VitrA Cleaning and Care Instructions

1. General Information

VitrA Tiles are produced utilizing the most advanced equipment under extensive and strict process controls. Quality is assured with sourcing the finest raw materials available in the market. VitrA continously focuses on maintaining its commitment to quality so that our products meet and exceed your expectations.

Market research studies and tests prove that ceramic displays excellent properties compared to other covering materials. Its long lasting beauty, ease of cleaning and high functionality are what makes ceramic tiles the most chosen covering material in both private and public areas. All glazed and unglazed materials are distinguished by surfaces which are ideal for easy cleaning. As with every covering material, our products require nominal care in order to maintain a satisfactory appearance and acceptable sanitation for years.

As a company committed to sustainability, VitrA recommends the use of low VOC, non-hazardous, and non-polluting products for cleaning and maintaining tiles and grout.

Regular cleaning has to be planned according to the needs, depending on the degree of soiling and frequency of use: could be several times a day or once a day or once a week. For public use, shoe-scrapers, doormats and cleaning zones for shoes in front of the entrance of the building ensure that most dirt is left outside. VitrA recommends proper selection of such preventive elements for the sake of minimizing the use of cleaning agents and impact on environment.

Before grouting, regardless of the grout colour chosen, always test a small area first to determine if the grout or grout pigment will affect the surface of the tile.

1.1 Proper Care During Construction

Since VitrA products are considered to be a finish covering material, they should not be laid until all heavy construction is finished. Between the installation and putting the tiled area into service, it is imperative to properly protect the tile and grout in order to avoid construction related cleaning problems. There is a build-up of dirt and debris on each construction site. This dirt and debris may cause the grout, and sometimes the tile, to be negatively affected. VitrA recommends that a protective cover be put over the tile surface to safeguard the appearance. This will insure a quality appearance when the floor is ready for use. The protective cover could be cardboard, plywood or any other clean soft-covering that will not damage the integrity of the installation. Do not use plastic as it may not allow the grout to properly cure, and it also may become extremely slippery as construction dust settles on the floor.

1.2 Proper Selection and Use of Cleaning Agent

Use only recommended dilution of detergent. As an important rule, more is not always better; higher concentrations of detergent in the cleaning solution would only make it more difficult to rinse. However, hard water requires more frequent use of cleaning agents. When using any cleaning agent, please make sure to comply with the instructions for use and hazard indications of the cleaning agent manufacturer. VitrA does not assume any liability for damage incurred by non-compliance with these instructions and information.

The detergent solution must be given time to act on the soil load. Generally 5-10 minutes is sufficient. Rinse thoroughly with clean, clear water to remove the dirty detergent solution and soil. Rinsing is a critical step in the maintenance procedure. Remove the rinse water with a wet vacuum, dry mop or towelling. If dirty detergent solution is not removed and is allowed to dry on the surface, a coating will form which is very difficult to remove.

Warnings for Proper Selection and Use of Cleaning Agent:

1) VitrA tiles are chemically resistant to both acidic and alkaline chemical products as defined in EN ISO 10545-13, with the exception of **hydrofluoric acids or compounds containing fluoride salts** and **derivatives. Hydrofluoric acid** is the only one that will attack tiles due to their molecular structure, even when diluted with plenty of water. All spills must be cleaned as quickly as possible
2) Never use a cleaning agent forming sticky grease, wax and synthetic layers on the tiles, which have a negative effect on the visual, hygienic, anti-slip and cleaning properties. The cleaning agent that is chosen should also be compatible with the grout at the same time. Always test a small area first with the selected cleaning agent.

1.3 General Cleaning Procedure

The following principles apply for the cleaning procedure:
1. Selecting the appropriate cleaning agent.
2. Sweeping or vacuuming floor areas prior to cleaning to remove any dust or debris.
3. Leaving the cleaning agent to act for sufficient time upon the dirt and to loosen it.
4. Brushing or wiping mechanically.
5. Collecting, washing or sucking off the dirt separated from the tiles thoroughly.
6. Rinsing with water when the cleaning process is finished.
7. Removing the rinse water with a wet vacuum, dry mop or towelling.

Above are general recommendations. Any specific recommendations of cleaning agents, grout, grout removers etc. suggested by the individual manufacturer should be followed.

