



# Glossary – Common Industry Terms

**ABSORPTION:** The relationship of the weight of water absorbed to the weight of the dry specimen, expressed in percentages.

**ABRASION RESISTANCE CLASSIFICATION:** ASTM C-1027 describes the standard test method for determining visible abrasion resistance of glazed ceramic tile.

Class 0 – Generally not recommended for use on floors;

Class I – Light Traffic, for residential bathroom floors;

Class II – Medium - Light Traffic, residential interiors with the exception of kitchens, stairs, landings and areas near external entries;

Class III – Medium - Heavy Traffic, All residential applications. Commercial applications which are similar in traffic to residential applications. Specifically excepted are areas of prevalent circulation or turning points;

Class IV – Heavy Traffic, all residential and most commercial applications such as the public areas of exhibition halls, hotels, restaurants, supermarkets, shops and schools;

Class IV – Extra Heavy Traffic, all residential and most commercial applications similar to Class IV where extra durability may be required.

**ACCELERATORS:** Materials used to speed up the setting of mortar or adhesive.

**ACCESSORIES:** Ceramic or non-ceramic fixtures such as towel bars, paper and soap holders, grab bars and the like.

**ACID:** A chemical substance usually corrosive to common metals (iron, aluminum, zinc). Acids are generally divided into two classes:

a. strong mineral or inorganic acids such as sulfamic, sulfuric, phosphoric, hydrochloric or nitric.

b. weak organic or natural acids such as acetic (vinegar), citric (citric fruit juices), oxalic and fatty acids (oleic, palmitic, stearic, etc.).

**ACOUSTICAL SEALANT:** A sealant with acoustical properties used to seal the joints in the construction of sound rated ceramic tile installations.

**ACRYLIC:** A general class of resinous polymers used as additives for thin-set adhesives and grouts.

**ADHESIVE:** See Organic Adhesive.

**ADMIXTURE:** A material other than water, aggregates, or hydraulic cement, used as an ingredient of grout or adhesive and which is added immediately before or during its mixing.

**AGGLOMERATED PRODUCT:** A man made stone product generally consisting of either crushed natural marble, natural granite or quartz chips with a matrix of resins and mineral pigments. The product is available in assorted tile sizes as well as large slabs.

**AGGREGATE:** Granular material such as sand, gravel, or crushed stone, used with a cement medium to form a screed or mortar.

**AGGREGATE, LIGHTWEIGHT:** Aggregate of low specific gravity, such as expanded or sintered clay, shale, slate, diatomaceous shale, perlite, vermiculite or slag; natural pumice, scoria, volcanic cinders, tuff and diatomite; sinter fly ash or industrial cinders; used to produce lightweight concrete.

**ANSI:** American National Standard Institute.

**APRON:** Trim or facing on the side or in front of a counter top, table edge or windowsill.

**ASTM:** American Society for Testing and Materials.

**BACK-BUTTER:** The spreading of a bond coat to the backs of ceramic tile just before the tile is placed.

**BACK WALL:** The wall facing an observer who is standing at the entrance to a room, shower or tub shower.

**BACKING:** Any material used as a base over which ceramic tile is to be installed. See Substrate.

**BACK-MOUNTED TILE:** See Mounted Tile.

**BALANCED CUTS:** Cuts of tile at the perimeter of an area that will not take full tiles. The cuts on opposite sides of such an area shall be the same size. Also the same size cuts on each side of a miter.

**BASE:** One or more rows of tile installed above the floor. See Cove.

**BEATING BLOCK:** A block used to imbed tiles in a flat plane. The method used is called "Beating In".

**BENCH MARK:** Permanent reference point or mark.

**BICOTTURA:** Method for producing tile by firing it twice (first fire is for body, second is to fuse glazes or patterns in glaze onto the body). Usually, there are two glazes on the tile, first a non-transparent glaze on the body, then a transparent glaze on the surface.

**BISQUE:** The refined mixture of clay, water and additives that has been shaped into the body of a tile.

**BODY:** The structural portion of a ceramic tile. The term also refers to the material or mixture from which the tile is made.

**BOND:** The adherence of one material to another.

**BOND COAT:** A material used between the back of the tile and the prepared surface. Suitable bond coats include pure Portland cement, dry-set Portland cement adhesive, latex Portland cement adhesive, organic adhesive and epoxy adhesive.

