

Cleaning terracotta surfaces



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Terracotta isn't a difficult material to look after. But it does have a high level of absorbency, so it needs to be correctly sealed to prevent staining.

Like all natural surfaces, a correct cleaning regime process will ensure that the surface maintains its original look and is easy to care for.

Prior to grouting, it's worth pre-sealing a terracotta surface with **PRW200**. Grout residues will be much easier to remove and a pre-seal will also speed-up the drying time after the initial wash, and after subsequent treatment stages.

An initial wash should always be carried out, this removes residues of adhesive and grout, along with accumulated dirt. If it isn't carried out properly, the application of any subsequent protective treatments will be compromised, as you'll effectively be 'sealing in' the deposits.

A multi-purpose acidic product, like **Deterdek Pro** from Fila, can be used. This will both clean the surface and remove all residues. **Deterdek Pro** should be diluted at a ratio of 1:5 or 1:10 (1 litre of product in 5 or 10 litres of water). Apply the solution a few square metres at a time, allow contact time

of 5 minutes, then work with a single disc cleaner or large brush. Remove any residues using a cloth or liquid vacuum cleaner and rinse with abundant clean water.

For sealing the tiles, water-based products are ideal, as they're odourless, have a lower eco-impact and dry quickly. If you don't want to alter the tiles' appearance, choose a natural-effect impregnator – like **W68** – which won't stain.

For indoor areas, a protective wax products can also be applied; such as **Matt or Satin**, depending on the finish required.

Once laid, a pH-neutral cleaning product should always be used to maintain terracotta; **Cleaner Pro** is ideal for this. This will lengthen the life of the impregnator and finish, and will ensure that the surface remains protected, in terms of practicality, longevity and aesthetics. Avoid normal household cleaners as they will break-down the surface protection provided, cause surface staining and can, potentially, damage the finish of the tile. And, throughout all stages, always carefully follow the manufacturers' instructions.

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