

Lippage of Stone Tile Installations

by

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Lippage of stone tile edges has become an increasingly contentious issue in the stone tile industry. While consumers expect a flat, even floor surface when selecting stone tile as a finish, eliminating all lippage is not practical unless the stone is re-finished in-place with grinding equipment. Lippage is defined as a difference in elevation between the edges of adjacent tiles, giving the finished surface an irregular appearance. Unfortunately, there are many variables and conditions which can affect lippage beyond simple errors in installation. As a result, tile contractors need to be aware of these issues, conduct appropriate investigation, and have candid discussions with clients and customers to recognize what steps might be necessary to meet their expectations.

Probably one of the most overlooked issues with stone tiles is that technical standards for this type of tile technically falls under the jurisdiction of the ceramic tile industry.

Why is Lippage of Stone Tile Magnified ?

Warping of natural stone
Desire for narrower grout joints for a continuous look
Treatment of edges
Size of stone modules – flat substrate

Other factors affecting- joint pattern running bond

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the Marble Institute of America (MIA) and American Society for Testing Materials (ASTM) differentiate between "thin, modular stone tile", and dimension stone. Modular stone tile is defined by ASTM standard C119 as not greater than 24 inches in either face direction, no greater than 4 square feet in area, and no greater than 3/4 inch in thickness. MIA standards generally recommend installation of modular stone tile using the "thin-set method", and defers to tile industry standards, specifically Tile Council of North America TCNA and ANSI 108 standards for proper installation recommendations.



Precise measurement of tile lippage with digital offset depth gauge

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Assessing the Performance of Metal Trim for Ceramic & Stone Tile Installations
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