**BOND STRENGTH:** A bond coat's ability to resist separating from the tile and setting bed. Measured in megapascals (MPa).

**BOX SCREED:** Essentially a box screed is a jig used to apply adhesive onto the back side of large-sized ceramic, marble and granite tiles which may vary in thickness, in order to achieve a uniform unit of thickness of the tile and adhesive combined.

**BREAKING STRENGTH:** Physical property that indicates the tile's ability to withstand loads. ANSI A137.1 requires minimum strength of 110 kg for floor tile.

**BRICK-VENEER TILE:** Tile produced by several methods to simulate the appearance of brick.

**BROOM FINISH:** The surface texture obtained by sweeping a broom over freshly poured concrete.

**BROWN COAT:** The second coat in a three-coat plaster or screed application.

**BULLNOSE:** A trim tile with a convex radius on one edge. This tile is used for finishing the top of a wainscot or for turning an outside corner.

**BULLNOSE CORNER:** A type of bullnose trim with a convex radius on two adjacent edges.

**BUSHHAMMER:** A powered hammer that has a rectangular head with serrated or jagged edges. The bushhammer is used for roughing concrete to provide an adequate bond surface for adhesion.

**BUTTERFLY:** A term commonly used for inside corner angles for trim shapes such as AB 106, AF 200, AK 106 and AU 106.

**BUTTERING:** See Back-Butter.

**BUTTONBACK TILE:** Tiles that have projections on the bondable side. Many of these projections are round and therefore the term “buttonback”. Some projections are quite thick and can also be other shapes, such as square.

**CAP:** A trim tile with a convex radius on one edge. This tile is used for finishing the top of a wainscot or for turning an outside corner.

**CAULK:** See Sealant.

**CAULKING COMPOUND:** Waterproof caulking material. See Sealant.

**CEMENT:** Usually refers to Portland cement which is mixed with sand, gravel and water to form concrete.

**CEMENT BODY TILE:** Tiles with a structure made from a mixture of sand, gravel and water to form concrete.

**CEMENT GROUT:** A cementitious mixture of Portland cement, sand or other ingredients and water, to produce a water resistant, uniformly coloured material used to fill the joints between tile units.

**CEMENTIOUS:** Having the properties of cement.

**CERAMIC MOSAIC TILE:** Tile formed by either the dust-pressed or plastic method, usually 6 mm thick, and having a facial area of less than 3800 mm<sup>2</sup>. Ceramic Mosaic tiles may be either porcelain or natural clay composition and they may be either plain or may have an abrasive mixture throughout.

**CERAMIC TILE:** See Tile.

**CHALK LINE:** Usually a cotton cord coated with chalk. The cord is pulled taut and snapped to mark a straight line. The chalk line is used to align spots or screeds and to align tiles.

**CHEMICAL RESISTANCE:** The resistance offered by products to physical or chemical reactions as a result of contact with or immersion in various solvents, acids, alkalies, salts, etc.

**CLEAVAGE MEMBRANES:** A membrane that provides a separation and slip sheet between the mortar setting bed and the backing or base surface.

**CLINKER (KLINKER):** Red body formed by either the extrusion process or dust pressing. Sometimes referred to as red stoneware. This tile can be glazed or unglazed with a water absorption of 0.7%.

**COLD JOINT:** Any point in concrete construction where a pour was terminated and the surface lost its plasticity before work was continued.

**COLOURED GROUT:** Commercially prepared grout consisting of carefully graded aggregate, Portland cement, water dispersing agents, plasticisers and colour-fast pigments.

**COMMERCIAL PORTLAND CEMENT GROUT:** A mixture of Portland cement with other ingredients to produce a water-resistant, dense, uniformly coloured material.

**COMPACTION:** The process whereby the volume of freshly placed mortar or concrete is reduced to the minimum practical space usually by vibration, centrifugation, tamping or some combination of these; to mould it within forms or moulds and around imbedded parts and reinforcement and to eliminate voids other than entrained air.

**COMPRESSIVE STRENGTH:** A material’s ability to withstand a load measured in MPa.

**CONDUCTIVE MORTAR:** A tile mortar to which specific electrical conductivity is imparted through the use of conductive additives.

