

Useful Terminology

Ceramic – This is a clay bodied tile with a glazed surface, where the body of the tile is a different colour to the glaze. They tend not to be as durable as a porcelain tile, but can still be used on the floor depending on their grading.

Porcelain – These tiles usually have a 0.5% water absorption rate and are much harder than ordinary ceramic tiles. This means a number of things; firstly, you can polish the surface, as opposed to having to use a glaze like with standard ceramic tiles, secondly it is heavier than normal ceramic tiles, and finally it can be used in places where heavier things may be placed on top of it, or, in many cases, outside.

Through Bodied – (or full bodied) This simply means that the tile has the same colour composition through the whole thickness of the tile, as opposed to having a red or white body with a print or glaze over the top, as is the case with most traditional biscuit.

Through Coloured – (or coloured bodied) This is like a traditional red/white biscuit, however the biscuit colour is matched to that of the predominant colour of the glaze/print on the surface.

Double Loaded – This is where you have a through bodied tile sandwiched on top of a coloured bodied tile on around about a 25%-75% ratio. This makes it more durable than a coloured bodied tile, but not as durable as a through bodied tile.

Glazed – This is a layer that is put on top of the tile pattern before firing. This can come in two finishes for wall tiles (matte or glazed) and floor tiles come in three finishes (matte, glazed or polished).

Polished Porcelain – This is a mechanical polishing method on porcelain, it results in a high-gloss finish and as a general rule needs to be nano-sealed.

Matte Porcelain – This is the porcelain tile in its natural state and needs to be nano-sealed.

Rotary Screen Printing – This is where rollers print a pattern onto the ceramic tile, this is being replaced with Inkjet technology. This old method used rollers that pressed down directly on the tile (like a paint roller), which caused around 10% breakage in production.

Digital Inkjet Printing – This is a NONE CONTACT process and is done through computerised technology. This means two things: 1. More complex designs and surfaces can be 'printed' onto the tile, 2. Less breakages in production.

Rectified – This is when ALL the edges of a tile have been mechanically finished to achieve a more precise facial dimension.

Slip Rating – The slip rating of a tile indicates whether or not it is suitable for public spaces, outdoor use and wet areas. This is determined by a series of tests.

Useful Terminology: Continued

‘V’ Rating – This indicates the level of shading/tile difference you will get within a particular product (V1 – all tiles will match V5 – high level of variation). This variation is purposeful in order to create tiles that look more natural

Bevelled Edge – A bevelled edge refers to a structure where the edge is not perpendicular to the faces of the whole piece.

The following terms are natural stone specific:

Honed – This is when the natural stone has a smooth finish (this can also be polished).

Filled – This is where the naturally occurring holes that appear in natural stone are filled in with a filler that compliments the appearance of the tile (in Marble they use a special resin that is mixed with the dust of the cut marble to make it look more natural).

Unfilled – This is where none of the naturally occurring holes are filled.

Chipped Edge – This is where the edges of the natural stone tiles are chipped away.

Honed Edge – This is where the edges of the natural stone tiles are smooth.

Tumbled – This is a softer, more rounded edge than chipped edge.

Brushed – This is where the surface of the natural stone tile is matte, with a smooth but slightly bumpy surface.

Polished – This is where the surface of the natural stone tile is polished to give a high shine.