

How to Tile a Bathroom

With the right tools, you'll learn how to tile a bathroom in five steps.

How Tile Installation in a Bathroom Works



Tiling a bathroom floor, shower, or wall can reward with durability, low maintenance, and good looks for years -- but only if you install the tile properly.

No matter the tile design or size, the steps and materials used are the same: An adhesive holds the tile to the surface, while grout creates a water-tight surface and fills the spaces between the tile.

Grout is either cement-base or epoxy. Epoxy grout is highly water- and stain-resistant and requires no sealer, but is typically more expensive. Non-sanded cement-base grout is typically used for joints smaller than 1/8 inch; for larger joints, sanded cement-base grout is the choice. In addition, most cement-base grouts are enhanced with a protective sealer to increase water-resistance.

Tools Needed



If you want to learn how to tile a bathroom floor, you need to start by investing in the right tools. Those include

- measuring tape
- chalk line
- tile cutter
- tile nippers
- notched trowel
- tile float
- bucket
- sponges
- cushioned knee pads

Step 1: Measure, Design & Lay Out Bathroom Tile

Use measuring tape and a chalk line to organize the space you plan to tile. Use those dimensions to select the tile, then lay out the design and add any accents. This way you will know how many cuts to make.

Step 2: Cut Tile

As you're learning how to tile a bathroom, it's essential to realize that you'll have to cut tile, either to create diagonal patterns or finish ends. Use either a manual scoring cutter or motorized wet saw equipped with a diamond-tip blade (either can be rented from a home improvement center). Cut the tiles you need in order to finish your pattern.

Step 3: Apply Adhesive

Ceramic tile is first glued to the surface; there are several types of glue available, including thin-set mortar adhesive. Apply the adhesive to small areas and run the notched side of the trowel along the surface at a 45-degree angle in long horizontal strokes. Lay the tile and place removable plastic spacers between each joint for even spacing. Apply from the bottom up for a wall or the outermost corner forward for a floor. Press tiles into the adhesive with a slight twist to ensure proper bonding. Then, move onto the next section and repeat.

Step 4: Apply Grout

After adhesive has properly dried and set, remove the plastic spacers and fill the joints with grout using a rubber tile float held at a 45-degree angle. Allow the grout to set for a few minutes; then remove excess (but not too much grout between the joints) with a clean sponge and a bucket of water.

Step 5: Seal Grout

Once the grout has dried, apply grout sealant to help prevent stains.