For tiling part way up a wall: (e.g. to a dado)

Ideally, the desired height will be achieved using only full tiles. You’ll probably want to finish along the top with a full tile anyway.

Use your spirit level to identify the lowest point of the wall. Floors and baths often run off a little. Set an upright tile against the wall at that spot. Using your spirit level, draw a perfectly horizontal line across the wall from the top of the tile. (See Illustration 5).

This is where you can use your first furring strip. Nail a straight batten up to and beneath that line, to support the second line of tiles. They will be applied first.

Find and mark the vertical centre line as with a full wall and start with a full tile from that line. Where there is an obvious outside corner or edge, like the front of a bath recess, start from the outside corner and work to the inner corner.

All but one of the bottom row of tiles may need cutting. It depends on the setout.

### Installation

**Applying tiles to the wall**

1. Apply full tiles before cut tiles. Start either at the vertical centreline or from a full tile edge.
2. Apply tile adhesive to the wall, covering a small manageable area at a time until you get the hang of things. Spread it with a notched trowel so that all areas are evenly ribbed. For hard to reach areas, spread the adhesive on the back of the tile before placing it.
3. Place tiles carefully in the pattern shown. (See Illustration 6). Either flip them up into position from the bottom edge, or press them into place with a slight twist. Too much sliding about forces adhesive up into the joints. Press firmly into place.
4. Use your level often to check horizontal and vertical alignment of tiles as you go.
5. When all the full tiles are glued, wipe away any adhesive in unoccupied spaces. Do not allow it to dry. Leave the full tiles 4 or 5 hours to set, before removing furring strips, and/or applying the cut tiles.
6. When measuring a tile for cutting, allow for the width of grout lines.
7. Cutting tiles in a straight line is not difficult, and gets easier the better your cutter is. If you have more than a dozen visible cuts, hire a good tile cutter.
8. For curved cuts or notches, mark the area of tile to be removed with a pencil. Use tile nippers to cautiously nip away the waste, a little at a time. If the cut will be covered by fixture plates or flanges, the cut doesn’t need to be perfect. To apply a tile completely around a pipe, first cut the tile in half, then nip away the space for the pipe. (See Illustration 7). For a master edge, cut with a rod saw.
9. Remove any adhesive on the face of the tiles with an appropriate solvent, cleaner or a razor blade. Allow tiles to set at least 24 hours before grouting.

### Applying grout

1. Mix grout according to packet instructions. Depending on the job, you may use latex grout additive instead of, or as well as water.
2. Spread grout over tiles. (See Illustration 8).
   - Use squeegee
   - Spread diagonally
   - Force grout into joints
3. Wipe excess grout off with clean damp sponge. Use the rounded handle of a knife or a shaped piece of dowelling, to clean out, shape and smooth grout in joints.

**IMPORTANT:** Remove grout from floor/wall or wall/wall joints and fill with an appropriate silicone to accommodate movement. Grout can crack in these situations.

4. After the grout dries enough to form a haze on the tile, polish the surface with a dry cloth. Coat the grout with silicone sealer to prevent discoloration.

Reference: BRANZ Good Tiling Practice Guide

Please Note:

Whilst the advice and recommendations contained in this brochure have been produced with proper care, they are offered only with the objective of assisting those interested in home improvement projects and PlaceMakers do not accept responsibility for the advice, recommendations, etc. contained herein.
Tiling interior walls and floors

Tiling demands patience and precision. This pamphlet takes you through the process for tiling ordinary interior walls and floors. Complicated room or wall shapes require extensive cutting and unusual tile shapes are difficult for the inexperienced handyman. If you haven’t tried before, start with a simple, undemanding project.

Shower tiling requires waterproofing of the substrate. This is beyond the skill of all but the average homeowner and the consequences of a leak can be expensive. Leave shower tiling to experienced, professional tilers.

Materials required

- Tiles
- Tile adhesive
- Tile grout
- Notched trowel for spreading adhesive
- Firm sponge
- Squeegee
- Bucket for mixing grout
- Smoothing cut tile edges
- Carpenter's square
- Tape measure
- Pencil
- Rod saw for cutting tiles freehand.
- Tile cutter. The type the tile sits in is more accurate than hand versions run against a straightedge.

Floor versus wall tiles

There are a large variety of ceramic tiles available. Floor tiles are obviously subject to considerably more weight and wear than wall tiles. Therefore, while floor tile can sometimes be applied to walls, wall tiles must never be used on floors.