**CONTROL JOINTS:** See Expansion Joint.

**COPING:** The material or units used to form a cap or finish on top of a wall, pier, pilaster or chimney.

**COTTOFORTE:** Pink to red body used for most decorated, double-fired tile (glazed).

**COVE:** A trim tile unit having one edge with a concave radius. A cove is used to form a junction between the bottom wall course and the floor or to form an inside corner.

**COVE BASE (Sanitary):** A trim tile having a concave radius on one edge and a convex radius on the opposite edge. This base is used as the only course of tile above the floor tile.

**CRAWLING:** A parting and contraction of the glaze on the surface of ceramic ware during drying or firing, which results in unglazed areas bordered by coalesced glaze.

**CRAZING:** The cracking that occurs in fired glazes or other ceramic coatings due to critical tensile stresses (minute surface cracks).

**CROW HOP:** Tile joints that are out of alignment.

**CRYSTALLINE GLAZE:** See Glaze.

**CSI:** The Construction Specification Institute.

**CTDA:** Ceramic Tile Distributors Association.

**CTI:** Chicago Tile Institute.

**CTI:** Ceramic Tile Institute.

**CURING:** Maintenance of humidity and temperature of the freshly placed adhesive or grout during some definite period following the placing or finishing, to assure satisfactory hydration of Portland cement and proper hardening of the adhesive or grout.

**CUSHION-EDGED TILE:** Tile on which the facial edges have a distinct curvature that results in a slightly recessed joint.

**DASH COAT:** A first coat of mortar sometimes applied to a smooth surface with a whisk broom or fiber brush in such a manner as to provide a good mechanical key for subsequent mortar coats.

**DECORATIVE TILE:** Ceramic tile with a decoration on the surface.

**DEFLECTION:** A variation in the position or shape of a structure element due to the effect of loads or volume change; usually measured as a linear deviation from an established plane rather than an angular variation.

**DOPE COAT:** See Pure Coat.

**DOT-MOUNTED TILE:** Tile packaged in sheet format and held together by plastic or rubber dots between the joints.

**DOUBLE BULLNOSE:** A type of trim with the same convex radius on two opposite sides.

**DOWN ANGLE:** Trim tile with two rounded or curved edges, which serve to finish an outside corner.

**DRY-SET MORTAR:** A mixture of Portland cement with sand and additives imparting water retentivity, which is used as a bond coat for setting tile. Normally, when this mortar is used, neither the tile nor the walls have to be soaked during installation.

**DUSTING:** The application of dry Portland cement to a wet floor or deck mortar surface.

**DUTCHMAN:** A cut tile used as a filler in the run of a wall or floor area.

**EFFLORESCENCE:** The residue deposited on the surface of a material (usually the grout joint) by crystallisation of soluble salts.

**ELASTOMERIC:** Any of various elastic substances resembling rubber.

**EMBOSSSED:** A decoration in relief or excised on the wear surface of the tile.

**EPOXY ADHESIVE:** An adhesive system employing epoxy hardener portions.

**EPOXY GROUT:** A grouting system employing epoxy resin and epoxy hardener portions.

**EPOXY ADHESIVE:** A system employing epoxy resins and hardener portions, often containing coarse silica filler and which is usually formulated for industrial and commercial installations where chemical resistance is of paramount importance.

**EPOXY RESIN:** An epoxy composition used as a chemical resistant setting adhesive or chemical resistant grout.

**EUROPEAN TILE STANDARDS (GROUP A, GROUP B):** Used by European Manufacturers in compliance with the European Tile Standards (CEN). Group "A" tiles are made by the extrusion process. Group "B" tiles are made by the dust pressed method. These letters are preceded by the Roman numerals which indicate water absorption.

I = 0-3%,

IIa = 3-6%,

IIb = 6-10% and

III = over 10%

**EXPANSION JOINT:** A joint through the tile, mortar bed and reinforcing wire down to the substrate.

**EXTRUDED TILE:** A tile unit that is formed when plastic clay mixtures are forced through a pug mill opening (die) of suitable configuration, resulting in a continuous ribbon of formed clay. A wire cutter or similar cut-off device is then used to cut the ribbon into appropriate lengths and widths of tile.

**FACE-MOUNTED TILE:** See Mounted Tile.

**FACIAL DEFECT:** That portion of the tile's facial surface which is readily observed to be non-conforming and which detracts from the aesthetic appearance or serviceability of the installed tile.

