



CHIC DÉCOR & STYLE REDEFINED



In an era when Real Estate is exploring newer technologies with each passing day, it is high time we concentrate on things as basic as tiles...

BY: **DR. JYOTI SINGH**

In a recent study conducted by the office of a renowned real estate developer, it was sought to compare “what others provide” and “what we provide” as a part of their marketing strategy and corresponding increased benefits thereof. This comparison concerned an assorted range of products used by developers like wooden doors, wire mesh doors, tiles in drawing and dining, types of cupboards and material used, kitchen fittings, water supply pipes and so on.

Now, when it came to tiles especially in drawing and dining area, this particular developer was said to be

providing “high quality designer digital tiles costing more than twice the ordinary tiles” as compared to “ordinary vitrified tiles” provided by others. The corresponding increased benefit was said to be “Give grand look of a kothi, richness and long life to your house”. In the light of the above statement and user reviews, it has been well established that exquisite new collection of digital tiles available in the market has the uniqueness of high definition digital printing, which gives an option to play around with different colours and designs, thus, combining strength with style. Moreover, high resolutions’ printing of images



give a three dimensional look to the space where it is used and gives it a more dramatic appeal.

USE OF TILES IN FLOORING

Similar to strength and durability, flooring too is one of the most important aspects of a project. And the most interesting fact about flooring is that there are many options to choose from and the best flooring choice depends upon value of a said property and the function of any given room. For example, in a bathroom, you want flooring that is resistant to water whereas drawing and dining are the most frequented spaces and are a showcase for outside visitors. Needless to mention, since both the areas have varying functions, their flooring requirement is completely different from each other owing to which, importance of various different kinds of flooring can be well understood.

WHY TILE FLOORING IS IN

Off late, the trend in flooring too has changed a great deal and tile flooring, be it ceramic, porcelain or other kinds, is being preferred. That mainly is because not only are tiles just easy to clean, durable and water resistant, but also are available in a range of size, design and price. Additionally, tiles just need to be mopped and dried and if done regularly, they remain clean and shiny. However, it is considered prudent to undertake a periodic deep cleaning using vigorous cleaning techniques to remove any build up of lime scale or cleaning agent residue.

TECH SPECS

The cleaning of tiles might appear to be a child's play but when it comes to installing tiles, it definitely requires some skill to install. How technical is the nature of installation is directly proportional to the material used in making a particular type of tile.

Vitrified tiles are made by baking fine minerals like clay and silica, at extreme high temperatures where the individual grains or particles melt and fuse to make a

vitreous surface.

A tile is basically a piece manufactured from hard-wearing material. The three basic types of tiles are ceramic, porcelain and glass. Ceramic tiles are made from clay (clay is pliable in its natural form, but becomes hard and durable when exposed to high temperatures) mixed with some minerals and water. Through a treatment process by heating, the product becomes solidified. These may either be unglazed or glazed. Glazing is done to seal the top, because it is porous. This top layer is often called the design layer, as it also determines the tile's texture, design and colour. Tiles are used for covering not only floors but also walls etc.

PROPERTIES OF TILES

From aesthetic point of view, three predominant properties of tiles are: format, colour and décor. Format means the shape and size of the tile. The most common forms of ceramic tiles are square and rectangular although tiles are also available in other forms as well. The format of tiles significantly affects the visual impact of the tiled surface.

Décor can be defined as the design on a tile. In case of glazed tiles, the range of possible decors is unlimited. By the method of silk-screening, any design or photograph can be reproduced on the surface of a tile.

Colour complements the décor only, for example

- Red is the colour of energy and strength
- Orange is colour of warmth and cheerfulness
- Yellow colour gives feeling of airiness
- Blue colour exudes a feeling of coolness and cleanliness
- White is the colour of hygiene, purity and simplicity

CHOOSING TILES

One must consider a few simple rules, besides your budgetary constraints, while choosing tiles.

Breaking Strength -smaller font to be used

The first and foremost point is the breaking strength of tiles i.e. how much stress is safe in order to save the tile from cracking. This is particularly important in case of floor tiles. Wall tiles don't have to carry heavy stress hence it does not matter much in case of wall tiles but for flooring, the tiles must have the highest possible breaking strength. The thumb rule is - a higher break tolerance tile is necessary for horizontally laid tiles.

WEARING RATE

The next important factor is wearing rate of the tiles. The coefficient of friction is also an important aspect. A higher coefficient refers to slip-restraint and is particularly recommended in such places where either wetness or heavy foot traffic is anticipated.



PRISM

Water Absorption Percentage

Knowing the water absorption percentage of tiles is also a good idea. Tiles with 5% or more absorption percent should not be used where the weather is cold or else the tiles will wear out soon. Aesthetic is, no doubt, important but that must not top your priority list. If a tile is not durable or of high quality, it will chip and wear very soon, making it lose any aesthetic value it had.

SPECIFICATIONS

Tiles normally come in packs of four and packing details are of the type: Size (605 mm × 605 mm or 24" × 24"); tiles / box (4 pieces); thickness (10.0 mm); coverage area square metre (1.184); weight / box (31.00 kg). The technical specifications cover a whole of characteristics of tiles like dimensional and surface quality, physical properties, chemical properties, and thermal properties. A typical example is given below

FLOOR TILES SPECIFICATIONS	
Characteristics	CEN standards, ISO standards & Indian standards
Deviation in Length	Max. +/- 0.5%
Deviation in Thickness	Max. +/- 0.5%
Wedging Warpage	Max. +/- 0.5%
Squareness	Max. +/- 0.6%
Water Absorption	3-6%
Scratch Resistance (Moh's Scale)	Min. 5
Abrasion Resistance	As per the abrasion class indicated by the manufacturer
Crazing Resistance	In conformity with the norms
Chemical Resistance	Resistant to all acids all alkalis (except Hydrofluoric Acid and its compounds)
Bending Strength	>=220 Kgs/cm ²
Thermal Shock	Resistant to 10 Cycles

LAYING TILES

While laying the tiles, one must ensure that the concrete surface over which the tiles are to be placed must be level and sound. There should be no dips, hollows or expansion joints. If there are any, fill and level those using underlay, fiber cement sheeting or leveling compounds. Sufficient time should have elapsed after having poured concrete so that it is dry and would have lost its initial dampness. A simple check is to place a



dry rubber mat on the concrete overnight. If there is moisture on the surface when you move the mat next morning, the concrete is not ready for tiling. When planning to lay tiles, mark a chalk line on the floor down the centre of the room parallel to the wall that will give the best layout. Lay the first row of tiles down this line and work outwards towards the walls. For good results, lightly press and twist each tile to set it in the mortar. Every now and then use a straight edge or level to make sure all the tiles are laying flat. Any tile above or below the level of adjoining ones should be removed and some adhesive should be used for adjustment. Do not leave this job for too long or it will be very difficult to remove the tiles. As you near cabinets, doorways, walls, and other flooring stops, trim tiles as needed for installation. Use a tile cutter or a tile saw for cutting. For making curved cuts, tile nippers can be used.

CONCLUSION

Gone are the days when tiles were good choices for only kitchens and bathrooms. The availability of latest textures and finishes work well in living rooms, dining rooms and/or even in bedrooms. Furthermore, the range is wide enough to satisfy everyone's taste and budget. If large area is to be covered new styles of oversized tiles are also quite in which are not only fashionable but also can create a chic look.