Floor tiles are often thicker than wall tiles, or they may be glazed with a baked on gloss but, this coating makes them more wear and damage resistant. Both wall and floor tiles may be glazed with a baked on gloss but, this coating is harder for floors.

Floor tiles are often thicker than wall tiles. Complicated room or wall shapes require extensive cutting and unusual tile shapes are difficult for the inexperienced handyman. If you haven’t tried before, start with a simple, undemanding project.

Preparing the surface

What can you tile over?

- Cuts at one end only:
- Narrow cut
- Wider cut

Converting the area

(a) Move line half tile width for larger wall cut

(b) New line

Cuts all around

For tiling the whole wall:

- For glazed or vitrified tiles, grout as with wall tiles.

Applying grout:

1. As some terracotta floor tiles are porous, grout may be difficult to remove and could discolour and stain them.
2. Check tile and grout compatibility before ordering.
3. For glazed or vitrified tiles, grout as with wall tiles.

Setting out procedure:

1. Setting out procedure:

2. For a square or rectangular room:

- Stretch a chalk line between the centres of two facing walls. Snap the line, then do the same between the other pair of walls. The resulting lines must cross at the centre of the room at a precise 90° angle. Check with a carpenter’s square. If necessary, adjust the line angle until it’s 90°.

3. Taking one line at a time, lay the tiles side by side along the floor from the line to one end. If less than half a tile width remains between the last full tile and the wall or end, move the centre point half a tile width in the other direction. This will ensure a larger piece of tile at each end, giving a more attractive effect. (See Illustration 2a & 2b).

4. Floor tiles are often thicker, and have to be stronger than wall tiles. They can be difficult to cut. For smooth curved cuts and cutouts use a rod saw. Support the tile wall while cutting.

5. Use a contour gauge to duplicate irregular shapes, or make cardboard patterns. Cut as near as possible, then transfer the shape to the tile.

Installation

Laying the tiles:

1. Starting at your chosen edge, or from the centre line, lay tiles in one quarter of the floor at a time.

2. Lay all full tiles before laying cut tiles.

3. As you lay, check the lines of tiles are straight and at 90° to each other.

4. Floor tiles are often thicker, and have to be stronger than wall tiles. They can be difficult to cut. For smooth curved cuts and cutouts use a rod saw. Support the tile wall while cutting.

5. Use a contour gauge to duplicate irregular shapes, or make cardboard patterns. Cut as near as possible, then transfer the shape to the tile.

Choosing the wall surface:

If the wall has too much give or flex, you may need to strip off the lining, fix more studs and/or nogging, then relinole with a suitable substrate.

Wall tiles can be applied over plasterboard, fibre cement board, plywood, solid plaster, brick or blockwork. MDF board or chipboard are also fine, but not in wet or humid areas.

Preparing the surface:

Walls must be dry, flat, firm, clean and grease and soap free, with no loose paint, plaster or dust. Holes, dents and rough areas should be filled with a plaster based filler, then sanded smooth.

Bare plasterboard, MDF or particleboard should be sealed with an oil based sealer. Tiling over joints in MDF or particleboard can cause problems unless a proper movement control joint is formed.

Sound painted surfaces should be sanded and scratched to give the tiles grip.

Setting out procedure:

For tiling the whole wall:

Set out for walls is similar to floors, but you obviously can’t lay tiles out dry on the wall. Mark a stick of timber in tile widths (see Illustration 4). Use that to calculate the position of full tiles. As with floors, adjust the position of the guide lines to ensure even and attractive lines of cut tiles along all edges.

Use your spirit level to draw a plumb vertical line from the centre point, to the top of the area to be tiled.
Tiling interior walls and floors

Tiling demands patience and precision. This pamphlet takes you through the process for tiling ordinary interior walls and floors. Complicated room or wall shapes require extensive cutting and unusual tile shapes are difficult for the inexperienced handyman. If you haven’t tried before, start with a simple, undersized project.

Shower tiling requires waterproofing of the substrate. This is beyond the skill of the average homeowner and the consequences of a leak can be expensive. Leave shower tiling to experienced, professional tilers.

