



Installation Guide: Pre-Sealed Saltillo

Elon® **ALWAYS** recommends that all installations be done in accordance with local building codes and adheres to Tile Council of North America specifications.

Preparation

Prior to installation of Pre-Sealed Saltillo:

- Pre-sealed Saltillo cartons should all be opened and inspected.
 - Imperfections such as hairline chips, cracks, bumps, shade, and size variations are inherent to handmade pre-sealed Saltillo and are not considered defects. Every piece will be different from any other piece in the installation.
- All cartons should be opened, and material should be separated to allow the installer to layout all pieces and blend them together to give the final installation a uniform color blend, known as "Dry Laid."
- On large jobs, always blend material from multiple pallets when Dry Laying pre-sealed Saltillo.
- When installing pre-sealed handmade Saltillo, always allow for extreme size variations between pieces. When laying out for the installation, select a joint width between 3/8" to 3/4" based on the size variations of the material being installed.
- Lime or salt pops are caused when minerals found in the clay expand and cause slight pits to develop in the surface of the Saltillo.
 - Lime or salt pops will occur both during and after the installation and are not defects but are characteristics of the material that will add to the Old-World Charm of the installation.

Installation

When installing Pre-Sealed Saltillo:

- Many setting material manufacturers recommend using latex modified thinset for Pre-sealed Saltillo tile on both walls and floors rather than mastics, due to the extreme porosity of the Saltillo bisque or body.
 - Always follow the manufacturer's Instructions and limitations.
- When used in showers or tubs, pre-sealed Saltillo should never be set with the bottom course extending into the shower base or tight to tub lip. Always leave a minimum gap of 1/4" above and perpendicular to the floor or lip of the tub or shower base and use a waterproof flexible sealant where they meet per TCNA specification B412-23.
 - This will prevent water from wicking up the body and causing discoloration and water lines to be seen.

Grouting

Grouting Pre-Sealed Saltillo:

- When grouting pre-sealed Saltillo, always do a test sample first.
- Grout joint widths should range from a minimum 3/8" width to a maximum of 3/4" for this type of grout.
- Sanded grout for handmade pre-sealed Saltillo will be a MUST.

Sealing Pre-Sealed Saltillo

Re-Sealing Elon® Tile's Pre-Sealed Saltillo with Clear Semi-Gloss Finish:

- For maximum protection, Elon® suggests sealing the grout and re-sealing the surface of the Saltillo tile with Toro Shield Water-Based Sealer, available from an Elon® dealer, 36 hours after removing the grout haze from the Saltillo with a product like Aqua Mix's Cement Grout Haze Remover
 - Always do a test area first

Sealing Raw Saltillo

Many different finishes can be achieved; Elon® suggests the following:

- Aquamix's Sealers Choice Gold penetrating sealer will leave the Saltillo with a natural finish yet will be protected from staining.
 - +5 coats may be required
 - Between coats place a teaspoon of water on sealed Saltillo, allow to sit for 2 minutes. If when blotted up any discoloration from the water is noticed additional coats of sealer is required.
- Aquamix's Seal & Finish Low Sheen will protect the Saltillo while leaving a low sheen finish.
 - 2-3 coats will be required
- Aquamix's High-Gloss Sealer will seal the Saltillo and give it a high sheen finish.
 - 2-3 coats will be required

Common Problems

Common problems in Pre-Sealed Saltillo:

- Lime or salt pops WILL occur both during and after the installation and are not defects but are characteristics of the material that will add to the charm and character of the installation.
 - If a void occurs in the surface, it can be filled with grout prior to resealing the area.
 - Simply apply additional sealer to the area, and it will blend in with the rest of the installation.
- Many times, irregular joints and lippage or uneven surface height are results of Saltillo installed with too tight of a grout joint.
 - 3/8" to 3/4" grout joints will allow imperfections in the Saltillo to be blended, creating a uniform installation.
- Always inspect material prior to installation.

Installation is Acceptance

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