



# Tile + Stone Sealing Guide

## What are Sealers?

Sealers for tile and stone are typically liquid products applied to the surface of the substrate (tile or stone) to provide a level of stain protection and to promote the ease of cleaning to the surface. These products can either be water based or solvent based depending on the technology and intended purpose of the sealer.

## What types are available?

There are two categories of sealer which are defined by how they react with the tile or stone surface as detailed in the below categories.

**Penetrating Sealers :** This category of sealer is designed to be 'invisible' or 'natural looking' by penetrating beyond the surface and bonding to the micro structure of the substrate. This process leaves a micro barrier of sealer 'resin' which acts as the oil or water repellency barrier. These sealers are the cutting edge of technology with sometimes very complex chemistry.

**Topical Sealers :** This category of sealer is designed to form a physical barrier or coating which adheres to the surface of the substrate. As a result this alters the colour and sheen of the surface, with generally a higher sheen and deeper colour. The use of this type of sealer can be limited due to fairly specific requirements and conditions for this sealer to perform properly. These product formulations are generally quite basic but effective and have been around for many decades.

## Do my tiles require sealing?

Understanding the sealing requirements of a tile is generally linked to the porosity of the surface. The higher the porosity, the more it requires sealing to prevent permanent staining. Generally sealing can be beneficial even on lower porosity tiles to assist with maintenance and ease of cleaning on tile surfaces as well assist with the porosity of the grout joints. Below is a guide on tiles and their general sealing requirements.

**Glazed Ceramics / Glazed Porcelains :** This category generally does not require sealing for the tile itself as the glazing acts as a barrier to contaminants. These are generally the lowest porosity products on the market. The grout joints however will be porous and will require sealing unless epoxy grout has been installed.

**Porcelains / Polished Porcelains :** Porcelains tiles - although having very low porosity may require sealing if not already factory treated. These products generally have micro pores which may absorb stains if not maintained properly. A very small number of high quality and dense porcelains may not require sealing due to the superior quality of materials used in its production and the premium processing methods, but these products usually come at a premium price.

**Quarry and Terracotta Tiles :** These products have medium to high porosity and as a general rule will require a sealing treatment to prevent maintenance and staining issues down the track. Always ask your **Tile Power professional** for specific sealing advice when dealing with this category of products.

**Natural Stone Products :** The porosity of natural stone can vary greatly from low to high depending on the type and country of origin. As a rule all natural stones will benefit from sealing due to a natural capillary action which forms as the stone itself is formed in nature. Some have higher capillary action than others but all will have it to some degree.

## How long will Sealer last?

Sealer technology and maintenance systems have come a long way in the last 10 years, with some manufacturers claiming an effective lifespan of 15 years or more if their maintenance systems are followed. As with all treatments regular assessment is the surest way to avoid failure.

## Can I do the sealing myself?

Yes - sealer application is an easy process to undertake which involves 3 easy steps.

- 1) Floor preparation :** Vacuum then scrub your floor and spot clean any stains or marks. Then allow to dry completely.
- 2) Sealer Application :** Gently apply an even amount of sealer over the entire tile surface not forgetting the grout as well. Evenly wet the tile and grout with the sealer, being careful not to agitate the product too much.
- 3) Finishing :** Once the sealer has dried, you may begin to buff the surface to remove any residue that may be present. This can be easily done with a white towel or cloth.

*All sealing situations are different and may need slightly different techniques to get the job done right. Please contact your local **Tile Power professional** for detailed information on your specific situation.*

**\* Information disclosed is a general guide only. For more detailed information regarding your specific situation please contact your closest Tile Power location. - [www.tilepower.com](http://www.tilepower.com)**