



Frequently Asked Questions

What is the standard for installing large format pavers and tile?

Porcelain and natural Stone manufacturers recommend using polymer modified mortars for installation of the pavers to concrete and or synthetic membranes a proper recommendation would be the Laticrete 254 Platinum for Exterior use and the Laticrete permacolor for grout.

What is considered large format?

Any tile or stone with an edge larger than 15"

Will large tiles or pavers require a special thin set or adhesive? What about pattern?

You should use a medium-bed mortar when installing to compensate for irregularities in the tile or substrate. Back buttering the back of the material is helpful as well, the full piece never uses a spot method. Common thin-set mortars will shrink as they cure then they can retract and pull as they thicken and become hard. When that happens, it can leave an uneven surface from paver to paver known as "lippage", or a crack in the tile. Medium based mortars are made to control the amount of shrinking that occurs. Self-leveling spacers should also be used to level out and pull down lippage as well.

A few good recommendations are found above by Laticrete.

Installation:

****See PDF on installation recommendations

What procedures should be followed to set large pavers and tile?

TCNA, with the support of tile installers, has developed specific recommendations for large format tile, pavers and natural stone.

<https://tcnatile.com/products/publications/custom23/>

- Medium based mortars should be used on anything with one edge greater than 15", when the final embedded thickness of the mortar exceeds 3/16".
- Anti-Fracture membranes as well as uncoupling membranes will improve the performance of above ground installations.
- Grout joints should never exceed the factory recommendation listed in the architect binders and or marketing materials.
- Any paver or tile greater than 18" should be installed on a 1/3 bond (33 percent) offset.

Please go to the TCNA guidelines handbook before installation involving a large project and there are always new guidelines and tips to help improve the project.

What about the surface, how can I prepare that?

First and foremost, your substrate must be flat for a successful installation. There should be no more than 1/8" in a 10' variance, according to ANSI (American National Standards Institute). There should be no more than 1/16" in a 24' space.

Substrates that exceed that standard must be corrected with a self-leveling underlayment or ground down to the correct tolerance level. Without a flat substrate you cannot guarantee a solid and quick installation.

<https://ansi.org/>

How do I know what mortar to use?

Check your TCNA standards when choosing products, your dealer recommendations, or professional installer recommendations.

Large Format Tile and Stone Mortars offer high flexibility and bonding strength. These are also available in rapid-setting formulas when time critical projects are being installed and can be grouted quickly after. (Visit the product recommendations PDF) for products.

Large Format Tile – LFT Mortars a non-slip, non-sag and non-slump polymer modified medium bed mortars specifically designed for large-format and heavy pavers interior and exterior use.

Will porcelain and stone pavers be hot under my feet?

The lighter the color the less hot the product will be. This is true for both stone and porcelain. Darker colors like black would not be a good recommendation for pools or surfaces that are in full sun where shoes will not be worn.

Lighter colors will deflect UV rays and lighter colors in natural stone will as well. Natural Stone is porous however and porcelain is not, therefore stone can cool down and absorb moisture to cool down and porcelain cannot.

Do my porcelain pavers or Natural stone need to be sealed?

Porcelain does not need to be sealed due to its non-absorbent properties. Natural stone does not necessarily need to be sealed but if it's installed near a pool or play area or cooking patio area this should be done (see PDF for products) that we recommend.

Why would I choose Porcelain over Natural Stone?

Porcelain is anti-slip, anti-stain, anti-mold and mildew, as well as chemical resistant. There is very little maintenance and a very light scrubbing with dish liquid will often clean the surface. For those wanting a low maintenance, no fade and lifelong solution this is an excellent choice.