**FAIENCE TILE:** Glazed or unglazed tile, generally made by the plastic process with characteristic variation in the face, edges and glaze. These variations produce a handcrafted, decorative effect.

**FAN or FANNING:** Spacing tile joints to widen certain areas so they will conform to a section that is not parallel.

**FEATURE STRIP (Decorates Lines):** A narrow strip of tile that has a contrasting colour, texture or trim.

**FIELD TILE:** An area of tile covering a wall or floor. The field is usually bordered by tile trim.

**FIRING:** The controlled heat treatment of ceramic tile in a kiln during the process of manufacturing, to develop the desired properties.

**FLOAT COAT:** The final mortar coat over which the neat coat, pure coat or skim coat is applied.

**FLOAT STRIP:** A strip of wood about 6 mm thick and 30 mm wide. It is used as a guide to align mortar surfaces.

**FLOATING:** A method of using a straight-edge to align mortar with float strips or screeds. This technique is used by specialists when they are setting glass mosaic murals.

**FROST-PROOF TILES:** Tile manufactured for use where freezing and thawing conditions occur.

**FREEZE-THAW STABILITY:** The ability of a tile to withstand the cycle of freezing and thawing without cracking.

**FURAN GROUT:** An intimate mixture of a furan resin, selected fillers and an acid catalyst. Fillers are generally carbon, silica or combination thereof into which the acid catalyst, or setting agent, may be incorporated. When combined, the components form a trowelable material for buttering or pointing tile.

**FURAN RESIN:** A chemical resistant acid catalysed condensation reaction product from furfural alcohol, furfural or combinations thereof.

**FURRING:** Stripping used to build out a surface such as a studded wall. Strips of suitable size are added to the studs to accommodate vent pipes, shower pans, tubs or other fixtures.

**GLASS MESH MORTAR UNIT/CEMENTITIOUS BACKER UNIT:** A backer board designed for use with ceramic tile in wet areas. It can be used in place of metal lath, Portland cement scratch coat and mortar bed.

**GLASS MOSAIC TILES:** Tiles made of glass, usually in sizes not over 1290 mm<sup>2</sup> and 6 mm thick and mounted on sheets of paper. Sheets are usually 300 mm x 300 mm.

**GLAZE:** A ceramic coating matured to the glassy state on ceramic tile. The term "glaze" also refers to the material or mixture from which the coating is made.

**BRIGHT GLAZE:** A high gloss coating with or without colour.

**CLEAR GLAZE:** A transparent glaze with or without colour.

**CRYSTALLINE GLAZE:** A glaze that contains microscopic crystals.

**FRITTED GLAZE:** A glaze in which a part or all of the fluxing constituents are pre-fused.

**MATT GLAZE:** A low-gloss glaze with or without colour.

**OPAQUE GLAZE:** A non-transparent glaze with or without colour.

**RAW GLAZE:** A glaze compounded primarily from raw constituents. It contains no pre-fused materials.

**SEMI-MATT GLAZE:** A medium-gloss glaze with or without colour.

**SPECKLED GLAZE:** A glaze containing granules of oxides or ceramic stains that are contrasting colours.

**GLAZED TILE:** Tile with a fused impervious facial finish composed of ceramic materials fused to the body of the tile, which may be non-vitreous, vitreous or impervious.

**GRADE:** A predetermined degree of slope that a finished floor should have.

**GRADES:** Grades of tile recognised in ANSI standard specifications for ceramic tile.

**GRES:** Unglazed, red body, heavy duty tile. Usually low water absorption with a textured pattern on its face.

**GROUT:** A cementitious or other type material used for filling joints between tile.

**GROUTING:** The process of filling tile joints with grout.

**GROUT SAW:** The grout saw is saw-toothed carbide steel blade mounted on a wooden handle. It is used to remove old grout. It is also used in patching work. Care should be taken as it can easily damage adjacent tiles. The carbide steel blade is brittle and it will shatter if it is dropped or abused.

**HARD SCREED:** A mortar screed that has become firm.

**HEAVY DUTY TILE:** Tile suitable for areas where heavy pedestrian traffic is prevalent. Can be specified to meet higher test values as determined by job requirements.

