta tile installation and after the drying of the adhesive cement, the entire terracotta tile surface must be washed with water to remove dust and dirt accumulated during installation. After this let it dry.

3. Filling the Terracotta tile grout joints

- 3.1.** After washing the terracotta tiles and before filling the joints, we recommend applying a pre-grouting protective agent on its surface ([FILA PRW200 is recommended – link to online store](#)). The application of the pre-grouting protective agent prevents grout residues from adhering deeply to the surface of the tiles.
- 3.2.** Always test the pre-grouting protective agent on a spare terracotta tile before applying it over installed tiles. This way you can assess the degree of absorption and in any surface colour change will happen to your terracotta tile.
- 3.3.** Apply the pre-grouting protective agent with a wide brush over the surface of the terracotta tile completely clean and dry.
- 3.4.** The pre-grouting protective agent must be applied evenly and in thin layers. Observe the results in order to avoid stains or brush marks. After this process you can proceed to fill the joints.
- 3.5.** For filling joints, a suitable grout for joints or simply cement and sand mortar can be used. In the latter case, make sure to always use the same dosage of cement and sand throughout the entire work to ensure uniform colouring.
- 3.6.** To fill the joints, pre-moisten the terracotta tiles and its edges with a damp sponge. Then proceed to fill the joints and try to ensure that there are no voids along the entire depth of the terracotta tiles.
- 3.7.** Excess joint grout should be immediately removed with a spatula, sponge or a clean, damp cloth.
- 3.8.** After finish the filling, wash the entire area with water in order to clean grout residues on the surface of the terracotta tiles. Never use acidic, corrosive or bleaching products to remove excesses of grout. Persistent residues that may end on the terracotta tile surface can be carefully removed with a scouring pad.



4. Terracotta tile sealing and finishing

- 4.1. We also recommend applying a final layer of water or oil-repellent / sealant on the surface of the terracotta tile and its grout joints.
- 4.2. For areas that only need protection against water, moist and weathering (algae, moulds, lichen...) a water-repellent protection is enough ([FILA Hydrorep ECO is recommended – link to online store](#)).
- 4.3. For areas subject to oil stains and dirt, a stain protector is advised ([FILA W68 is recommended – link to online store](#)). The stain protector / sealant ensures protection against watery, organic and oil stains.

5. Terracotta tile maintenance and cleaning

- 5.1. Whenever possible, try to keep the terracotta tile surfaces free of dust and sand. Vacuuming or sweeping regularly reduces the wear and tear caused by sand on the surface of the terracotta tile and prevent dirt from depth adhering.
- 5.2. The terracotta tile can be washed using water soap or a neutral pH detergent, ideally biodegradable and environmentally friendly. Washing allows to remove dirt and keep surfaces clean and hygienic.
- 5.3. Never use acidic, corrosive or bleaching cleaners on terracotta tile coated surfaces.