



Understanding Tile Terms

What do I need to know when buying tiles?

When it comes to buying tiles, if you aren't familiar with the process, you can get caught out if there are certain industry terms and practices you are not aware of.

Industry terms like 'shade, spoilage or wastage, calibration' are things you may hear when making selections or placing orders, but what do these terms actually mean and how will they have a bearing on your project?

Usually when dealing with any reputable dealer (like your local Tile Power professional) this information will be explained thoroughly, but it is always better to be armed with a little knowledge before you start than go in blind.

Below are some of the regularly used industry terms - what they mean and what you need to know.

Industry Term - 'Shades'

Tiles are manufactured in a large oven like device called a kiln and like all kiln fired products, there will be slight variations from batch to batch. Shading is a term used to describe a specific tonal difference from batch to batch. This is important to understand as the same product / same colour but different shade can have disastrous results to a projects overall look.

What you need to know :

- 1) Always try to buy all your tiles at the one time to ensure consistent shade.
- 2) Always keep a couple of boxes aside for future use such as running repairs to the installation. Once some time has passed, there is little hope of getting the exact same shade of tile again.



Industry Term - 'Wastage or Spoilage'

Wastage or spoilage refers to the small percentage of tiles for any given project that are either broken or damaged during on site handling or used for cuts. This is unavoidable and a necessary factor when estimating your project size.

What you need to know :

- 1) Generally allow an extra 10% for wastage. This is generally enough for most projects and any left over boxes can be kept for future running repairs.



Industry Term - 'Calibration'

Calibration refers to the standardised thickness of any given batch of tiles produced. For good quality tiles, stone or mosaics the calibration will be very much uniform from piece to piece.

What you need to know :

- 1) Calibration issues can cause installation problems depending how much variance there is within the batch, Tilers must periodically check for this during installation to ensure there are no calibration problems.



Industry Term - 'Sizing Variation'

When speaking of sizing variation in relation to tiles, this refers to the variance in size from the standardised size of a particular kind, ie: a manufacturer may produce a run of tiles to be sold as 300 x 600, but after all the processes are complete there may be a variation of up to 3mm in the finished size (297 x 597). This is an acceptable standard provided all the tiles within a batch carry the same variation.

What you need to know :

- 1) Sizing variation will not cause issues with the overall finish of the installation.

*** Information disclosed is a general guide only. For more detailed information regarding your specific situation please contact your closest Tile Power location.**