

# **SECOIN ENCAUSTIC CEMENT TILES - FAQ**

## **CHARACTERISTIC**

### **1. What is encaustic cement tile?**

Secoin encaustic cement tiles are hand-made, aesthetic tiles with many colored patterns used for floor and wall coverings. Our tiles are made with two layers: The first layer (about 2-3mm thick) is a mixture of white cement, pigment, stone powder and additives which is hand-poured into divider mould to create desired patterned. The second layer is made of grey cement and sand to ensure the strength of tiles.

### **2. What is encaustic terrazzo?**

Encaustic terrazzo tiles are made as the combination of traditional encaustic cement tile and terrazzo tile. In encaustic terrazzo, small natural stone chips are used on the surface to create a special look. Other type of decorative chips, such as mother-of-pearl, glass chips,... can be used to enhance the beauty for tile products.

In encaustic terrazzo tiles, as there are decorative chips in the patterns, the lines of patterns are not as sharp and smooth as in encaustic cement tiles.

Another difference between encaustic terrazzo tiles and encaustic cement tiles is that encaustic terrazzo tiles have to go through grinding-polishing process which makes the decorative chips to be exposed on the surface.

### **3. Should I expect shade variations or imperfections in this product?**

Yes. Please be aware that cement tile is a handmade product. Cement tiles will not be identical from piece to piece. Slight variations such as size, shade, slight imperfections, irregular edges are inherent to this product and can vary from piece to piece. This adds to the natural appeal and does not compromise the performance. Secoin does not give warranty against shade variations.

### **4. Are the patterns on Secoin encaustic tiles painted?**

No, the patterns are neither painted nor printed. Liquid colored materials (consisting of white cement, pigment, fillers, additives which are friendly to the environment) are hand-poured into divider molds to create these patterns. They are actually a layer of approx. 2-3mm. Therefore, the patterns will last very long and never go away. There are many ancient buildings in which cement tile floors have been existing for more than 100 years but still very beautiful. We have a short video on "How Cement Tiles are Made", with an explanation and additional photographs.

### **5. How thick are your cement tiles?**

Our standard thickness for cement tiles is 1.6cm for most of sizes, tiles may be up to 2.0 – 2.5 cm thickness for size 30x30cm. However, we have thinner tiles for walling with 1.2cm thickness.

## **SECOIN ENCAUSTIC CEMENT TILES - FAQ**

### **6. Are Secoin encaustic cement tiles friendly to the environment?**

Secoin encaustic cement tiles are considered “green” products. They are manufactured from natural materials (cement, sand, stone powder, pigment) under hydraulic pressing process. Unlike ceramic or clay-burnt tiles, no heat is involved, so there is no consumption of fuel; no clay is used, so there is no consumption of agricultural land.

### **7. Do your cement tiles have exactly the same thickness?**

As a characteristic of cement tiles, our products do not have exactly the same thickness. There is certain allowed tolerance, which is about +/- 1mm for thickness of tiles.

Due to the tolerance, it is recommended to use mortar instead of glue when laying tiles so as to easily adjust tiles to a flat surface.

### **8. I sometimes see white marks on the surface of normal cement tiles. What are those white marks?**

The white mark you see is efflorescence. Secoin Encaustic Cement Tile have very few problems with efflorescence as we are using a special environmentally friendly additive which has the function of reducing efflorescence. However efflorescence is an inherit problem for all cementitious products and does no harm to the products. It is a natural occurring phenomenon and cannot be totally controlled. If you see white marks on tile surface - that is efflorescence which will gradually go away.

Considerably reduced efflorescence is one of the outstanding features in Secoin encaustic cement tiles as compared to other similar products.

## **DESIGN AND COLOUR**

### **1. Can you make custom design?**

Yes, we can make custom cement tile designs. This requires making a custom "new divider mold". We have the best artisans for making custom divider mold in-house and can create divider molds for almost any designs from our customers. Getting a custom cement tile design will take a bit longer and there is an additional cost.

### **2. Can you make custom colours?**

Yes, besides Secoin's 75 standard colors, we can match almost any colors. Getting a custom color will take a bit of time and an additional cost.

### **3. How many colours can be made in one tile?**

## **SECOIN ENCAUSTIC CEMENT TILES - FAQ**

We do not have limited number of colors in one design. We have some patterns with up to 10 colors or checker-board tiles with up to 25 colors. The more colors the higher cost. However, specific designs and colors will be quoted by case.

### **4. What shapes and sizes do you offer?**

We have different shapes of Square in size of 7x7cm, 10x10cm, 14x14cm, 15x15cm, 20x20cm, 30x30cm, Hexagonal in size of 20x23cm, 15x17.5cm, Octagonal in size of 20x20cm, Rectangle in size 11.5x20cm, Lantern in size 20x20cm, Fish scale in size 20x20cm. Moreover we have different shape for skirting board size 20x10cm. Please click here to see our shapes and sizes.

Besides, we can make other designs following customers' request and based on the technology of our production.

### **5. Can I get tile designs in a non-standard size or shape?**

You can get tile designs in different sizes or shapes allowed by this production technology, but there will be an additional mold production cost. Depending on the complexity of the design and the quantity of the order, we will quote the cost by case.

## **APPLICATION**

### **1. Where can encaustic cement tiles be used?**

Thanks to their durability and aesthetic appearance, encaustic cement tiles can be used for various applications, such as hotels, restaurants, kitchen, bathroom, living room, walling, terrace & staircase, commercial projects, corridor and other furniture decoration (tables, chairs,...). Nowadays, encaustic cement tiles are not only used in ancient buildings but also used in many modern and stylish projects with contemporary designs. Please visit our gallery to see application of encaustic cement tile many constructions and projects around the world.

