

**TAYLOR STUDIOS** Box 847 Kingshill, VI 00851-0847  
Phone: 340-718-1364, fax 773-7836 website: taylorstudiosvi.com  
An Eligible Supplier to the EDC Companies

### General Information

Taylor Studios is an Eligible Supplier to the EDC Companies of the Virgin Islands.

The Taylor family has been making concrete products on St. Croix for more than 40 years. The following information has been collected from other craftsmen, our own experiences, and industry standards over all these years; and while we have tried to present as complete an explanation as possible, we make no guarantees as to the outcome of your project.

Taylor Tile are handmade individually from a mixture of portland cements, mineral pigments, sand aggregates, and locally quarried "blue bitch" rock. The tiles are molded in handmade forms, not pressed in a machine. They are left to cure overnight, and then turned out for finishing.

The texture of the tile surface can be as smooth and shiny as polished marble, as rough as cut coral or stone, or slightly textured like travertine-type marble. You can choose the degree of texture best suited for the different areas of your project: perhaps smooth or lightly textured tile indoors, and twenty-five, fifty, or seventy-five per cent of the surface textured for walkways, patios, or pool areas.

Our concrete pigments are made of crushed minerals and become an integral part of the surface layer of the tile, which varies from 3/16" to 1/2" thick, depending on the size and usage of the tile. It is unlikely you will wear through the surface of these tiles in a lifetime, while the thin glazes of some other tiles are much less durable.

Our tiles, installed in high traffic areas over twenty years ago, are available for inspection. Some have had little or no care during their lifetime, and are faring well. Quality workmanship and materials enable smooth tiles installed in private homes to have achieved a rich translucency much like aged marble, with only casual care over the years.

We have many color variations available, and if necessary, colors can be specially created to complement the interior and exterior of your home.

### Notes On Installation

Taylor Tile can be installed in a variety of patterns using cut tile pieces and whole tile, or in regular rows. Different colors can be added for accent borders, mosaics, centerpieces, or thresholds. Design possibilities are extensive, and indeed are a major benefit of using locally handmade tile. Custom tile can be molded in color to your specifications.

The 8" by 8" tile are molded with flat sides and can fit together with a very small grout joint – 3/32" or less. The larger tiles have rounded edges and are slightly beveled to provide for a grout joint of 3/8" to 1/2". Larger grout joints do not usually look as good or last as long as smaller ones, and finishing the joint by striking it with a convex rodding tool to slightly compress and smooth the joint gives the best effect and the strongest joint.

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On a good slab, Taylor Tile should be laid with thinset using a 1/2" or 3/8" notched trowel. Thinset must be applied to both the floor and the bottom of the tile to ensure a good bond and leveling bed. It is NOT recommended that the tile be beaten with a mallet of any kind. Seat and level them with a twisting motion and hand pressure only as with marble, limestone, or quarry tiles. Clean frequently as you go with a damp sponge. The 12" tile can be laid to a string stretched tightly every 12 1/4". Setting one side of the tile to this string will ensure nicely spaced tile, and the slight hand made discrepancies between the tiles will add to the pleasing effect.

The next day, the clean, dry tiles may be lightly sealed with a silicone or siloxane sealer (see Lambert Products). This sealer is available on island from Taylor Studios for exterior use. A penetrating silicone sealer solution with petroleum distillates should be used. Interior tile can be ordered pre-sealed with a petroleum based acrylic sealer. (Please use a water based acrylic sealer only as a last resort: the acrylic may not bond to the concrete tile if there is excessive moisture present either on top or below the tile. The sealer will crack and pop off.) The joints should be filled with a pourable cement-and-sand grout mix, which should be pigmented to match the tile. Fill a small, connected area of joints at a time, overfilling slightly to allow for slump in this wet mix. The joint can be rodded, smoothed, and compressed when the grout filling it is no longer wet, but just damp and workable. A damp sponge or the edge of your trowel does a good job of cleaning any crust that may be left on the edge of the tile. It is important to realize that smearing grout over the entire tile will not work, as the texture of the tile surface may be ruined. Don't let the grout dry out on the tile surface.

After the tile is grouted, they should be cleaned and sealed again. Please do not pressure wash or acid wash our tiles. A water based acrylic sealer is the last choice for sealers, as it may cause many more problems if there is any dampness in the slab. There are silicone sealer products that do work, and different brands may be found locally. We can supply these sealers. Both exterior and interior tiles should be sealed, and resealed as needed, perhaps every year in high traffic areas. You can test the water repellent ability of the exterior tile to determine the necessity of resealing; tile that need resealing will darken when wet. Interior tile treated with only a sealer will gradually achieve a very attractive patina as they are further polished by use.

The installation of some exterior tile with a fine exposed aggregate (stone) finish may require that the tile be washed with a mild muriatic solution after they have been cemented in place and before they are sealed or grouted, to remove efflorescence. If you have chosen pre-sealed tile, this is not necessary. The solution should be no stronger than a 10% mix; i.e., one part muriatic to nine parts water. This will thoroughly clean the surface of any staining prior to the sealing and grouting procedure.

We recommend hiring an experienced professional tile setter, and we are, of course, available for consultation.

#### Notes on Care and Maintenance

With minimal care and maintenance, your Taylor Tile floor will last a lifetime. Weekly damp mopping, or simply vacuuming, will keep your floor clean. Using an oil base soap

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(such as Murphy's Oil Soap) to clean the tile will maintain the attractive patina of the surface of the smooth tile; Mop and Glow type products used on pre-sealed tile will maintain this finish for many years. Harsh chemicals are generally not necessary or advisable on properly sealed tile.

It is probable that sealers will have to be renewed from time to time. Where high traffic paths begin to lose their shine, spot applications of sealers will restore the finish you wish to maintain. As time passes, this will be less frequently necessary. Be sure the tiles are clean first.

There are two cleaning procedures that must be avoided: acid washing and pressure washing. Both techniques can erode the surface of any concrete product, leaving you with a porous finish more easily stained as the finish is eroded away. Low pressure washing, such as your garden hose, and scrubbing with a stiff broom will not harm the tile.

Stains and outdoor algae can best be removed by using a high concentration of bleach, soap, and water – or even straight bleach poured right on the stain. This will not hurt the tile, and if you let the bleach sit for a few hours, especially in the sun, chances are you can just rinse off the dirt. Sealing the tile will help prevent stains from causing any problems.

#### Notes on Replica Danish Brick

Replica Danish pattern brick are cement reproductions of the low fired clay slump brick brought from Europe or produced locally for use in our historic building and public works. There was much variation in the size of the originals, and after extensive random sampling we determined as average size to be 8 1/2" long by 4 1/4" wide by 1 5/8" thick. The length and width of our brick are somewhat regular; the thickness varies more as both the original brick and the replica are slump brick products. The 'soaps' are brick 8 1/2" long by 4 1/4" wide by 7/8" thick, to be used on floors or walks where the full thickness brick are unnecessary or too thick to match the adjacent tile. Both thicknesses of brick are available in many colors including the traditional earth tones. They may be used for floors, walkways, arches, flower boxes, etc.; in new construction, additions, and restoration, in combination with our tile or other masonry products. Please also seal and maintain these portland cement products as outlined above.

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