

## NEED INSPIRATION?

Check out our website to browse products and our project gallery. If you see something that catches your eye, register at the top right of your screen to create an account where you can log-in to create a wish list. Call for an appointment and email your salesperson the list or bring it with you. We love to pull samples before your appointment begins so we can spend more time talking about design.

[www.architecturalceramics.com](http://www.architecturalceramics.com)

ARCHITECTURAL CERAMICS 



### SHOWROOM LOCATIONS:

#### MARYLAND

Baltimore: 410.522.1072  
Bethesda: 301.718.8343  
Rockville: 301.251.3555

#### VIRGINIA

Alexandria: 703.299.6200  
Vienna: 703.714.0161

#### GEORGIA

Atlanta: 404.220.8063

### HOURS OF OPERATION:

Sun: closed  
Mon, Tue, Thu, Fri: 9:00 am - 5:00 pm  
Wed: 11:00 am - 7:00 pm  
Sat: 10:00 am - 5:00 pm

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ARCHITECTURAL CERAMICS 

## CARE & MAINTENANCE

 TileTips



Cleaning, Sealing, and Problem Solutions.

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## CLEANING



Tile is relatively easy to care for but is not maintenance free. In general, vacuuming loose debris and dirt and using mild soap (pH neutral) and water is the best way to clean all types of tile, whether you've designed with porcelain, glass or stone. Many specialty tiles such as metal, concrete, or terracotta have special usage restrictions and maintenance requirements. Testing cleaners on an inconspicuous area or leftover tile can ensure compatibility and offer peace of mind. Regardless of the type of material, it is always best to confirm cleaning recommendations from the manufacturer with your salesperson.

## SEALING



The purpose of sealing a product is to help prevent stains. Sealers are generally used on natural stone, cement tile, hand-made ceramic, and any product with a crackle finish. Some sealers can also act as a color enhancer for stones that have natural color such as Brazilian Multicolor Slate. The need to seal a product is based on the product type, surface finish, location and planned maintenance of the installation. If it is determined a sealer is needed, apply a penetrating, also known as impregnating sealer with the recommended applicator. If you are concerned about chemicals you can opt for a water-based impregnator. Sealers are normally applied after an installation as well as with handmade and crackle glazed ceramics. Technically speaking it is safe to seal all stones before installation as the sealer can aid in clean-up after grouting. However, highly porous material, such as Beaumaniere Limestone or terracotta are often sealed before and after the installation. Depending on surface wear, a sealer can be re-applied every 1-3 years depending on area usage or wear. There are certain products such as cement tiles that are pre-sealed during the manufacturing process. Always ask your salesperson about a recommended sealer by the manufacturer, and don't assume that your tiles will arrive pre-sealed.

## PORCELAIN

The easiest type of tile to maintain is unpolished porcelain. Whether your installation is glazed, unglazed, or color body, routinely vacuuming and/or sweeping dust and debris is one of the best ways to prolong the life of your floor. A pH neutral floor cleaning product or tile and stone cleaner can be used for regular cleaning. Abrasive chemicals should not be used on polished products and are rarely necessary on porcelain products. Porcelain tile does not need to be sealed.

AC recommends these products:

CLEANING
Porcelain & Ceramic Tile Cleaner
Counter Kleen Spray Cleaner
Tile & Stone Cleaner

## HANDMADE CERAMICS & CRACKLE FINISHES

Hand made material and special finishes should be maintained with extra care. Mild pH neutral soap and water is the best way to clean this material or you can use the special products ACI stocks. Always avoid abrasive cleaners as they can scratch the surface. While porcelains do not require sealing, generally handmade

ceramic & ceramics with a crackle finish require this extra step of sealing before installation and at least 24 hours after grouting grouting is complete. If sealing is skipped- a crackle finish in a wet area can become milky in appearance and handmade ceramic tile may absorb small amounts of water changing the color of the tile and possibly creating mildew issues.