### **2. Are there any places where encaustic cement tile cannot be used?**

So far, we do not recommend using encaustic cement tiles in the following applications:

- + Outdoor in places that freeze in winter
- + Outdoor with vehicle traffic or driveways
- + Inside swimming pool or similar applications
- + Floors which are in frequent contact with acids, alkaline or other attacking chemicals

### **3. Can encaustic cement tiles be used in bathroom or places with water?**

Cement tiles can be used for floors in bathrooms and showers. Please note that in these cases, cement tiles and grout have to be sealed with a very good penetrating sealer to protect the floors

## **SECOIN ENCAUSTIC CEMENT TILES - FAQ**

from attack of body wash or shower gel. Secoin can provide penetrating sealers to protect your encaustic cement tile floor.

### **4. Can encaustic cement tiles be used on the walls?**

Encaustic cement tiles can be used on walls, such as wall decoration in living room, dining room, kitchen backsplash, bathroom wall,... Depending on the type of walls, cement tiles should be protected with suitable penetrating sealer to be protected from stain or oil or other substances.

### **5. Can cement tiles be used with heating systems?**

Yes. Our cement tiles can be used for heating systems as they can conduct heat.

## **INSTALLATION AND MAINTENANCE**

### **1. Do hand-made encaustic cement tiles have to be installed on a cement substrate?**

Most of the time, encaustic cement tiles are installed on cement mortar substrate. In some cases, installing on wood subflooring could be possible, but please check carefully with your contractor about it. Special care should be taken if installing over a wooden subfloor so that the tiles don't crack as the subfloor expands and contracts. We recommend installing on cement mortar substrate as it is a more stable.

### **2. What do you use to glue down the tiles?**

Fill the joints with grouting liquid. For the grouting color, you can choose either white grout or colored grout. White grout matches most of the cases. However, for colored grout, please choose the color which is the same with the color of tile or pattern in the tile. DO NOT use black or dark grouting liquid as it may stain the floor.

### **3. Does the floor need to be polished after tile installation?**

For our encaustic cement tiles, the floor will not be ground or polished after installation. Therefore, it is necessary to pay attention to levelling the tiles during installation to have a perfectly flat floor.

For our encaustic terrazzo, there is no need to grind or polish the floor after installation. However, in some countries, the encaustic terrazzo floor is ground and polished after installation. In these cases, please pay attention not to grind more than 1mm away from the top layer (as the thickness of first layer in our encaustic terrazzo is about 3mm).

### **4. Do I need to seal my floor? What type of sealer should I use?**

Yes, it is very important that encaustic cement tile floor has to be sealed. Cement tile is a porous material that absorbs stains and dirt if not properly sealed. There are two general types of sealers: penetrating and topical. Penetrating sealers are absorbed into the cement and make it more difficult

## **SECOIN ENCAUSTIC CEMENT TILES - FAQ**

for the stain to adhere to the cement. Topical sealers sit on the surface of the tile and do not let the stain through. We recommend you use a good penetrating sealer to protect the floor after installation.

### **5. Do we have to leave any gaps or grout joints between tiles?**

Yes, it is best to have 2 -3 mm of a grout joint for tiles 20x20cm. In case of bigger sizes, grout joint may be bigger or as recommended by designer.

### **6. How do I clean my hand-made encaustic cement tile floor?**

The floor should be cleaned with pH-neutral soap and water. Do not use any acids or bleach on these tiles!

### **7. How should I store the tiles before installing them?**

Before installation, please keep tiles in boxes in a dry place. Avoid being in contact with water or humidity as it may cause tiles to be stained.

### **8. Will the floor be stained by soda, wine, or acids?**

If the floor is properly sealed, it will not absorb stains. However, when there is coffee, tea, wine, acids, etc. on the floor, they should not be left to sit on the tile for long as they will eventually eat through the sealer and stain the tile.

## **PACKING**

### **1. How many pallets can we stack in the warehouse?**

For packing into container, we double stack pallets. We also recommend double stacking for pallets when being kept in your warehouse to avoid any breakage or damages.

### **2. How are encaustic cement tiles packed?**

Tiles are put face to face into carton boxes. Between the tiles, there are white papers to protect tile surface. Then, boxes are put into wooden pallets. Pallets will be loaded into container. Please click [here](#) for more details.

### **3. How many sqm can we load in one 20ft container?**

Each 20ft container can be loaded with 20 to 24 pallets depending on the maximum tonnage allowed by shipping companies. For tiles of 1.6cm thickness, each pallet has 60 boxes equal to 28.8sqm, totally we could load 691.20sqm in 1 container 20ft. In case of thin tile 1.2cm, we could load up to 920sqm in one 20ft container.

### **4. What is the dimension of wooden pallet?**

## **SECOIN ENCAUSTIC CEMENT TILES - FAQ**

We have standard pallet size: 113x93x98cm (length x width x height). Three layers in 1 pallet, each layer has 20 boxes.

### **5. How much do they weigh?**

We have many sizes of tiles. The most popular tile 20x20x1.6cm weighs 1.3kgs, 1 pallet has 720 pieces à 936kgs (net weight). If included carton boxes and pallet weight, each pallet weighs about 1 ton. Please [click here](#) for information about other tiles.

### **6. Can we print logo on carton boxes?**

We supply our tiles in 3 kinds of carton boxes: Secoin standard carton boxes; Neutral boxes (plain without name or logo); Custom boxes (depending on the order volume).