

Appropriate cleaning and maintenance will enhance the unique beauty of Studio Collection materials, which are recognized for their ease of maintenance. Following the specific, yet simple guidelines outlined below will ensure a long-lasting, beautiful installation.

Grouting

Grouting and grout cleanup of Studio Collection materials can be achieved quickly and efficiently if the contractor follows the directions from the grout manufacturer.

Many grout manufacturers produce products specifically for use with unglazed porcelain tile, and by following their instructions, a beautiful and durable installation is ensured. Special attention should be given when using contrasting grouts --- specifically, light colored tile with dark grouts. All installations using a black grout should be field tested for compatibility. Performing a test area using the specified grout and Studio Collection, materials is recommended to determine if the inclusion of a grout release agent, it is necessary to use one that will not affect the bonding of the grout to the sides and edges of the joint.

Surface Coatings

Studio Collection materials do not require the use of sealers or waxes; in fact, adding surface coatings only increases the maintenance of this flooring system. Surface coatings may actually diminish the exceptional performance characteristics of Studio Collection materials by creating a thin barrier that can modify skid resistance properties.

The dense, low-porosity nature of Studio Collection materials inhibits not only the absorption of stains, but also the absorption of sealers and waxes. Application of these products may produce a spotty or streaked appearance on the tile.

In the event a polished finish is used in an area prone to excessive spills or dirt, it may be advisable to treat the tile with a penetrating type of sealer.

During the polishing process, microscopic pores are sometimes exposed. Although the pores are shallow, spills can fill them making standard cleaning procedures inadequate. By using a penetrating type of sealer, these microscopic pores are filled preventing stains from setting in. A penetrating-type sealer is designed only to fill pores, not to coat the tile surface. You will not alter the polished tile's appearance, provided a recommended sealer is used and applied according to the manufacturer's instructions.

Initial Cleaning

The complete removal of construction dirt and grout haze from Studio Collection materials during the initial cleaning will ensure ease of future, daily maintenance.

If construction dirt has collected on the surface of the tile, it will be necessary to use a heavy-duty cleaner and possibly a scrubber to release the dirt. A wet vacuum can be used to aid in the pickup of the suspended dirt in the cleaning solution. The floor should then be rinsed thoroughly to leave the surface free and clear of any cleaner residue, which if left on the surface could attract dirt or become slippery when wet.

Grout haze or residue, however, will require special products. There are two situations that can occur with grout residue; a cementitious residue, which generally can be seen, or an invisible residue left by additives often used in grouts. It is important that both residues be removed to leave your floor thoroughly cleaned. Either residue will increase soiling and create ongoing maintenance problems.

Acid washing is not recommended, especially with the use of colored grouts. Use of acids can cause discoloration of the grout joints and, in some instances, cause the color pigment to attach itself to the surface of the tile making it more difficult to clean. If tracking and soiling are consistently occurring, it can usually be associated with grout haze or buildup of cleaners. A cleanup of the grout as directed above, or a thorough cleansing and rinsing of the floor to remove cleaner buildup, should eliminate excessive soiling and tracking.

1. Sweep, using a soft, natural bristle broom, or vacuum floor of debris.
2. Using a product from a reputable manufacturer of tile cleaner or grout stripper, prepare a cleaning solution as recommended by the manufacturer's instructions. Dispense a generous amount of solution onto the floor by mop or sponge applicator.
3. Allow the solution to sit on the surface a few minutes to increase the suspension of the dirt particles and produce a cleaner surface.
4. Using a nylo-grit brush, scrub slowly in an overlapping figure eight pattern. If the area is very dirty or has grout or sealer film, a 175-rpm rotary scrubber must be used to get the proper results. If the area is only lightly soiled, an auto scrubber can be used, making several passes before picking up the solution.
5. Have several rinse buckets with clean water available before picking up the scrubbed solution. Use a wet vacuum to pick up the solution and immediately rinse the surface with clean, cold water. Pick up the rinse water and repeat until the surface is completely free of solution.
6. Remove excess water from the floor.



Maintenance

Many general purpose, neutral cleaners are effective for the regular cleaning and maintenance of Studio Collection materials. It is important that the selected cleaner has a non-oil, non-animal fat, non-soap base. Cleaners with these ingredients may cause problems due to residues left behind in the cleaning process, which can trap dirt. For best results, the following maintenance procedures are recommended for the various finishes of Studio Collection products.

Unpolished

Matte, Semi-Matte, Honed

For moderate soiling:

1. Sweep, using a soft, natural bristle broom or vacuum floor of debris.
2. Saturate the floor with the recommended amount of general purpose, neutral cleaner and agitate the solution. An auto-scrubber may be used.
3. Allow the solution to sit on the surface a minimum of five minutes to increase the suspension of the dirt particles and produce a cleaner surface.
4. Remove the dirty cleaning solution from the floor with either a wet vacuum or mop, and rinse with clean water.
5. Remove excess water from the floor. Buff with dry mop or towel.

For heavy soiling:

1. Sweep or vacuum the floor of debris.
2. If there are deeply soiled areas or apparent staining on the surface of the tile, first attempt to identify and pre-treat them. Different surface contaminants require different cleaning methods and chemicals.
3. Scrub with a cleaning compound and floor machine equipped with an abrasive pad or stiff, natural bristle brush. For residential and small areas, use a scrub brush.
4. Remove the dirty cleaning solution with a wet vacuum and rinse the floor more than once to thoroughly remove the cleaning agent from the surface.
5. Remove excess water from the floor.

Polished

1. Sweep or vacuum the floor of loose dirt. An untreated, dry dust mop may be more effective than a soft bristle broom.
2. Wipe or mop with a diluted solution of neutral cleaner or clean, clear water.
3. If a cleaning solution is used, rinse thoroughly with clean water.
4. Dry or buff to increase shine and water spots.

Slate and Industrial Finishes

Studio Collection material's slate and industrial finishes offer an excellent safety feature due to their high degree of slip-resistance. However, they require a slight variation in cleaning procedure. Due to the undulation and texture of the tile surface, it will be necessary to reach the soil that rests on the low points of the tile. Standard wet mopping will not be completely effective in cleaning these textured surfaces.

1. Sweep or vacuum the floor. If sweeping, use a soft bristle broom. The choice of brush bristles is important because a strong, thorough bristle action is required to remove debris. Sweep in two directions. First, follow the direction of the tile, and then sweep diagonal to the tile to ensure complete removal of all foreign material.
2. Saturate the surface with a neutral cleaning solution (use a degreaser in food preparation areas). Agitate and allow the mixture to remain on the floor for a few minutes, giving the cleaner time to activate. Use a scrub machine or bristle brush to scrub. Once again, use a cross action pattern to ensure soil removal.
3. Rinse the floor with clean water and remove it with a wet vacuum or dry towel to eliminate dirty water from escaping into low points of the surface. Note: Several factors will affect the frequency of maintenance and type of procedure required, including pedestrian traffic, weather conditions, walk off mats, color of floor (lighter floors show more soiling) and environment. Please take these conditions into consideration when planning your maintenance schedule.

Studio Collection highly recommends the use of low VOC, non-hazardous, and non-polluting products for the cleaning and maintenance of tile and grout products.