AC recommends these products:

CLEANING	SEALING
Tile & Stone Cleaner	511 H2O Sealer
Counter Kleen Spray Cleaner	Sealer Applicator

## NATURAL STONE

Mild detergent diluted with water or ACI's recommended products should be used to clean stone. To prevent soap scum in showers, a squeegee is helpful after each use. You may need to have your stone refinished as the surface wears down. Never use, vinegar, lemon juice or any other cleaners containing acid or ammonia. Some stones have dry seams, pits, and fissures that are often filled at the factory or during installation. These are all inherent characteristics of the stone and as your installation ages these voids can lose their fillings. Refilling voids is part of normal maintenance and on travertine surfaces is often done with an un-sanded grout or color matched un-sanded caulk. All stone needs to be sealed upon installation with a penetrating sealer. If your stone has vibrant colors (check this by wetting the stone) you might choose the 511 Seal and Enhance option to bring out the natural colors. Proper maintenance will prolong the life and beauty of your stone.

AC recommends these products:

CLEANING	SEALING
Tile & Stone Cleaner ◆	511 H2O Sealer* ◆
Limestone and Travertine Stone Cleaner	511 Porous Plus Sealer ◆
Counter Kleen Spray Cleaner ◆	511 Seal & Enhance Sealer (Generally Slates & Pebbles)
	Sealer Applicator ◆

◆ SAFE FOR POLISHED STONE

\* USE ON DECORATIVE STONE SURFACE

## GLASS TILE

Any non-abrasive cleaning agent recommended for glass can be used to clean glass field or mosaic tiles. For backsplash applications with heavy grout lines, try wiping the tile with a dry microfiber cloth.

Glass tile does not need to be sealed, but the grout does.

## SPECIAL MATERIAL

Special care should always be taken on clay, metal and metallic products as well as cement, hand-made ceramics, resin, antiqued and/or hand-painted surfaces, terrazzo, and river shell. These products generally should not be treated with chemical based cleaners and scour pads. Manufacturing techniques vary for metal, concrete, and ceramic so don't assume these materials are treated the same. Always seek the manufacturer's recommendations for cleaning specialty tile. When sealing is recommended, use a water based sealer.

## GROUT

All types of grout are porous except for Epoxy. Grout specific cleaning products can be effective as well as routine cleaning with a neutral pH soap and water. For deep cleaning apply force with a nylon brush. Stay away from acids if you have colored grouts as they can change the color.

AC recommends these products:

CLEANING	SEALING
Grout Cleaner	Grout Shield (Grout mixture additive for extra stain protection)
Epoxy Remover Cleaner	
Residue Remover Cleaner	
Liquid Poultice Part A+B Clean	

## SEALER DEFINITIONS



**511 POROUS PLUS:** Penetrating sealer used on stones with the highest porosity and when oil repellency is primary issue.

**511 H2O SEALER:** 511 H2O Plus is a unique water base penetrating sealer designed for the protection of all natural stone, tile, grout and masonry surfaces where a water based product is preferred. This product contains no P.F.O.S or P.F.O.A.s.

**511 SEALER & ENHANCE:** A solvent-base formula designed to eliminate the need to use an impregnator before using a color enhancer for maximum stain protection and superior color enhancement. Safe for use on granite, marble, limestone, natural stone, slate, ceramic tile, quarry tile and grout surfaces. Enhances the color and rejuvenates the appearance of tumbled, honed, acid-washed, sandblasted, flamed, textured, even polished stone and tile surfaces. Revitalizes old and worn stone and tile installations. Can be used in interior and exterior environments and is freeze/thaw resistant.

## PROBLEM SOLVING



There are many products on the market to help with your tile woes. Does your floor look hazy? Did it get sealed before the grout haze was properly cleaned? Many products are available to solve these problems.

AC recommends these products:

CLEANING
<b>HEAVY DUTY ACID CLEANER</b> for textured, non-polished natural and man-made surfaces. Removes sanded grout and mortar residue, joint cement, lime and hard water deposits, efflorescence, rust, heavy dirt and grime.
<b>LIQUID POULTICE PART A+B CLEANER:</b> Deep cleaning of stains on acid-sensitive, porous natural stones & grout surfaces. Especially effective for cleaning organic stains like coffee and tea. Use on Marble, Limestone, Sandstone/Flagstone, Grout, Brick, Concrete, Masonry & polished surfaces.

For Natural Stone issues like water marks, efflorescence and more, reference our comprehensive Problem Solving Guide found here: [www.architecturalceramics.com/Datasheets/STAINGUIDE.pdf](http://www.architecturalceramics.com/Datasheets/STAINGUIDE.pdf)  
PLEASE NOTE THIS LINK IS CASE SENSITIVE