Materials required
• Tiles
• Tile adhesive
• Tile grout

Depending on the situation, you may also need:
• Silicone sealant
• Screws

Floor versus wall tiles
There are a large variety of ceramic tiles available. Floor tiles are obviously subject to considerably more weight and wear than wall tiles. Therefore, while floor tiles also can sometimes be applied to walls, wall tiles must never be used on floors. Floor tiles are often thicker than wall tiles, or they may be vitrified (baked extremely dense and hard). This makes them more wear and damage resistant. Both wall and floor tiles may be glazed with a baked on gloss but, this coating makes them more wear and damage resistant.

Floor tiling - before you begin

Preparing the surface
What can you tile over? The floor surface must be clean, dry, sound, flat and RIGID. Smooth concrete is ideal, as it’s perfectly rigid. However, concrete floors should be at least four months old before tiling, so most of the shrinkage in the concrete has occurred. Timber and particleboard floors can be tiled over, but all fill must be removed first. If you can feel the floor flexing when walked over, it’s not suitable for tiling. More floor joints may need to be installed. A screwed and glued overlay of fibre cement board provides a smooth substrate for the tiles on top of timber floorboards. A dampproof membrane is required when tiling over particleboard, fibre cement board, plywood, solid plaster, brick or blockwork. MDF board or chipboard are also fine, but not in wet or humid areas.

Preparing the surface:
Walls must be dry, flat, firm, clean and grease and soap free with no loose paint, plaster or dust. Holes, dents and rough areas should be filled with a plaster based filler, then sanded smooth.

Bare plasterboard, MDF or particleboard should be sealed with an oil based sealer. Tiling over joints in MDF or particleboard can cause problems unless a proper movement control joint is formed.

Sound painted surfaces should be sanded and scratched to give the tiles grip.

Setting out procedure:

For tiling the whole wall:
1. Stretch a chalk line between the centres of two facing walls. Snap the line, then do the same between the other pair of walls. The resulting lines must cross at the centre of the room at a precise 90° angle. Check with a carpenter’s square. If necessary, adjust the line angle until it’s 90°.
2. Taking one line at a time, lay the tiles side by side along the floor from the line to one end. If less than half a tile width remains between the last full tile and the wall or door, more the point centre half a tile width in the other direction. This will ensure a larger piece of tile at each end, giving a more attractive effect. (See Illustration 2 & 2b).
3. Repeat with the other line.
4. Seal grout with silicone sealer.
5. Use a contour gauge to duplicate irregular shapes, or make cardboard patterns. Cut as nearly as possible, then transfer the shapes to the tile.

Applying grout:
1. As some terrazzo floor tiles are porous, grout may be difficult to remove and could discolour and stain them. Check tile and grout compatibility when ordering.
2. For glazed or vitrified tiles, grout as with wall tiles.
3. After the grout has dried, fill joint around edge of room with appropriate silicone. Silicones matching grout colours are available.
4. Seal grout with silicone sealer.

Wall tiling - before you begin
Wall tiling presents the added difficulty of holding tiles on the wall while the adhesive sets. You may need to make up 50mm wide straight timber furring strips to use as tile guides and supports.

Checking the wall surface:
If the wall has too much give or flex, you may need to strip off the lining, fix more studs and/or nogging, then reline with a suitable substrate.

Wall tiles can be applied over plasterboard, fibre cement board, plywood, solid plaster, brick or blockwork. MDF board or chipboard are also fine, but not in wet or humid areas.

Materials required
Tiles
Tile adhesive
Tile grout

Floor tiles are often thicker, and have to be stronger than wall tiles. They can be difficult to cut. For smooth curved cuts and cuts into a wall, use a tile cutter. The type the tile sits in is more accurate than hand versions run against a straightedge.

Preparing the surface:

1. Stretch a chalk line between the centres of two facing walls. Snap the line, then do the same between the other pair of walls. The resulting lines must cross at the centre of the room at a precise 90° angle. Check with a carpenter’s square. If necessary, adjust the line angle until it’s 90°.
2. Taking one line at a time, lay the tiles side by side along the floor from the line to one end. If less than half a tile width remains between the last full tile and the wall or door, more the point centre half a tile width in the other direction. This will ensure a larger piece of tile at each end, giving a more attractive effect. (See Illustration 2 & 2b).
3. Repeat with the other line.
4. Seal grout with silicone sealer.
5. Use a contour gauge to duplicate irregular shapes, or make cardboard patterns. Cut as nearly as possible, then transfer the shapes to the tile.

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Checking the wall surface:
If the wall has too much give or flex, you may need to strip off the lining, fix more studs and/or nogging, then rel ine with a suitable substrate.

