

TERRACOTTA CLEANING, SEALING & MAINTENANCE GUIDE

PRE-SEALING

Terracotta can be extremely porous and may benefit from a pre sealing. **Spirit Pre Seal** will act as a compliment to your final seal, giving added water resistance. The bonus of acting as a grout release makes grouting much easier, provides a higher level grout joint, and a better finish overall.

The tiles can be dip sealed, sprayed, or a lambswool applicator can be used after which the stone can be stacked to dry. Only 1 coat or treatment is necessary, and the **Spirit Pre Seal** has a 24hr cure time.

IMPORTANT! Do not stack the drying tiles against each other with no air flow, stack them so they can breathe, and remove any excess sealer within 5 minutes.

USING SPIRIT PRE SEAL AS A GROUT RELEASE

Prior to grouting you can apply a coat of **Spirit Pre Seal** to the face of your already laid terracotta. The following day you can grout your stone with ease.

INITIAL CLEANING / GROUT HAZE REMOVAL

Once the terracotta has been laid, grouted and washed, a grout residue/haze may be left. It is recommended to wait for 3-4 days for the grout to harden sufficiently before attempting to remove the grout haze in preparation for sealing.

It is advised to keep the floor and or walls protected during this timeframe if work is still being done by other trades, as they may need to work over or near your freshly laid terracotta.

What you will need – (**Spirit Phosphoric Acid, Spirit Neutral Cleaner, Spirit Doodlebug**, bucket, broom, mop) **Spirit Safe Acid** can also be used to remove the grout haze.

IMPORTANT! Test first for acid sensitivity before cleaning any surface with **Spirit Phosphoric Acid** or **Spirit Safe Acid**. If the stone shows acid sensitivity, use **Spirit HDC** to remove the grout haze.

1. Sweep and or vacuum the area to remove any loose debris.
2. In a bucket, dilute 10 parts clean water to 1 part **Spirit Phosphoric Acid** or **Spirit Safe Acid** and apply to the area that needs cleaning. Use a broom to evenly distribute the solution over the area.
3. Allow the solution to sit for 2-3 mins. If you notice that the solution is drying, add more cleaner to keep it wet. *Only clean in sections that you can handle.
4. Now scrub the area with a **Spirit Doodlebug** (scouring pad.) The multi-directional head attaches easily to a broom handle for easy cleaning in hard-to-reach areas.
5. Remove the solution with a dense mop and rinse the floor with **Spirit Neutral Cleaner** at a dilution of 20 parts clean water to 1 part **Spirit Neutral Cleaner**. If you have access to a wet/dry vacuum it is the ideal way to remove the dirty water.
6. If necessary, rinse the area with clean water and allow it to dry completely before sealing.

SEALING

Once the terracotta is clean and dry, final sealing can begin. It is recommended that a breathable penetrating sealer is used. Test first before use, preferably on a spare piece of tile.

- **Spirit Premium Seal, Spirit Waterbased Premium Seal and Spirit NPS** are all suitable.

What you will need – (Sealer, **Spirit Microfibre Applicator**, clean white rags, gloves, respirator and solvent suitable tray (for solvent-based sealer only)

2 coats are required, allowing approximately 1 hour in between coats. Follow the directions on the can or bottle very closely.

Please note: Penetrating sealers will not prevent surface etching or scuffing.

MAINTENANCE

The terracotta can be cleaned regularly using **Spirit Neutral Cleaner**. If need be, the tiles can be cleaned periodically (every 6-12 months) depending on traffic and wear with **Spirit HDC** or **Spirit Bright As**.

RE-SEALING

Please note: Weather conditions, harsh cleaning methods using high-alkaline, acid or solvent-based cleaners will affect the long-term performance of any sealer. Following the appropriate **Spirit Guide** relating to your substrate will ensure the very best protection. The longevity of your sealer and the protection it provides is greatly dependant on the following 4 points...

1. Using a premium quality sealer.

Spirit Sealers are all premium quality sealers.

2. Proper application of the sealer. This includes the cleaning process prior to sealing.

Sealing a floor that hasn't properly dried, sealing when it's too hot or cold, not mopping up excess sealer and not applying enough sealer are a few of the mistakes made.

3. Where the sealed area is? Is it a high traffic area?

Commercial areas that see more traffic and are cleaned daily will need re-sealing before most domestic areas; however, in domestic situations like, outdoor areas, high traffic internal areas and shower cubicles, these areas will need to be re-sealed more often. If in doubt, contact Spirit Sealers.

4. How the floor is maintained?

Cleaning regularly with the wrong types of cleaners will break down the sealer prematurely and may even do damage to your terracotta. The cleaners in this guide have been formulated especially for the stone and tile industry.

This is a general guide for Terracotta, Spirit Sealers always recommends to test first when cleaning or sealing any surface. For more information contact sales@spiritsealers.com