

CUTTING CERAMIC WALL AND FLOOR TILES

When working with wall and floor tiles it is important to wear safety gloves and goggles. Wall and floor tiles can be very sharp when cut or trimmed

Cutting tiles with a scribe

Mark the tile to be cut and then place it face up on a firm surface. Using a metal ruler scribe a straight line into the tile using a tile scriber. Place a support under each end of the tile and press down firmly. The tile should break cleanly.

After dry cutting a tile, the edge should be rubbed with a carborundum stone to smooth and remove any sharp edges.

Using hand tile cutters

Mark the tile to be cut using a tile marker supplied with the hand tool. Place the tile between the jaws of the cutter and apply pressure.

After dry cutting a tile, the edge should be rubbed with a carborundum stone to smooth and remove any sharp edges.

Cutting shapes

It is well worth while spending a little time when cutting shapes into a tile. Firstly draw up a template of the tile to be cut.

When using a tile nipper you should aim to cut a small piece at a time, as trying to cut too much at one time may lead to the tile breaking.

Begin by cutting in from the edge of the tile and work towards the lines you have marked. As you get closer to any corners that need to be cut work from the outside of the tile towards the corner. Clean out the corner carefully, using a tile file if necessary.

Drilling

Before starting you should stick masking tape onto the tile. This should stop the drill slipping.

Specialist diamond tipped drill bits are readily available for drilling fully vitrified or porcelain tiles.



For some porcelain tiles a wet drill stand using a diamond core bit with the tile fully supported on a flat piece of board will be necessary. The drill should be set to low speed.

Cutting shapes or corners

For corners – ‘check-outs’ – the tile should, ideally, be cut with a wet bench cutter or hand held angle grinder with diamond wheel. Where this is not practicable and if the tile must be cut by scoring, it is advisable to drill a hole at the point at which the two straight score lines will meet. This will relieve the stress caused by the scoring and cutting of tiles to that point. When a tile is scored or cut a micro-fracture is sometimes caused from the internal corner running in a straight line to the edge of the tile which may result in the tile breaking.

It is possible to cut holes by “stitch” drilling, i.e. cutting a series of holes close together in the area that will be waste. A few more holes would then be cut until it is weak enough to break out the hole. Once this has been done, the edge of the hole should be filed using a round file.

After dry cutting a tile, the edge should be rubbed with a carborundum stone to smooth and remove any sharp edges.

Tiling Tools

There is a wide range of powered cutting tools readily available on the market from TTA members aimed both at the DIY and contract sector. It is important to follow the manufacturer’s instructions when using these tools.

Helpful Contacts

[Aquacut](#) ... Tel : 01565 750666

[Bellota](#) ... Mark.Ruthven@bellota.com

[Genesis Global Systems](#) ... 01642 713000

[Tilers Tools](#) ... 01565 750666

[QEP](#) ... 01283 245430