

Cleaning and Maintenance

Floor Tiles

Adherence to the following cleaning procedures will enable you to take maximum advantage of the properties of floor tiles.

The materials and methods recommended are the outcome of many year's experience, and when used in association with a regular cleaning routine, will enable the floor to be maintained to a high standard of cleanliness, slip resistance, hygiene and appearance.

On newly laid floors there may be residual cement on the tile surface. All traces of this must be removed by application of a mildly acid decementing solution (e.g Hagesan extra), followed by thorough rinsing, then proceed as follows:

- a)** Regular cleaning with water (warm or hot, particularly if oil or grease is present) and a neutral or mildly alkaline (pH 6 to 8) detergent, mixed in the proportions recommended by the manufacturer, will remove all but the most stubborn dirt.

The water/detergent mixture must be allowed to remain on the floor for sufficient time (5 to 15 minutes) to allow it to penetrate and emulsify the dirt, after which it should be rinsed thoroughly with clean water to remove all traces of the mixture.

- b)** Large areas of plain or textured surface tiles are most readily cleaned with rotary, cylindrical or reversing mechanical scrubbing machines. These should rotate at slow to medium speed. Such machines are frequently provided with a suction drying facility. If so equipped the machine should first be used with the suction facility switched off to permit the water detergent mix used in the scrubbing process to remain on the floor to penetrate the dirt layer.

Allow at least 5 to 15 minutes to elapse, then repeat the scrubbing operation, but with clean water only, and with the suction drying facility switched on. It is the rinsing process, which removes the dirt.

- c)** Spillages of oil, fat or material likely to stain or cause a slipping hazard, should be removed immediately by using detergents and hot water, followed by rinsing with clean water.
- d)** Periodically, clean the floor by the methods recommended in (b) and (c) above, but with the addition of an abrasive powder (e.g Vim, ajax, fine Silica Sand). This will scour the tiles, remove impacted or built up dirt, and generally 'refresh' the floor.

It will not damage unglazed tiles. Remove the residue with clean water rinsing before it has been allowed to dry out.

- e) High velocity water jets are sometimes available for general use and/or for removal of stubborn dirt. These will not damage the tiles, but may erode the joints if used regularly. If oil or grease is present, use the jet with warm or hot water and with a neutral detergent.

General Hints

From time to time foreign matter may cause surface stains which mark the tile, and which normal water/detergent cleaning will not remove. Protect the floor if decorating; construction or overhead work is taking place. If stains have occurred the following treatment will normally remove or minimise them, though the treatment should be used only on the offending mark. It is advisable to experiment on a small area first, particularly if the nature of the stain is in doubt.

Staining Agent and Treatment

Paint:	Paint remover
Organic Stains:	Bleach, one-off treatment with washing soda or `Hagesan remover`
Rust:	Masonry cleaner or `Hagesan extra`
Rubber (carbon)	Abrasive powder or liquid (e.g. Vim, Ajax, Jif)

Wet Areas

Locations, which are permanently, wet (e.g. swimming pool promenades, showers, changing rooms, etc.) may attract a build up of body fats, oils, soap residue and, in humid conditions, organic growth (algae).

To remove these, a more acidic cleaning agent, such as `Hagesan green`, used regularly, is preferable. If build up has been allowed to occur, a preliminary `deep clean` with `Hagesan extra` (for lime) or `Hagesan remover` (for fat, soap residue, or organic growth (algae), etc should be carried out, followed by regular use of `Hagesan green`

Do not use solvents or wire wool.

Neutral Detergents

The pH of a material is the measure of acidity or alkalinity.

It is a logarithmic scale, and pH7 is the neutral point. Below pH7 the material is progressively more acidic, and above pH7 more alkaline, (i.e pH8 is ten times more alkaline than pH7).

The regular use of detergents and other cleaning agents which are excessively acidic or alkaline can cause irreversible damage to the tile surface; acidity being less damaging than alkalinity.

Many degreasing agents which contain wax, sodium silicate or other additives which leave a sticky deposit on the floor and thus retain dirt on the surface, must also be avoided.

Wall Tiles

Some glazed wall tiles are supplied having a thin wax coating to the back of the tile in order to prevent scratching of the glazed surface during packaging and transit. The wax may often be transferred to the tile face and is best removed with warm water and a non-metallic scouring pad.

The routine cleaning of glazed ceramic wall tiles should be carried out after the removal of any loose dirt or grit by wiping off with a dry cloth, followed by washing with warm water to which a neutral, low sulphate detergent has been added. After a further rinse with clean water to ensure thorough removal of the detergent solution the installation should be given a final wipe down and polish with a clean, dry, soft cloth.