

Tiles

Henry Liu CPBC 53115 Canada Association of Home and Property Inspectors of BC

Tiles are the popular flooring materials which come with various types, patterns, colors and solid durability as well as easy maintenance and cleanness. They are widely applied from commercial and public buildings to private kitchens and baths.



Nowadays the main types of tiles are porcelain, ceramic and natural granite, marble, also slate. Porcelain and ceramic have the same materials and manufacture processes are basically made from clay and silica sand plus pigment which go through under the high temperatures. The finish products become solid and dense with smooth shining surface. The materials of porcelain are finer and purer. Therefore the finish products are denser and better wear resistance and lower water absorption normally < 0.5%. Different from the artificial tiles the natural stone materials are more elegant and stylish but expensive. Out of the 3 granite is the best, which can be applied inside out both floors and walls. The slate is following. Although marble is rich of colors and pattern, it is not as dense and hard as the other 2. Generally marbles are used for wall decoration and less traffic floor. Most time we see the tile crack along the exterior wall during the inside inspection. This was caused by the new construction settlement in the beginning several years. It is a good practice that the builder left spare tiles to replace. The cracks in the other area are the results of impact or lack of enough mortar, which should be serviced and not necessarily a structure safety concern. There is a tip to clean tile. Besides the tons of cleansers on the market, tooth paste is good to clean the tile surface. The fine particles of it can remove the dirt and not damage the surface finish.

When select tiles, PEI is a criteria to artificial products. The PEI grade 0 is good for wall decoration. Grade 1-3 is for less traffic application. Grade 3-5 is eligible to heave traffic area. The selection tips: 1, vision review the defects which include dirt spots, fish mouth, needle holes, cracks, scratch and discoloration, as well as the manufacturer information and date preferred; 2, weight comparison: the same size products the heavier the better; 3, sound: tap the tiles, which sounds like metal and clear is better; 4, assembly: pick 4 pcs to make a square which gives sense of alignment and planeness; 5, Touch: which to try it slippery or not.