**HORIZONTAL BROKEN JOINTS:** A style of laying tile with each course offset one-half its length.

**HOT-MOPPED PAN:** A type of shower pan made of altering layers of hot asphalt and tar paper.

**IMPERVIOUS TILE:** Tile with water absorption of 0.5 percent or less.

**IN/OUT CORNERS:** Trim tile for turning a right-angle inside or outside a wall corner.

**L CUT:** A piece of tile cut or shaped to the letter "L".

**LAITANCE:** A layer of weak and non-durable material containing cement and fines from aggregates, brought by bleeding water to the top of over wet concrete, the amount of which is generally increased by overworking or over manipulating concrete at the surface by improper finishing or by job traffic.

**LATEX-PORTLAND CEMENT GROUT:** Combines Portland cement grout with a special latex additive.

**LATEX-PORTLAND CEMENT ADHESIVE:** A mixture of Portland cement, sand and a special latex additive which is used as a bond coat for setting tile.

**LATH:** Metal mesh which acts as a backing or reinforcing agent for the scratch coat or mortar bed.

**LAYOUT LINES:** Lines chalked on a substrate to guide in accurately setting tile.

**LAYOUT STICK:** A long strip of wood marked at the appropriate joint intervals for the tile to be used. It is used to check the length, width or height of the tile work. Common names for this item are "idiot stick" or "story pole".

**LEG:** A tile wall running alongside a bathtub or abutment. This term is sometimes used to describe a narrow strip of tile floor.

**LEVEL:** (a) A surface or line with all points at the same elevation.  
(b) Horizontally straight.

**LEVELING COAT:** See Plumb Scratch.

**LUGS:** Protuberances attached to tiles to maintain even spacing for grout lines.

**MARBLE TILE:** Marble cut into tiles, usually 9 mm to 19 mm thick. Available in various finishes, including polished, honed and split face.

**MASTER GRADE CERTIFICATE:** A certificate which states that the tile listed in the shipment and described on the certificate are made in accordance with ANSI A137.1.

**MASTIC:** Tile adhesives.

**MEXICAN PAVER TILE:** Hand-made tiles that vary in colour, texture and appearance and which are used mainly on floors. The terra-cotta like tiles are made in hexagon, octagon, elongated hexagon, fleur-de-lis, square and other shapes. Coated with various types of sealers to provide a wearing surface.

**MIA:** Marble Institute of America.

**MMSA:** Materials & Methods Standards Association.

**MONOCOTTURA:** Method of producing tile by a single firing. Tiles may be glazed or unglazed.

**MORTAR BED:** The layer of mortar on which tile is set. The final coat of mortar on a wall, floor or ceiling is called a mortar bed.

**MOSAICS:** Small tiles or bits of tile, stone or glass which are used to form a surface or a intricate pattern.

**MOUNTED TILE:** Tile assembled into units or sheets using suitable material to facilitate handling and installation. Tile may be face-mounted or edge-mounted.

**FACE-MOUNTED TILE ASSEMBLIES:** May have paper or other suitable material applied to the face of each tile, usually with water soluble adhesives for easy removal after installation, but prior to grouting the joints.

**BACK-MOUNTED TILE ASSEMBLIES:** May have perforated paper, fibre mesh, resin or other suitable material bonded to the back of each tile which becomes an integral part of the tile installation.

**EDGE-MOUNTED TILE ASSEMBLIES:** Are mounted together solidly at the edges with the bonding material also serving as grout. Joints between sheets are grouted on the job. Back-mounted and edge-mounted tile assemblies shall have a sufficient exposure of tile and joints surrounding each tile to comply with bond strength requirements. Tile manufacturers must specify whether back-mounted and edge-mounted tile assemblies are suitable for installation in swimming pools, on exteriors or in wet areas.

**MPa:** Megapascal

**MUD:** A slang term for mortar.

**MURALS:** Tile installed in a precise area of a wall or floor to provide a decorative design or picture. Glass or marble mosaic tile (tesserae) made to form a picture or design. Ceramic tile painted and fired to form a picture or design.

**NATURAL CLAY TILE:** A ceramic mosaic tile or a paver tile made by either the dust-pressed or the plastic method from clays which produce a dense body and a distinctive slightly textured appearance.