Wall tiles can be applied over plasterboard, fibre cement board, plywood, solid plaster, brick or blockwork. MDF board or chipboard are also fine, but not in wet or humid areas.

Preparing the surface:
Walls must be dry, flat, firm, clean and grease and soap free with no loose paint, plaster or dust. Holes, dents and rough areas should be filled with a plaster based filler, then sanded smooth.

Bare plasterboard, MDF or particleboard should be sealed with an oil based sealer. Tiling over joints in MDF or particleboard can cause problems unless a proper movement control joint is formed.

Sound painted surfaces should be sanded and scratched to give the tiles grip.

Setting out procedure:

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1. Stretch a chalk line between the centres of two facing walls. Snap the line, then do the same between the other pair of walls. The resulting lines must cross at the centre of the room at a precise 90° angle. Check with a carpenter’s square. If necessary, adjust the line angle until it’s 90°.
2. Taking one line at a time, lay the tiles side by side along the floor from the line to one end. If less than half a tile width remains between the last full tile and the wall or door, more the point centre half a tile width in the other direction. This will ensure a larger piece of tile at each end, giving a more attractive effect. (See Illustration 2 & 2b).
3. Repeat with the other line.
4. Seal grout with silicone sealer.
5. Use a contour gauge to duplicate irregular shapes, or make cardboard patterns. Cut as nearly as possible, then transfer the shapes to the tile.

Applying grout:
1. As some terrazzo floor tiles are porous, grout may be difficult to remove and could discolour and stain them. Check tile and grout compatibility when ordering.
2. For glazed or vitrified tiles, grout as with wall tiles.
3. After the grout has dried, fill joint around edge of room with appropriate silicone. Silicones matching grout colours are available.
4. Seal grout with silicone sealer.
Floor tiling - before you begin

Preparing the surface

What can you tile over?

For a square or rectangular room:
1. Stretch a chalk line between the centres of two facing walls. Snap the line, then do the same between the other pair of walls. The resulting lines must cross at the centre of the room at a precise 90° angle. Check with a carpenter’s square. If necessary, adjust the line angle until it’s 90°.
2. Taking one line at a time, lay the tiles side by side along the chalk line from one end. If less than a full tile width remains between the last full tile and the end or wall, move the centre point half a tile width in the other direction. This will ensure a larger piece of tile at each end, giving a more attractive effect. (See Illustration 2a & 2b).

Setting out procedure

1. As some terracotta floor tiles are porous, grout may be absorbed by them.
2. Lay all full tiles before laying cut tiles.
3. After the grout has dried, fill joint around edge of room with appropriate silicone. Silicones matching grout colours are available.
4. Seal grout with silicone sealer.

Wall tiling - before you begin

Tiling demands patience and precision. This pamphlet takes you through the process for tiling ordinary interior walls and floors. Complicated room or wall shapes require extensive cutting and unusual tile shapes are difficult for the inexperienced handyman. If you haven’t tiled before, start with a simple, undemanding project.

Shower tiling requires waterproofing of the substrate. This is beyond the skill of all but the average homeowner and the consequences of a leak can be expensive. Leave shower tiling to experienced, professional tilers.

Materials required

• Tiles
• Tile adhesive
• Tile grout

Floor versus wall tiles

There are a large variety of ceramic tiles available. Floor tiles are obviously subject to considerably more weight and wear than wall tiles. Therefore, while floor tiles can sometimes be applied to walls, wall tiles must never be used on floors.

Preparing the surface

The floor surface must be clean, dry, sound, flat and RIGID. Smooth concrete is ideal, as it’s perfectly level, can take the weight of a person. Concrete must be hard enough for tiles to be applied directly, but it may need to be prepared before tiling.

Setting out procedure

1. Starting at your chosen edge, or from the centre line, lay tiles in one quarter of the floor at a time. (See Illustration 2).
2. As with floors, adjust the position of full tiles. As with floors, adjust the position of full tiles. As with floors, adjust the position of full tiles. As with floors, adjust the position of full tiles.
3. Seal grout with silicone sealer.

Checklist

Note: Specialist tools can be hired.

Tiling interior walls and floors

Installation

1. As some terracotta floor tiles are porous, grout may be absorbed by them.
2. Lay all full tiles before laying cut tiles.
3. As with floors, adjust the position of the guide lines to ensure even and attractive lines of cut tiles along all edges.
4. Use your spirit level to draw a plumb vertical line from the centre-point, to the top of the area to be tiled.

