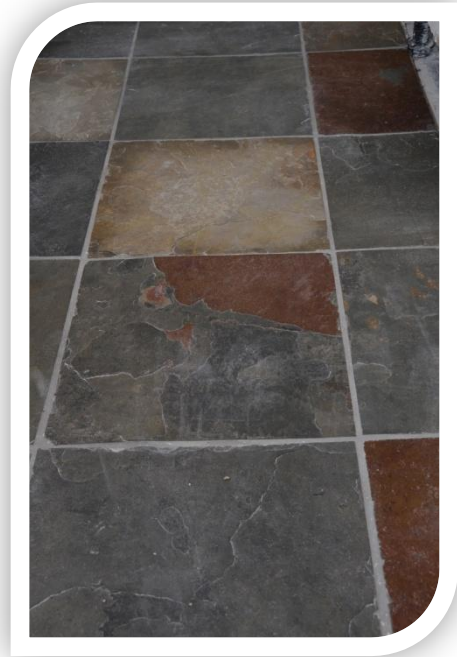


Caring for your tiles – Natural Slate

Slate – a metamorphic rock that is foliated (an additional fabric of sediment) and derived from shale type sedimentary rocks, typically of clay and volcanic ash. Slate occurs in a variety of colours, but is frequently found coloured grey. Slate deposits can be found across the world, and in recent years, massive slate deposits have been quarried to provide a ready source of cheap slate for construction. In the UK there are extensive deposits of slate which are in a wide variety of colours including yellow, green and purple.

It is currently very popular as a floor tile, but efflorescence (a process of water loss that crystallises a salt onto the surface) can be a significant problem, and it is extremely slippery when wet. The stone is also naturally “soft” and is susceptible to abrasive damage, and can be damaged by acid based cleaning solutions.



Looking after a slate floor.

1. Your floor has been sealed with either a wax polish or (in cases where the tiles are likely to get wet frequently) with a non-impregnating sealer. This will give your floor some stain protection as well as enhancing the beauty of the stones colours.
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 stone itself. It is recommended that the floor is either swept or vacuumed on a daily basis 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 slate should be washed regularly (2 or 3 times a week 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 slate without damaging the stone, 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.
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.
 - 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 07505 105265 for advice.
 - g. Finally when the stain is gone and the floor completely dried, then apply two coats of the sealer used on the rest of the floor (we leave the remainder of the sealer with you for this reason) to the area that you have cleaned.
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 stone 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.

Slate – warnings

SLATE HAS A CONTENT OF SILICA THAT CAN POSE A HEALTH HAZARD IN DUST FORM AND DUST FROM SLATE CAN CAUSE SILICOSIS. WHEN VACUUMING DUST ON THESE SURFACES IT IS RECOMMENDED THAT THE VACUUM CLEANER HAS A HEPA FILTRATION SYSTEM AND THE DUST BAG SHOULD NOT BE EMPTIED IN A CONFINED SPACE.

Please note that sealing your floor and keeping the sealer intact is the best way of stopping the harmful build-up of any silica based dust.