

Install Instructions for Blake Studios Tile

- 1) Pre-installation care: Prior to installation, keep bubble wrap, non-lint cloth, or 12" pieces of foam roll, between tile to keep from chipping the carved details, or marring matte glazes.
- 2) Back buttering: One of Blake Studio tile's best feature is its undulation. To install the tile properly, we recommend you butter the tile only where the tile will touch the wall. The tiles have at least 50% surface area, which provides sufficient hold for the weight of the tile (about 4-4.5 pounds each). **Use top grade full, flex mortar.** We found that if the undulation on the back of the tile is filled with mortar, as the mortar dries, it shrinks away from the wall and does not provide any more support. You can, however, fill the undulation with some mortar and let it set up until fully dry, creating more surface area for buttering, should there be some concern about adhesion.
- 3) Trowel Size: ¼ inch V notch trowel.
- 4) Mortar: We use Full Flex Thin Set for installation.
- 5) Saw and Cutting: A standard tile wet saw is used to cut the tile. The carving details can chip off if one moves too fast through the blade, so take it easy. Matt finishes will need to be sealed thoroughly before cutting as the cutting residue can permeate the porous surface and be difficult to clean. Should cutting residue get on the tile before it has a chance to be sealed, use a clean toothbrush and mild detergent with warm water to gently remove the offense. Do NOT use rags or sponges that might leave lint.
- 6) Sealing: The tiles with matte and/or porous textured surfaces need to be sealed thoroughly before grouting. Tiles with semi-sheen to gloss surfaces do not need sealing.
- 7) Grouting instructions: Glazes with an obvious sheen surface can be grouted and wiped with an ordinary grouting sponge and will not risk damage. Glazes with an obvious matte texture that may be slightly rough to the touch should be grouted with extreme care. : A common pastry bag with a round tip can be used to fill grout lines between tile. This is to avoid getting grout embedded in the more porous, matte glazes. Use a gentle thumb pressure to smooth the grout bead, but not smear into the porous surface.
- 8) Cleaning: Tiles with semi-sheen to gloss surfaces can be washed with a soft rag or sponge and mild detergent. A green 3-M scrub pad can be used gently to remove scuffmarks on most glazes. The **Lapis** blue glaze can scratch so test a small area to learn its limits. Tiles with matte and porous surfaces should be treated much as one would treat suede; use a clean, non-lint tool such as a toothbrush or lint free cloth to gently lift the dirt out of the glaze pores. Mild soap and water can be used.

9) Blake Studios Tile are extremely versatile and can be installed indoors in bathrooms, kitchens and saunas, as well as outdoor applications. Because of the slight degree of undulation water cannot be trapped and freeze. Porous matte glazes must be sealed thoroughly, however, so acids from rain or grease and sink splash in kitchens does not destroy the surface. Be sure when grouting for an outside cold weather application to not CREATE pockets in the grouting process where water can pool and freeze and therefore expand and crack the glaze surface. It is recommended that the tile be sealed before installation and again after installation to ensure sealing of both tile and grout and in the event weather becomes an issue before the project is complete.