**NEAT CEMENT:** Portland cement mixed with water to a desired creamy consistency. See Pure Coat.

**NOMINAL SIZES:** The approximate facial size or thickness of tile, expressed in millimetres.

**NON-VITREOUS TILE:** Tile with water absorption of more than 7.0 percent.

**NOTCHED TROWEL:** A trowel with a serrated or notched edge. It is used for the application of a gauged amount of tile adhesive in ridges of a specific thickness.

**NTCA:** National Tile Contractors Association, Inc.

**NTMA:** National Terrazzo and Mosaic Association.

**OPEN TIME:** The period of time during which the bond coat retains its ability to adhere to the tile and bond the tile to the substrate.

**ORGANIC ADHESIVE:** A prepared organic material, ready to use with no further addition of liquid or powder, which cures by evaporation.

**PAPER AND WIRE:** Tar paper and wire mesh (or metal lath) that are used as a backing for the installation of tile.

**PAVER TILE:** Glazed or unglazed porcelain or natural clay tile formed by the dust pressed method and having 3870 mm<sup>2</sup> or more of facial area.

**PENCIL ROD:** Reinforcing rod with a diameter of no greater than 6 mm.

**PINHOLES:** Imperfections in the surface of a ceramic body or glaze, or in the surface of a grout.

**PLASTER:** A cementitious material or combination of cementitious material and aggregate that, when mixed with a suitable amount of water, forms a plastic mass or paste which when applied to a surface, adheres to it and subsequently hardens, preserving in a rigid state the form or texture imposed during the period of plasticity; also the placed and hardened mixture.

**PLUMB:** Perpendicular to a true level.

**PLUMB SCRATCH:** An additional scratch coat that has been applied to obtain a uniform setting bed on a plumb vertical plane.

**PORCELAIN TILE:** A ceramic mosaic tile or a paver tile that is generally made by the dust-pressed method from a composition which results in a tile that is dense, impervious, fine grained and smooth, with a sharply formed face.

**POT LIFE:** The period of time during which a material maintains its workable properties after it has been mixed.

**PREFLOAT:** The term used to describe a mortar bed that has been placed and allowed to harden prior to bonding tile to it with thin-set materials.

**PRE-GROUTED TILE:** A surfacing unit consisting of an assembly of ceramic tiles bonded together at their edges by a material (generally elastomeric) which seals the joint completely. Such material (grout) may fill the joint completely or partially and may cover all, a portion or none of the back surfaces of the tiles in the sheets. The perimeter of these factory pre-grouted sheets may include the entire or part of the joint between the sheets or none at all. The term "Edge-bonded Tile" is sometimes used to designate a particular type of pre-grouted tile sheets having the front and back surfaces completely exposed.

**PSI:** Pounds per square inch (1 MPa = approximately 145 psi).

**PURE COAT:** Neat cement applied to the mortar bed.

**QUARRY TILE:** Glazed or unglazed tile made by the extrusion process from natural clay or shale, usually having 3870 mm<sup>2</sup> or more of facial area.

**RACK:** A metal grid that is used to properly space and align tiles.

**RAKE or RAKE LINE:** The inclination from a horizontal direction.

**RECEPTOR:** Waterproof base for a shower stall.

**REFERENCE LINES:** A pair of lines chalked on a substrate that intersect at 90 degree angle and establish the starting point for plotting a grid of layout lines to guide in accurately setting tile.

**RETURN:** The ending of a small splash wall or wainscot at right angles to the major wall.

**RODDING:** A method of using a straight edge to align mortar with the float strips or screeds. This technique also is called floating, dragging or pulling.

**ROUGHING IN:** The act of preparing a surface by applying tar paper and metal lath (or wire mesh). Sometimes called "wiring".

**RUBBER TROWEL:** The rubber trowel used for grouting. A non-porous synthetic-rubber-faced float that is mounted on an aluminum back with a wood handle. This trowel is used to force material into tile joints, remove excess grout and form a smooth grout finish.

**RUBBING STONE:** A carborundum stone that is used to smooth the rough edges on tile.

**RUNNING BOND:** Stretchers overlapping one another by one-half unit, with vertical joint in alternate courses.

**SAG:** A term used when a wall surface has developed a slide.

**SALTILLO TILE:** Adobe type tile made of clay and other natural raw materials, moulded and allowed to dry. Not a fired clay product.

**SAMPLING:** Method of obtaining tile for testing from an agreed upon lot.

**SANDBLASTING:** A method of scarifying the surface of concrete or masonry to provide a bondable surface. Compressed air is used to propel a stream of wet or dry sand onto the surface.