Pointed plasterer’s trowel, putty knife or old knife

In addition to some of the materials listed above, you may also need:

• Ceramic tile cutter
• Square

3. Repeat with the other line.
4. Use a contour gauge to duplicate irregular shapes, or make cardboard patterns. Cut out as nearly as possible, then transfer the shape to the tile.
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Tiling demands patience and precision. This pamphlet takes you through the process for tiling ordinary interior walls and floors. Complicated room or wall shapes require extensive cutting and unusual tile shapes are difficult for the inexperienced home handyman. If you haven’t tiled before, start with a simple, undemanding project.

Shower tiling requires waterproofing of the substrate. This is beyond the skill of the average homeowner and the consequences of a leak can be expensive. Leave shower tiling to experienced, professional tilers.

Materials required
- Tiles
- Tile adhesive
- Tile grout
- Alkali-resistant fibre
- Sand
- Mastic
- Mortar
- Mortar units
- Rubber gloves
- Any special tiling requirements

Floor versus wall tiles
There are a large variety of ceramic tiles available. Floor tiles are obviously subject to considerably more weight and wear than wall tiles. Therefore, while floor tiles can sometimes be applied to walls, wall tiles must never be used on floors. Floor tiles are often thicker than wall tiles, or they may be vitrified (baked extremely dense and hard). This makes them more wear and damage resistant. Both wall and floor tiles may be glazed with a baked on glass but, this coating is harder for floors.

Do your homework when choosing tiles. Using inappropriate tiles can have disastrous consequences.

Checklist
- Specialist tools can be hired.
  - Tape measure
  - Pencil
  - Carpenter’s square
  - Contour gauge (helpful)
  - Chalk line (for some situations)
  - Spirit level - for wall tiling
  - Notched trowel for spreading adhesive
  - Tile nippers

Pointed plasterer’s trowel, putty knife or old knife
- Tile cutter. The type the tile sits in is more accurate than hand versions run against a straightedge.
- Rod saw for cutting tiles freehand.
- Every stone or fine Carbonamide paper for smoothing cut tile edges
- Bucket for mixing grout
- Silicone sealant
- Contour gauge (helpful)
- Carpenter’s square
- Tape measure
- Clean cloths
- Emery stone or fine Carborundum paper for smoothing cut tile edges
- Pointed plasterer’s trowel, putty knife or old knife
- Tile cutter. The type the tile sits in is more accurate than hand versions run against a straightedge.

Considering special tiling requirements
- Beaten brick
- Terracotta
- Engineered stone
- Marble
- Porcelain
- Granite
- Bamboo
- Slate
- Natural stone
- Lacquered wood
- Metal

Tile laying, starting with full tiles from a very visible line (i.e. a wide doorstep, or where the tiles give way to carpet). This is particularly appropriate where cut tiles against the opposite wall will be concealed by furniture. (See Illustration 3). 3. Repeat with the other line.
- Cuts at one end only:
  - You may want to start with full tiles from a very visible line, e.g. a wide doorway, or where the tiles give way to carpet. This is particularly appropriate where cut tiles against the opposite wall will be concealed by furniture. (See Illustration 3).

Setting out procedure
For a square or rectangular room:
1. Stretch a chalk line between the centres of two facing walls. Snap the line, then do the same between the other pair of walls. The resulting lines must cross at the centre of the room at a precise 90° angle. Check with a carpenter’s square. If necessary, adjust the line angle until it’s 90°.
2. Taking one line at a time, lay the tiles side by side along the floor from the line to one end. If less than a half a tile width remains between the last full tile and the wall or end, more the centre point half a tile width in the other direction. This will ensure a larger piece of tile at each end, giving a more attractive effect. (See Illustration 2a & 2b).
3. Repeat with the other line.
4. Seal grout with silicone sealer.

Installation
Laying the tiles:
1. Starting at your chosen edge, or from the centre line, lay tiles in one quarter of the floor at a time.
2. Lay all full tiles before laying cut tiles.
3. As you lay, check the lines of tiles are straight and at 90° to each other.
4. Floor tiles are often thicker, and have to be stronger than wall tiles. They can be difficult to cut. For smooth curved cuts, use a tile cutter.
5. Use a contour gauge to duplicate irregular shapes, or make cardboard patterns. Cut as near as possible, then transfer the shape to the tile.