2. First Cleaning After Installation

The first step for maintenance is complete removal of grout and construction dirt after tiles are laid. To remove the grout from the surface, there are many products available in the market. These products can be diluted for removal of light deposits of grouting materials with the possibility of using higher concentrations when aggressive cleaning is required. Grout manufacturers print instructions for proper mixing, curing, and cleaning of grout on packaging, these must be followed. This cleaning must be carried out after the cement grout has dried out, which takes at least 24-48 hours for quicksetting and quick-drying products. In any case the grout manufacturer's instructions must be followed. In most cases, VitrA tiles can be cleaned successfully by scrubbing the installation with hot water and a neutral detergent, followed by a thorough rinsing and then removing the rinse water with a wet vacuum, mop or dry towelling. If grout residue still remains, further cleaning of the tile should be accomplished in consultation with the grout manufacturer. Once the initial cleaning has been thoroughly completed, daily maintenance procedures can be followed for continuous and long-lasting beauty.
For polished porcelain tiles, following the completion of the grouting process, the tile surface can be cleaned and any excess protective sealer removed. Use dry and wet cloth (such as MICROFIBER) in order to remove excess, if needed, add neutral detergent according to manufacturer's instruction, help removing the residue. Always test a small area first. Wipe up the residue with a cotton towel or sponge. Rinse thoroughly with clean water.
In the case of anti-slip surfaces, mechanical cleaning by means of brushing machines with rotating soft nylon brushes or microfiber as well as high-pressure or vapour pressure cleaners is most effective, whereby joints must be cared during cleaning process. During the cleaning do not use improper pads or brushes with abrasive grain as they can significantly weaken non-slip safety!

2.1 General First Cleaning After Installation Procedure

Cleaning should be carried out by the professionals who have installed the material:
1. Sweep/vacuum the floor thoroughly to remove construction dust
2. Dilute the cement film remover in water as instructed on the package
3. Apply the cleaning product with an ordinary mop
4. Leave to act for a few minutes
5. Rub the zones with the toughest deposits hard with an abrasive sponge such as Scotch-Brite
6. Wipe up the residues using cloth and rinse with plenty of clean water and dry with mop, wet vacuum or towel.

Warnings for First Cleaning After Installation:

1) First cleaning after installation can damage objects close to the tiled area; such as doors, metallic objects and finishes; it is recommended to protect these before starting the cleaning operation.
2) Acid cleaners attack cement joints. Therefore, protect the joints by dampening with water and thoroughly rinse the covering with clear water after the use of acid cleaners, neutralise if possible. When using epoxy grouts, use a specially formulated cleaner and strictly follow the manufacturer's instructions for preparation, application and cleaning.
3) Especially for metallic tiles and tiles with metallic decors, use only non-acidic grout cleaners, always handle with maximum care. Water should be first option. If a stronger cleaning is needed clean with alcohol and a soft cloth or alternatively use a neutral PH. Avoid abrasive, acidic or alkaline cleaning products. Use a slightly damp sponge to clean the tile joints, passing it diagonally across them. Do not use dirty water.
4) Never clean tiles that are too hot (e.g. exposed to sunlight during hot summer days) since the reaction of chemicals may become harsher. In the summer, cleaning should be done during the coolest period of the day especially on areas exposed to direct sunlight.

3. Regular Cleaning

3.0. General Rules

Two methods are customarily used:

1) Manual cleaning using a broom, scrubbing brush or a mop.
2) Machine cleaning using a disc machine, scrubbing suction machine or high-pressure cleaner with spray injection.

Manual cleaning is recommended for only little dirt. When machines are used, single-disc or multi-disc machines or brush/scrubber suction machines are most effective options. High-pressure cleaners with spray injection are particularly suitable for slip-resistant surfaces. Which is the most rational method for these surfaces.

Warnings for Regular Cleaning:

1) All of the information provided about cleaning, care and removing stains from ceramic tiles is based on the latest knowledge and material. It is, however, a general information and cannot cover every single possibility. Therefore, please pay attention to the instructions provided by the cleaning agent and grout manufacturer.
2) Routine cleaners should never contain acids or ammonia. Acids can damage the grout and the glazed surface of the tile, and ammonia can discolour the grout.
3) Film-forming cleaning agents should not be used as they can considerably reduce or even neutralise the slip resistance of ceramic coverings, and can also cause staining.

4) With high-pressure cleaners there is a slight danger of washing out and destroying cement joints if the machine is not used correctly (pressure too high because water jet is too close to surface). Using of unsuitable cleaning agents, e.g. acidic cleansers for cleaning increases this effect.
5) Where underfloor heating systems are installed, it is particularly important to ensure that the removed dirt and dirty water is cleaned before it is able to dry again when heating is on.

3.1. Unglazed Tiles

VitrA unglazed tiles has a protective glaze finish that is not a glaze, but rather a special surface preparation sprayed on the tile before firing. During the manufacturing process, the structure of the tile surface is sealed with a protective glaze in order to further increase the tiles' resistance to staining and dirt, as a result of which subsequent treatment with impregnating agents is no longer necessary. The following represents a simple procedure for maintaining protective glaze coating and unpolished matte finish tile floors with a moderate soil load. For best results:

1. Sweep or vacuum the floor of all loose dirt and other foreign materials.
2. Saturate the floor with a mild cleaning solution and hot water, agitate, and allow it to dwell (remain on the floor) 5-10 minutes. Do not allow cleaning solutions to dry. It may be best to complete small areas at a time.
3. Clean routinely with tile cleaners that have a neutral pH for safe regular use.
4. Remove the dirty cleaning solution and rinse the surface with clean, clear water.
5. Buff with a dry mop or towel.