**SAND-PORTLAND CEMENT GROUT:** An on-the-job mixture of Portland cement, fine graded sand, lime and water.

**SCARIFY:** A mechanical means of roughing a surface to obtain a better bond.

**SCRATCH COAT:** A mixture of Portland cement, sand and water applied as the first coat of mortar on a wall or ceiling. Its surface usually is scratched or roughened so that it will bond properly with subsequent coats of mortar.

**SCRATCHER:** Any serrated or sharply tined object that is used to roughen the surface of one coat of mortar to provide a mechanical key for the next coat.

**SCREED or SCREED STRIP:** Strips of wood, metal, mortar or other material used as guides on which a straightedge is worked to obtain a true mortar surface.

**SCULPTURED TILE:** Tile with a decorative design of high and low areas moulded into its face.

**SEALANT:** An elastomeric material used to fill and seal expansion and control joints. This material prevents the passage of moisture and allows the horizontal and lateral movement at the expansion and control joints.

**SELF-SPACING TILE:** Tile with lugs, spacers or protuberances on the sides which automatically space the tile for the grout joint.

**SEMI-VITREOUS TILE:** Tile with water absorption of more than 3.0 percent, but not more than 7.0 percent.

**SET-UP TIME:** The time adhesive spread on a surface takes to cure or harden.

**SETTING BED:** The layer of mortar on which the tile is set. The final coat of mortar on a wall or ceiling may also be called a setting bed.

**SHELF LIFE:** The maximum period of time that an item can be stored before it is used.

**SHOWER PAN:** A waterproof shower floor membrane made from metal, layers of built-up roofing or single or multiple elastomeric membranes.

**SILICONE GROUT:** An engineered elastomeric grout system for interior use.

**SINK ANGLE:** Trim shape used on a drain board at the corners of the kitchen sink. This trim shape, which is AU 106, is also called a "Butterfly".

**SLAKE:** Allowing the mixtures of mortar, thin-set adhesive or grout to stand for a brief period of time after the ingredients have been thoroughly combined and before the final mixing has occurred. Slaking enables the moisture in the mix to penetrate lumps in the dry components, making it easier to complete the mixing procedure.

**SLIDE:** A fresh tile wall that has sagged. This condition may be caused by excessive adhesive, insufficient lime in the adhesive or excessive moisture in the adhesive. A slide may also result if the surface is slick or if the adhesive is too soft.

**SLIP-RESISTANT TILE:** Tile having slip-resistant characteristics due to an abrasive admixture, abrasive particles in the surface or grooves or patterns in the surface.

**SLOT CUT:** Description of a tile that has been cut to fit around pipes or switch boxes. This tile is usually in the shape of the letter "H" or the letter "L".

**SLURRY COAT:** A pure coat of a very soft consistency.

**SOLDIER COURSE:** Oblong tile laid with the long side vertical and all joints in alignment.

**SPACERS:** Plastic, rubber, wood or rope used in wall or floor installations to separate tiles. Manufactured spacers are available in thicknesses 1.5 mm to 12 mm.

**SPACING MIX:** A dry or dampened mixture of one part Portland cement and one part extra-fine sand. This mix is used as a filler in the joints of mounted tile.

**SPANDREL:** That part of a wall between the head of a window and the sill of the window above it.

**SPECIAL PURPOSE TILE:** Tile, either glazed or unglazed, made to meet or have special physical design or appearance characteristics such as size, thickness, shape, colour or decoration; keys or lugs on back or sides; pre-grouted assemblies or sheets; special resistance to staining, frost alkalies, acids, thermal shock, physical impact or high coefficient of friction.

**SPLASH WALLS:** The walls of a tile drain board or bathtub.

**SPLIT L CUT:** An improper "L" cut that is made by splitting a tile instead of cutting it.

**SPOTS:** Small pieces of tile placed on a wall or floor surface to align the screeds or setting bed. Spots of casting plaster also may be used.

**STANDARD GRADE CERAMIC TILE:** Highest grade of all types of ceramic tile.

**STATIC COEFFICIENT OF FRICTION (C.O.F.):** Slip resistance. The degree of slip resistance presented in a quantitative number that expresses the degree of slip resistance. Slip resistance is evaluated by the horizontal pull method (ASTM C1028). There is no current ANSI requirement a coefficient of friction of 0.5 and above is the recognised industry standard for a slip resistant floor.

