

MARBLE TILE F.A.Q.

What is Marble?

Marble is a metamorphic rock formed when a carbonate rock (either limestone or dolostone) is exposed to high temperature and intense pressure. The heat and pressure cause the recrystallization of the original carbonate mineral grains forming a denser rock. The characteristic swirls and veins found in marble are usually due to the various mineral (clay, sand, silt, iron oxides or chert) impurities which were originally present as grains or layers in the limestone.

What areas are most appropriate for marble installation?

Marble is an extremely versatile natural stone that has been used for centuries. Its unique varied patterns and colours give it a timeless appeal and is ideal for foyers, hallways, kitchens and bathrooms. Due to its vulnerability to acidic substances, it is not recommended for kitchen countertops.

What sizes of marble tiles are available from BuildDirect?

Standard marble tile sizes include: 12"x12"x3/8", 18"x18"x1/2", 12"x24"x1/2" and 24"x24"x5/8"

How durable is marble?

Marble has been counted on for centuries by cultures across the globe to last as flooring, wall tile, and other surfaces. Although marble is susceptible to acidic substances and metal abrasion, it remains to be a surface to be counted on to look great for years, given that a cleaning and maintenance regimen is incorporated to make sure it retains its original look. Sealing the surface of marble with an impregnator can help to do this, and to make maintenance a much easier job.

What do I need to consider when buying marble?

Make sure that your choice in marble tile has been appropriately gauged (its edges are perfectly square) and calibrated (the back of each tile is made entirely flat). This will make it easier to install from tile to tile. And when you order marble tile, expect color variation. This is a natural product, the color of which has been determined randomly depending on which mineral content makes up each batch when the marble is formed.

You can use this subtle color variation to your advantage when it comes time for a trial layout. Open all boxes in your shipment and see the range of color variation that can be seen in your particular batch. This is a great way to determine what you want in terms of overall look. And this leads to a finished marble project that is unique to your installation.

What about samples? Will they match my order?

Samples are a great way of finding out if the marble you're interested in is what you're really looking for. But, because there will always be variation in terms of both color and surface pattern, a sample should be viewed in the broadest terms only. This means that the colors you see in your sample is a very general guide as to how the marble in your order will look. Aside from this, a sample can give you ideas about textures, weight, and durability before you buy. In this, ordering samples is a great idea.

Are cracks and pits to be expected?

Minute crack-like patterns in marble are a feature of the stone. One way to make sure that your marble will stand up to foot traffic and moisture is to make sure it's sealed. Otherwise, what is referred to as the veining in marble tile is due to the various minerals that have become trapped in the body of the marble over millions of years, formed by underground water sources. This accounts for what appears to be liquid-like patterns which makes marble tile such an attractive addition to a property.



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Are sealers really necessary?

Absolutely. Marble is a porous material, which means that any liquids which spill onto the surface tend to leech into the body of the marble. This can negatively affect how your marble will look over time. A sealer, or an impregnator as it is also known, can make sure that any materials remain on the surface of the marble, until you clean it off, of course. This is the best way to make sure that your marble retains its original look for as long as possible. Talk to your local outlet about which products to use and how long to leave them before sealing your marble again. Always read the labels of the products you buy, take safety precautions where necessary, and follow instructions carefully.

What's the best way to keep marble tile clean?

The best way to keep marble clean is to incorporate removal of dirt, grit, and other materials that are tracked in from outdoors. Many of these substances can cause minute scratches on the surface of your marble which can become noticeable over time. So, it's best to make sure that the surface of the marble is clear with a damp cloth, soft broom, or vacuum as regularly as you can. Clean up liquid spills immediately, particularly if they are acidic in nature. Fruit juice is particularly problematic, as is coffee and red wine, because of their tendency to stain. Even if you've sealed your marble, it's a good idea not to take any chances. Clear spills right away. Don't use bleach, vinegar, or any harsh acidic-based cleaners as these will degrade the surface of your marble over time.

What's the best way of removing stains?

When a stain is unavoidable, taking steps to remove stains from marble tile is a fairly simple procedure. The same reason marble is susceptible to staining is the same reason it's a straightforward process to remove them – marble is porous. A procedure called 'poulticing' is a great way to remove stains by literally drawing the stain up from your marble and into another material – a mixture of a reducing agent soaked into a cloth or paper towels is the most basic variety of poultice. The best methods should always be measured against the kind of stain you've got. Once again, the best source of knowledge on this is your local DIY retailer who can advise on what procedure to use on what types of materials which have stained your marble.

Can marble be repaired if it's damaged?

Yes. The best people to speak with about how to repair marble tile are your local retailers. They know about the latest products which are meant for repairing marble tile. Most of these will come in the form of an epoxy glue or filler. Wiping down any broken pieces with acetone so that all foreign materials are removed is the first step in making sure that it will re-bond with the broken tile. Make sure to clear all bonding agents from the surface of the marble tile. Be sure to apply the right amount of pressure for the right amount of time. When in doubt, talk to retailers, and always read the labels of the products you buy.