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ZELLIGE HOME

Zellige Home Handcrafted Home Design Tiles



How to install Zellige tiles

This guide outlines the steps needed for a successful Zellige tile installation. Everyone involved should review it thoroughly before any work begins.

Each Zellige Home tile is crafted in our Moroccan workshop, established in 1912, by Maallems—master artisans who train for decades to perfect the centuries-old process. Each piece carries the subtle irregularities and rich texture that only come from human hands. Proper installation is essential—not only for durability, but to bring out the full depth and character of the tile.

While this guide is intended to be accessible, Zellige tile demands a level of care and craftsmanship best provided by a professional. We strongly recommend hiring an installer with specific experience working with Zellige.

Zellige Home is not responsible for the maintenance or installation of tile after delivery. We do not accept liability for damages incurred during or after installation, dissatisfaction related to natural variations in color, texture, or finish, or any issues arising from improper handling, storage, or maintenance.

We recommend ordering 10–15% more tile than your project’s exact measurements to account for cuts and adjustments. For greater flexibility in layout and tile selection—especially if you’re particular about tone, thickness, or texture—an overage of 20–25% is suggested. Zellige tiles feature natural variation, including subtle differences in color and thickness, irregular edges, surface crazing, and occasional pits or chips that may expose the clay body beneath the glaze.

These are hallmarks of a centuries-old craft, not defects. Samples are a general representation and may not exactly match your full order. Likewise, additions placed after the initial purchase may vary slightly due to differences between production batches.

Required Materials

- Mapei Keraflex or similar high-quality flexible cement-based adhesive
- Notched trowel
- Bubble level
- Rubber grout float
- Mapei Ultracolor Plus FA grout (for glazed Zellige)
 - For Raw Terracotta: Mapei Flexcolor CQ grout and 511 Porous Plus sealer
- Sponge and clean water
- Water-cooled diamond tile cutter (wet saw)
- Tile spacers (optional)

IMPORTANT: Safety First!

Zellige tiles have sharp, handcrafted edges. Always wear protective gloves and safety goggles when handling or cutting tiles. Use a wet saw with a diamond blade for smooth, clean cuts and reduced dust. Ensure your workspace is well-ventilated when applying adhesives or sealers, and keep the area dry and free of hazards.

Step-by-Step Installation

1. Inspect Your Tiles

Open all boxes and inspect the tiles. Zellige tiles are handcrafted and will feature variation. Blend tiles from multiple boxes to distribute color and texture evenly across

your surface.

2. Sort Tiles Before You Begin

Lay out a small section in advance to plan for visual balance. Set aside tiles with more prominent imperfections for less visible areas or cuts. Sorting gives you more control over the final look.

3. Prepare the Surface

Verify that the surface you're tiling is clean, completely dry, and perfectly level. Uneven surfaces can affect how the tiles sit. A primer may improve adhesion.

4. Clean the Tiles

Zellige tiles often gather dust in transit. Before installing, soak glazed tiles in water for 1–2 minutes to wash away any surface dust or residue. Do not soak unglazed or natural Zellige tiles, as moisture can cause mineral deposits to rise to the surface.

5. Apply Adhesive

Spread your tile adhesive using a notched trowel, working in small areas so it doesn't dry out before you place the tile.

6. Set the Tiles

Place each tile by hand and press gently but firmly into the adhesive. Due to irregular edges, spacers are optional. Authentic Zellige is typically installed with minimal or no grout lines.

7. Check for Level

Use a bubble level to keep the surface balanced. Some height variation is natural and adds to the character of the finished surface.

8. Allow to Dry

Let the adhesive set for at least 24 hours before applying grout.

9. Apply Grout

For glazed Zellige, use Mapei Ultracolor Plus FA to avoid staining. For raw terracotta, seal with 511 Porous Plus before grouting. Apply grout with a rubber float, and gently wipe excess with a damp sponge before it dries.

10. Final Cleaning

Once grout is dry, clean the tiles with a soft cloth or damp sponge to remove any haze. Apply a finish sealer such as FILA Matte Wax Sealer for added protection.

A Successful Installation

A well-installed Zellige surface will feel rich, irregular, and full of light-catching texture. Expect gentle shifts in tone and undulation across the surface—these are the qualities that define authentic Zellige. An experienced Zellige installer will know how to merge these elements into a cohesive and intentional final result.

Zellige Maintenance


Zellige requires little maintenance beyond basic care. Clean with a soft cloth and mild, non-acidic soap. Avoid harsh chemicals, vinegar, or abrasive cleaners, as they can damage the glaze. For unglazed tiles, resealing periodically will help protect the surface from stains. With proper care, your Zellige will continue to age beautifully over time. For additional questions, contact our expert team at support@zelligehome.com or consult a professional installer.

Documents / Resources

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References

- [User Manual](#)

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