**STORY POLE:** A measuring stick created for a particular tile installation whose unit of measure is the width of a single tile and grout joint rather than millimetres. This tool gives tile setters a quick, efficient means of determining how many tiles will fit in a given area and where to position layout lines.

**STONED:** Use of a carborundum stone to smooth rough edges caused by cutting.

**STRAIGHT JOINT:** The usual style of laying tile where all the joints are in alignment.

**STRAIGHTEDGE:** A straight piece of wood or metal which is used to rod mortar and to align tile.

**STRETCHER:** Trim shapes of tile between trim angles.

**STRIKING JOINTS:** A process of removing excess grout from the joints by wiping them with a sponge or cloth, or by scraping them with a curved instrument.

**STRUCTURAL DEFECTS:** Cracks or laminations in the tile body which detract from the aesthetic appearances and/or structural soundness of the installation.

**SUBFLOOR:** A rough floor, plywood or boards, laid over joists and on which an underlayment or substrate is installed.

**SUBSTRATE:** The underlying support for ceramic tile installations.

**TCA:** Tile Council of America.

**TERRACOTTA:** Hard baked tile of variable colour and water absorption. Usually unglazed, this product requires a sealer to prevent staining. Used mainly on interior floors. Sometimes referred to as Cotto.

**THICK-BED ADHESIVE:** A thick layer of adhesive (more than 12 mm) that is used for leveling.

**THIN-SET:** The term used to describe the installation of tile with all materials except Portland cement adhesive, which is the only recognised thick-bed method.

**3-4-5- TRIANGLE:** A triangle with sides in the proportion of 3:4:5, which produces one 90 degree corner. Plotting a 3-4-5 triangle is a method used to establish a pair of square reference lines on a large surface. These lines can be used to determine if the installation site is square and to create a grid of layout lines for setting tile.

**TIE WIRE:** The 18-gauge galvanised wire used for a variety of purposes in construction work.

**TILE:** A ceramic surfacing unit, usually relatively thin in relation to facial area, made from clay or a mixture or a mixture of clay and other ceramic materials called the body of the tile, and having either a glazed or unglazed face. Fired at a temperature sufficiently high enough to produce specific physical properties and characteristics.

**TILE ASSEMBLIES:** See Mounted Tile.

**TILE CUTTER:** Special machine to cut ceramic tile.

**TILE NIPPER:** Special pliers that nibble away little bites of ceramic tile to create small, irregular or curved cuts.

**TRIM UNITS:** Units of various shapes consisting of items such as bases, caps, corners, mouldings and angles necessary to achieve installations of the desired sanitary and architectural design.

**UNGLAZED TILE:** A hard, dense tile of uniform composition throughout, deriving colour and texture from the materials of which the body is made.

**URETHANE:** An elastomeric polymer with excellent chemical and water resistance. Single component (moisture cure) and 2-part (chemical cure) systems are available. Both types may be applied in a fluid state and cure (polymerise) after installation. Typical tile industry applications include sealants, caulks, waterproofing membranes and high performance flexible adhesives.

**V-CAP TRIM:** V-shaped trim tile used on the front edge of a counter top. The tile's top surface is gently curved upward at the front edge to prevent water from running onto the floor.

**VERTICAL BROKEN JOINT:** Style of laying tile with each vertical row of tile offset for one-half its length.

**VITREOUS TILE:** Tile with water absorption of more than 0.5 percent, but not more than 3.0 percent.

**VITRIFICATION:** The condition resulting when kiln temperatures are sufficient to fuse grains and close pores of a clay product.

**WALL TILE:** A glazed tile with a body that is suitable for interior use and which is usually non-vitreous, and is not required nor expected to withstand excessive impact or be subjected to freezing and thawing conditions.

**WATERPROOFING MEMBRANE:** A covering applied to a substrate before tiling to protect the substrate and framing from damage by water. May be applied below mortar beds or directly beneath this-set tiles.

**WET AREAS:** Tile surfaces that are either soaked, saturated or subjected to moisture or liquids (usually water) such as communal showers, tub enclosures, showers, laundries, saunas, steam rooms, swimming pools and exterior areas.

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