

## **FAQ**

**Q. Can natural stone be used in swimming pool areas?**

A. Stone products are frequently used in external and swimming pool areas taking the quality of outdoor areas to a higher level as well as adding another natural component to the landscaping. It should be said, however, that some corrosion may occur from pool chemicals regardless of the pool being a chlorinated or salt water pool. Given the non slip finish usually used on external stone paving this is usually of little consequence.

**Q. How can natural stone be protected when applied in an external application?**

A. Efflorescence can occur on external stone paving or cladding and for obvious reasons is much more obvious on darker coloured materials. This can be minimized by waterproofing on top of the screed or render prior to installing tiles as well as sealing with "Dry Treat Stain Proof", which in addition to being a penetrating sealer also inhibits efflorescence.

**Q. What is the recommended slab thickness for external steps?**

A. While 2cm slabs can be used in external areas we recommend 3cm with a view to improving longevity and minimizing risk of cracking as a result of structural movement and/or thermal loss and gain.

**Q. What is the minimum joint width for tiles laid internally/externally?**

A. Our recommendation for joint width is 2mm minimum internally and 3 to 4mm externally, (joint width is important as it helps accommodate structural movement). If possible allow a perimeter expansion joint to help minimize any damage to flooring from building movement. In the case of single items that are wall to wall items such as step treads or cappings the suggested joint width should also be allowed between wall and stone.

**Q. What are the advantages of screeding my internal floors verses adhesive fixing?**

A. Best results are obtained from preparing the background with a screed of minimum thickness 20mm. This provides the installer with perfect levels and as a result a floor that reflects these levels giving a "billiard table" finish. In some cases this is not practical due to floor level and or cost issues and adhesive fixing is considered. In this case we recommend that the floor is surveyed thoroughly by the installers for high points and where applicable consider some grinding of the concrete to make good to levels enabling installers to achieve an acceptable result.



**Q. What options are there for sealing internal floors?**

**A. Option One, Impregnating Sealers:** for this option we recommend “Dry Treat Stainproof” which has a 15 year guarantee. Note that impregnating sealers make the surface more resilient and less porous and as a result easier to clean and maintain. They do not protect the actual surface in any way, that is for example, the surface would still be vulnerable to acidic attack from spillage of alcohol or citrus juice. “Dry Treat Stainproof” is a once only application and is guaranteed for 15 years if applied by a certified applicator.

**Option Two, Surface Sealer:** for this option we recommend Belinzoni RR1, a wax based product that provides an easy to maintain surface and protects the stone from corrosion or attack that might result from any kind of spillage. This finish is maintained simply by addition of a dash of RR1 to the washing water each time the floor is washed! The initial full application would be repeated on a 1 to 3 year basis depending on the extent of the traffic.

**Q. I've noticed some of my tiles have a mesh backing, is there a particular method that needs to be followed when laying these tiles?**

**A.** Some stone tiles are produced with a fibreglass and epoxy mesh backing. Davco have tested some of these products and established that “Davco two part rapid” is effective in installing such tiles. Note that installers must be warned to check tiles as installing to ensure that none of the epoxy/fibreglass backing is loose in which case any loose parts must be removed. As external areas are subject to weather and thermal loss and gain a further precaution can be taken by removing 50% of the backing on each tile with a grinder to improve adhesion.