Applying grout:
1. As some terracotta floor tiles are porous, grout may be difficult to remove and could discolour and stain them. Check tile and grout compatibility before ordering.
2. For glazed or vitrified tiles, grout as with wall tiles.
3. After the grout has dried, fill joint around edge of room with appropriate silicone. Silicones matching grout colours are available.
4. Seal grout with silicone sealer.

Wall tiling - before you begin
Tiling presents the added difficulty of holding tiles on the wall while the adhesive sets. You may need to make up 50mm wide strong fibres strips to use as tile guides and supports.

Preparing the wall:
- Walls must be dry, flat, firm, clean, dry and soap-free, with no loose paint, plaster or dirt. Holes, dents and rough areas should be filled with a plaster based filler, then sanded smooth.
- Bare plasterboard, MDF or particleboard should be sealed with an oil based sealer. Tiling over joints in MDF or particleboard can cause problems unless a proper movement control joint is formed.
- Sound painted surfaces should be sanded and scratched to give the tiles grip.

Setting out procedure:
For tiling the whole wall:
Setting out for walls is similar to floors, but you obviously can’t lay tiles out dry on the wall. Mark a stock of tile in tile widths (see Illustration 4). Use that to calculate the position of full tiles. As with floors, adjust the position of the guide lines to ensure even and attractive lines of cut tiles along all edges.

Use your spirit level to draw a plumb vertical line from the centre point, to the top of the area to be tiled.

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Materials required

- Tiles
- Tile adhesive
- Tile grout

Depending on the situation, you may also need:
- Silicone sealant
- Chalk line

Floor versus wall tiles

There are a large variety of ceramic tiles available. Floor tiles are obviously subject to considerably more weight and wear than wall tiles. Therefore, while floor tiles can sometimes be applied to walls, wall tiles must never be used on floors. Floor tiles are often thicker than wall tiles, or they may be vitrified (baked extremely dense and hard). This makes them more wear and damage resistant. Both wall and floor tiles may be glazed with a baked on gloss but, this coating makes them more wear and damage resistant. Both wall and floor tiles are obviously subject to considerably more weight and wear than wall tiles. They can be difficult to cut. For smooth movement control joint is formed.

Floor tiling - before you begin

Preparing the surface

What can you tile over? The floor surface must be clean, dry, sound, flat and RIGID. Smooth concrete is ideal, as it's perfectly rigid. However, concrete floors should be at least four months old before tiling, so most of the shrinkage in the concrete has occurred.

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Setting out procedure

For a square or rectangular room:
1. Stretch a chalk line between the centres of two facing walls. Snap the line, then do the same between the other pair of walls. The resulting lines must cross at the centre of the room at a precise 90° angle. Check with a carpenter’s square. If necessary, adjust the line angle until it's 90°.
2. Taking one line at a time, lay the tiles side by side along the line from one end. If less than a whole tile width remains between the last full tile and the wall or end, move the centre point half a tile width to the wall or end, giving a more attractive effect. (See Illustration 1).
3. Repeat with the other line. 4. Seal grout with silicone sealer.

Installation

Laying the tiles:
1. Starting at your chosen edge, or from the centre line, lay tiles in one quarter of the floor at a time.
2. Lay all full tiles before laying cut tiles.
3. As you lay, check the lines of tiles are straight and at 90° to each other.
4. Floor tiles are often thicker, and have to be stronger than wall tiles. They can be difficult to cut. For smooth cut tiles and cutouts use a wood cutter. Support the tile wall while cutting.
5. Use a contour gauge to duplicate irregular shapes, or make cardboard patterns. Cut as nearly as possible, then transfer the shapes to the tile.

Applying grout:
1. As some terracotta floor tiles are porous, grout may be difficult to remove and could discolor and stain them. Check tile and grout compatibility when ordering.
2. For glazed or vitrified tiles, grout as with wall tiles.
3. After the grout has dried, fill joint around edge of room with appropriate silicone. Silicones matching grout colours are available.
4. Seal grout with silicone sealer.

Wall tiling - before you begin

Wall tiling presents the added difficulty of holding tiles on the wall while the adhesive sets. You may need to make up 50mm wide timber furring strips to use as tile guides and supports.

Checking the wall surface:
If the wall has too much give or flex, you may need to strap off the lining, fix more studs and/or naggin, then relime with a suitable substrate.

