



FAQs: Ceramic Tiles

Is ceramic tile a healthy option for flooring?

Ceramic tiling is one of the best eco-healthy flooring options available. In most cases, ceramic floor tiles are waterproof and not very porous, making them easy to thoroughly clean, and an unlikely surface for the growth of mold, mildew and other allergens. In addition, tile floors are naturally low in toxic materials and often have low to no volatile organic compounds (VOCs).

Though it tends to be more expensive than carpeting or vinyl flooring, ceramic tiles are far more durable and have very long lifetimes. Thus, fewer replacements are needed, which means less material and energy use in production. Unlike carpeting, ceramic tiles are a hard surface to fall on, but installing no-slip tiles that have grit baked into the surface of the tiles during manufacture will help to reduce slips and falls.

It is also important to consider the materials used to install the tiles. Many adhesives are worse for indoor air quality than the flooring materials themselves. When having floors installed, make sure that any adhesives used have low VOC levels. The same applies for grout, thin-set mortars, self-leveling underlayments, and any other products used for the tile installation.

What are VOCs?

Volatile organic compounds (VOCs) are substances containing carbon and different proportions of other elements such as hydrogen, oxygen, fluorine, chlorine, bromine, sulfur, or nitrogen; these substances easily become vapors or gases. A significant number of VOCs are commonly used as solvents (paint thinners, lacquer thinners, degreasers, and dry cleaning fluids).