3.2. Glazed Tiles

Wall tiles should be cleaned routinely with an all-purpose, non-oil-based household or commercial cleaner. The type of product may vary depending on the tile application and use. A multipurpose spray cleaner, which removes soap residue, hard water deposits and dirt designed for everyday use can be used on wall tiles. Floor tiles should be cleaned and scrubbed with cleaner solution through the use of a cotton mop, cloth, sponge, or non-metallic brush.
Important Notice: Strongly alkaline or strongly acidic cleaning agents can attack or destroy the surface of glazed tiles and joints and must therefore not be used!

3.3. Polished Porcelain

VitrA Protect is applied to the surfaces of the polished porcelain tiles at the factory, improving the resistance to staining and soiling. VitrA does not recommend subsequent treatment with impregnating agents.
Important Notice: Dry thoroughly with a soft cloth after cleaning is completed to increase the shine and prevent water spots.

3.4. VitrA Clean Surface

The VitrA Clean finish was developed to achieve an easy-care tile surface by VitrA Innovation Center.
Dirt particles are virtually unable to hold and flow off with the water droplets on wall tiles with VitrA Clean application. Water and a soft cloth are sufficient for routine cleaning without a need for aggressive detergents.

3.5. Antislip Tiles

VitrA product range includes a great number of anti-slip glazed and unglazed series. These products are perfectly suitable for use in commercial, industrial and public areas as well as in wet barefoot areas such as swimming pools, showers and saunas. They have smooth, micro-rough or relief-type surfaces, depending on the area of application. In the case of anti-slip surfaces, mechanical cleaning by means of brushing machines with rotating soft nylon brushes or microfiber as well as high-pressure or vapour pressure cleaners is most effective, whereby joints must be cared during cleaning process. Cleaning agents, equipment and methods must be selected due to type of soiling and area of application. An extensive cleaning is required compared to smooth, glazed surfaces.
A selection of suitable cleaning agents is outlined in the RK List (list of tested cleaning agents for ceramic surfaces in swimming pools) supplied by the German Society for the Pool Industry. In any case, the instructions for use and hazard warnings provided by the respective manufacturer must be respected.
There are several recommended good ways of cleaning this type of floor surface:

- High-pressure cleaning equipment (Pressure washers or high-pressure hoses).
- Vapour steam cleaners.
- Disc cleaners
- Scrubbing the surface with a brush with hard plastic bristles and then rinsing it with plenty of clean water.

Warnings for Antislip Tiles Cleaning:

1) Brushes or pads containing abrasives must not be used under any circumstances, as they reduce slip resistance.
2) When using disc machines, suitable pads must be used, particularly on slip-resistant tile coverings in order to prevent cleaning from impairing the slip resistance. The slip-resistant properties are achieved through the roughness of the tile's surface or by means of relief-type profiling.
3) Whichever cleaning system is used, it is important to use clean water because otherwise, when the water evaporates, small particles of dirt from the water will be deposited in lower, more inaccessible parts of the embossed surface. For good results, it is essential to rinse with plenty of water.
4) Cleaning agent may cause the floor to become slippier, therefore they should be rinsed thoroughly to avoid forming a greasy layer which negatively affects anti-slip safety. When anti-slip floor tiles are cleaned, whatever their surface finish, it is not sufficient to clean them with damp mopping, because it will not clean away any dirt embedded in the particles that give the tiles their anti-slip finish. This means that dirt will build up, spoiling the overall appearance of the floor surface and normally modifying the colour slightly.
5) Alkaline cleaning agents should be used for basic cleaning and regular maintenance cleaning. Where water is soft, only occasional acidic cleaning is necessary (weekly or monthly depending on the flow of water and water hardness). Hard water requires more frequent use of cleaning agents.

3.6. Metallic Tiles/Decors

Some tiles are made out of metal-containing decoration which gives a shiny appearance with a silver / platinium / gold / copper effect. These tiles are indicated in the catalogue. For these tiles, extreme care must be taken during their installation, first cleaning after installation and general

cleaning. Avoid using abrasive cleaners that can scratch and damage the surface. VitrA recommends using a soft cloth with water and alcohol. After cleaning, dry the surface with a clean cotton cloth to avoid water mark.
Important Notice: Never install metallic tiles/decors in wet areas such as showers, baths.

3.7. Photocatalytic Tiles

The same products can be used for cleaning as for similar tiles without photocatalytic coating - with the advantage that the concentration of the cleaning agent can be considerably lower.
Any cleaning material forming a film or a greasy or sticky layer on the tile would impair the effectiveness of photocatalytic and must be avoided as they impede the incidence of light onto the tile surface.
It is very important to thoroughly remove cleaning and disinfecting agents.

** You can find most recent information about our products, Warranty Conditions, Cleaning and Care Instructions, along with other Product Performance Data and Installation specifications at: www.vitra.com.tr / https://vitraglobal.com/*