

## Quarry Tiles – Laying, Cleaning and Maintenance Guide

### Background and Applications

Dreadnought Tiles and Ketley Bricks are manufactured in a high quality factory in the West Midlands UK which has been operating for 220 years. During this time the company has built up an extensive knowledge of the tile manufacturing process.

Ketley Quarry Tiles are manufactured from the proven Etruria Marl clay, which, when fired, becomes dense, hard wearing and resistant to acids, alkalis, oils, grease and fats. It is the same clay that has stood the test of many decades in the form of Ketley Class A engineering bricks and Dreadnought roof tiles, still seen in excellent condition in railway bridges, canal locks and roofs across the UK.

The range of Ketley Quarry Tiles suit most flooring and wall cladding applications indoors or externally, in commercial premises or the home. They are available in a range of natural clay colours from Staffordshire Red, Brown Brindle, Blue Brindle, Brown Antique, Red/Blue and Staffordshire Blue.

The Quarry Tiles and Brick Slips are 18mm thick and demonstrate exceedingly low slip potential in pendulum tests on sliders 96 & 55 and in inclined platform tests in shod conditions, they can be categorised as R11 which means they are not considered to be slippery in wet or greasy conditions, and in inclined platform tests in barefoot conditions, they can be categorised as Category C which is the highest rating for slip resistance.

They are ideal for heavily pedestrianised traffic areas, such as external terraces, where continuity from indoors to outdoor paving is desired, light industrial and internally in retail, commercial outlets and the home.

Sealers are not necessary but can be used indoors in certain situations.

### Laying Quarry Tiles

Quarry tiles should be laid on a rigid base, with no voids underneath so that the load applied to them is transferred through to the base. In situations where heavy loads are involved, the strength of the installation can be improved by the use of a thicker paver as the transverse breaking load of a clay paving product is directly related to its thickness where all other factors are equal. It is advisable to select the material to resist the most arduous conditions likely to be imposed during the life of the product.

For a sand and cement base, allow at least 3 weeks before fixing the tiles. and for concrete, at least 6 weeks, preferably 12 weeks drying time should be allowed.

The surface should be hard, sound, clean, free from laitance and dust. It should also be flat with a tolerance of  $\leq 3$  mm under a 2m straight edge. Any deviations from this should be corrected using a levelling compound.

### UNDER FLOOR HEATING

Ketley Quarry Tiles are fully compatible with both water-based (wet) and electric (dry) underfloor heating systems. Their dense, extruded clay body provides excellent thermal conductivity and heat retention, making them suitable for internal floors where UFH is installed beneath a screed or adhesive bed.

## **FIXING**

Ketley recommends using a tile adhesive such as ARDEX X 7 R. ([Download Ardex guide to fixing Ketley Quarry Tiles](#)) This adhesive is mixed with clean water and applied to the substrate with a suitably sized notched trowel to form straight, ribbed lines. The quarry tiles are then pressed firmly into the adhesive bed at consistent joint widths (6-10mm). The backs of the tiles should be regularly checked to ensure that solid bed fixing has been achieved.

## **GROUTING**

Ketley recommends using a flexible grout which is available in a wide range of colours from companies like ARDEX. This product is mixed with clean water to a creamy consistency and worked thoroughly into the joints using a rubber squeegee. As the work proceeds, any excess grout should be removed, residues can be removed with a damp sponge for up to 30 minutes. Any dry film can be polished off with a clean cloth afterwards. If, after this process, there is a hazy mist on the surface of the tiles, this can easily be cleaned off with a grout remover, diluted according to the manufacturer's instructions.

## **MOVEMENT JOINTS**

These should be installed in accordance with BS 5385-3:2007. Any existing movement/structural joints should be continued through to the surface of the tiling.

## **CLEANING & MAINTENANCE**

Ketley Quarry Tiles require minimal routine maintenance. Floors can usually be kept clean by sweeping to remove loose dirt, followed by washing with warm water and a non-soapy, neutral, sulphate-free detergent. Clean, dry surfaces have a naturally low slip potential; most slip incidents occur when contaminants remain on the floor, so an effective cleaning regime is essential for both appearance and safety.

### **Establishing an Effective Cleaning Regime**

- Identify contaminants so the correct cleaning agent can be selected.
- Use suitable tools, with dedicated equipment for specific areas if required.
- Schedule regular cleaning, assigning responsibility and timing around pedestrian traffic.
- Provide clear instructions on procedures, detergent use, disposal, spill response, and record-keeping.
- Inspect floors routinely to identify wear, damage, debris, or contamination.

### **Cleaning Method**

Cleaning methods vary depending on contamination, surface profile, available agents, and whether mechanical equipment can be used. Regardless of method, all residues must be removed. After cleaning, rinse thoroughly with clean water and leave the floor dry. Failure to rinse can leave detergent or contaminant residues that emulsify when re-wetted and increase slip risk.

### **Initial Clean After Installation**

Once grout joints have hardened, tiles may require a light clean using a neutral, non-soapy, sulphate-free detergent, followed by rinsing. Strong detergents should be avoided as they can cause scumming. Tiles should be pre-dampened before applying any cleaner to prevent absorption into the tile body.

### **Removing Difficult Stains**

- Abrasive cleaners, avoiding steel wool, which can leave metal particles that cause rust staining.
- Chemical cleaning using an appropriate solvent; specialist advice may be required for specific stains.
- Bleaching, where suitable, to remove the colour of the stain.

NB The use of sealers and polishers on quarry tiles can make regular cleaning more difficult.

## **Disclaimer**

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