

Caring for your tiles – Original Style Victorian Tiles

Victorian Floors – Geometric floor tiles were originally used to ornament medieval places of worship and homes of the ruling classes. Early in the reign of Queen Victoria this style of floor tiling became fashionable and classic designs were copied in buildings around the British Empire.



Figure 1 –Victorian floor pattern.

The tiles are constructed from clay, and fired in furnaces to harden (similar to pottery making). This process means that there is not a guarantee that all the tiles are identical in size or shade (of each colour) and the sizes may vary by up to 2mm.

All the tiles are vitrified (hard fired) but unglazed (not waterproof and quite porous).

Customers having new tiles laid need to understand that this type of tile will not have perfect edges, may show evidence of shade variations when tiles of the same colour are used, and that the width of spaces between the tiles are varied to accommodate size differences. However the tiles are so small and the patterns complex enough that these differences are lost in the impact of the overall style. Although your floor is only just over 11' long and 3' wide, nearly 1000 individual tiles make up the floor.

Your Tiled Installation

The floor is a 100mm concrete base over light polythene, covered by a latex based self smoothing compound. The tiles were laid on a solid bed of flexible cementitious adhesive. The tiles had an initial coat of FilaW68 stain protector to prevent grout staining. A concrete coloured grout was then applied with a colour matched anti-bacterial silicone to seal to visible joints to adjacent walls and floors of differing materials (e.g. to wooden floors). Finally 2 further coats of FilaW68 were applied.

Looking after a Victorian floor.

1. Your floor has been sealed with an impregnating sealer manufactured by Filachim. This should give your floor stain protection for up to 5 years. This drastically reduces the absorption of liquid through the surface. To further enhance the finish, a liquid wax should be applied – we generally recommend Filachim's own polishes on their sealer, but we have



never experienced problems when other manufacturers waxes have been applied after sealing with FilaW68. Application of a polish also provides a further protection against grime damage.

2. Take care to keep the floor clear of dirt and grit from outdoors – this has the effect of scratching both the sealer and the tiles. It is recommended that the floor is either swept or vacuumed regularly to prevent scratching the surface of your tiles.
3. If any liquids are spilled on the floor mop them up as soon as possible. Coffee, tea, and red wine are particularly strong contaminants and should always be immediately mopped up when spilt.
4. The tiles should be washed regularly (2 or 3 times a month at the very least) using a mild soap based cleaner (the Ecover products sold in supermarkets are generally soap based products). This will clean the tiles without damaging the tile, grout or sealer used.
5. When cleaning the floor remember that the solution is “dirty water” and it is recommended that you rinse the floor over with clean water before allowing to dry (this requires a “2 bucket” cleaning process – one with cleaning solution and one with clean water).
6. If the floor becomes stained in a particular spot, use a neutral pH cleaner applied watered down according to the manufacturer’s instructions.
 - a. We recommend either Fila PS87 or LTP Grimex to prevent removal of too much of the applied stain protector.
 - b. Allow time for the solution to “sit” and lift the dirt – normally between 5 and 15 minutes.
 - c. Use a nylon scrubbing brush to agitate the solution until the stain is lifted.
 - d. Do not allow the solution to dry out and rinse the surface with clean water.
 - e. Check to see if the stain has been removed – further application of the cleaner and scrubbing may be necessary. A badly stained floor may need over an hour of agitation to lift the stain completely. The critical point with neutral pH cleaners is that they must be given time to work and rinsed before deciding if the stain is gone.
 - f. If the stain is still not removed – **PLEASE CALL US ON 01761 438888 FOR ADVICE.**
 - g. Finally when the stain is gone and the floor completely dried, then apply two coats of sealer.
7. Do not use “mother says” suggestions for cleaning with vinegar, salt, soda, coca cola etc. These can add to the stain and may damage the surface of the tile.
8. This guide is to help you maintain your floor but please do not hesitate to call for advice no matter how long it is since we completed the work for you.