Wall tiles can be applied over plasterboard, fibre cement board, plywood, solid plaster, brick or blockwork. MDF board or chipboard are also fine, but not in wet or humid areas.

Preparing the surface:
Walls must be dry, flat, firm, clean and grease and soap free, with no loose paint, plaster or dust. Holes, dents and rough areas should be filled with a plaster based filler, then sanded smooth.

Bare plasterboard, MDF or particleboard should be sealed with an oil based sealer. Tiling over joints in MDF or particleboard can cause problems unless a proper movement control joint is formed.

Sound painted surfaces should be sanded and scratched to give the tiles grip.

Setting out procedure:
For tiling the whole wall:
Setting out for walls is similar to floors, but you obviously can't lay tiles out dry on the wall. Mark a stack of timber in tile widths (see Illustration 4). Use that to calculate the position of full tiles. As with floors, adjust the position of the guide lines to ensure even and attractive lines of cut tiles along all edges.

Use your spirit level to draw a plumb vertical line from the centre point, to the top of the area to be tiled.

Checklist:
Note: specialist tools can be hired.
- Tape measure
- Pencil
- Carpenter’s square
- Contour gauge (helpful)
- Chalk line (for some situations)
- Spirit level - for wall tiling
- Notched trowel for spreading adhesive
- Tile nippers
For tiling part way up a wall: (e.g. to a dado)

Ideally, the desired height will be achieved using only full tiles. You’ll probably want to finish along the top with a full tile anyway.

Use your spirit level to identify the lowest point of the wall. Floors and baths often run off a little. Set an upright tile against the wall at that spot. Using your spirit level, draw a perfectly horizontal line across the wall from the top of the tile. (See Illustration 5).

This is where you can use your first furring strip. Nail a straight batten up to and beneath that line, to support the second line of tiles. They will be applied first.

Find and mark the vertical centre line as with a full wall and start with a full tile from that line. Where there is an obvious outside corner or edge, like the front of a bath recess, start from the outside corner and work to the inner corner.

All but one of the bottom row of tiles may need cutting. It depends on the setout.

Installation

Applying tiles to the wall

1. Apply full tiles before cut tiles. Start either at the vertical centreline or from a full tile edge.
2. Apply tile adhesive to the wall, covering a small manageable area at a time until you get the hang of things. Spread it with a notched trowel so that all areas are evenly ribbed. For hard to reach areas, spread the adhesive on the back of the tile before placing it.
3. Place tiles carefully in the pattern shown. (See Illustration 6). Either flip them up into position from the bottom edge, or press them into place with a slight twist. Too much sliding about forces adhesive up into the joints. Press firmly into place.
4. Use your level often to check horizontal and vertical alignment of tiles as you go.
5. When all the full tiles are glued, wipe away any adhesive in unoccupied spaces. Do not allow it to dry. Leave the full tiles 4 or 5 hours to set, before removing furring strips, and/or applying the cut tiles.
6. When measuring a tile for cutting, allow for the width of grout lines.
7. Cutting tiles in a straight line is not difficult, and gets easier the better your cutter is. If you have more than a dozen visible cuts, hire a good tile cutter.
8. For curved cuts or notches, mark the area of tile to be removed with a pencil. Use tile nippers to cautiously nip away the waste, a little at a time. If the cut will be covered by fixture plates or flanges, the cut doesn’t need to be perfect. To apply a tile completely around a pipe, first cut the tile in half, then nip away the space for the pipe. (See Illustration 7). For a master edge, cut with a rod saw.
9. Remove any adhesive on the face of the tiles with an appropriate solvent, cleaner or a razor blade. Allow tiles to set at least 24 hours before grouting.

Applying grout

1. Mix grout according to packet instructions. Depending on the job, you may use latex grout additive instead of, or as well as water.
2. Spread grout over tiles. (See Illustration 8). - use squeegee - spread diagonally - force grout into joints
3. Wipe excess grout off with clean damp sponge. Use the rounded handle of a knife or a shaped piece of dowelling, to clean out, shape and smooth grout in joints.
4. After the grout dries enough to form a haze on the tile, polish the surface with a dry cloth. Coat the grout with silicone sealer to prevent discoloration.

IMPORTANT: Remove grout from floor/wall or wall/wall joints and fill with an appropriate silicone to accommodate movement. Grout can crack in these situations.

Reference: BRANZ Good Tiling Practice Guide

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- spread diagonally
- force grout into joints

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Produced in association with The Building Research Association of New Zealand

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