

## ANTIQUING

Experience over many years has proved that the type of sealant and polish applied can have a major effect on the finished look of your floor tiles. Essentially the process of sealing and polishing enriches the colour of terracotta and retains the traditional terracotta look with its variation and natural warmth which is a most attractive feature.

In addition to the more traditional method of sealing mentioned above we can also offer an alternative termed *antiquing*. This results in a dark brown colour which is quite similar to weathered oak such as you might find in a piece of aged oak furniture or beam. The recommended formula to achieve an antique finish on York Handmade terracotta tiles is as follows:

## SEALANTS

- **1 coat LTP Mattstone**  
3 hours drying time
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3 hours drying time

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- **1 coat LTP Oldtone oil**  
12 hours drying time
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12 hours drying time
- **Finish with LTP Antique Beeswax**

All the HG range and the LTP range for antiquing are stocked and sold by York Handmade Brick.

Further details on antiquing are available with the product or from our office.

## MAINTENANCE

In the first 4-6 weeks it will pay dividends to polish the floor regularly. In between polishing, the floor can be swept and wiped down like any other hard surface. If using detergent, we recommend a weak soap solution as a concentrated or semi-abrasive cleaning solution will break down the polish. Spillage and cooking stains should not be allowed to remain on the floor but if any stubborn marks do stay they can be removed with a little white spirit.

It is recommended that every 12-18 months the polish is stripped using HG REMOVER or HG COTTO REMOVER for waxed floors, and then re-applied. This is an easy job and will ensure an incredibly long life for the floor tiles.

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Maintain with LTP Waxwash.

### FINALLY

Remember that your floor is a natural product, not unlike timber and should be treated with a certain amount of respect. There can be few finished surfaces to match the outstanding natural beauty of terracotta and, unlike a glazed or vitrified tile, there is no surface or glaze to break through. Thus the appearance of your tiles will only become enhanced over the years with the wear they receive.

The following attributes can occur:

### FURTHER NOTES

**EFFLORESCENCE** is caused by moisture in screed reacting to salts in the tiles and appearing as a white residue. It only happens once, just after laying, and is not at all damaging to the tiles but like on new brickwork can be unsightly to start with.

In order to avoid this we suggest base screed underneath screed/adhesive is completely dry - approximately 3-4 weeks after laying. Then PVA adhesive/render should be applied to the bottom surface of the tiles as they are being laid.

If the floor has been laid and efflorescence is apparent either before or after sealing then use water to remove and allow to dry completely before applying further sealer or polish.

**LIME PARTICLES** may be apparent in some of our terracotta floor tiles. They do not affect durability and can enhance the 'old look' of the tiles. If they appear once the tiles are laid they can either be sealed (as above) or patched using a colour stain and resin available from the company.

### OUTSIDE USE

No guarantees can be given in respect of durability outside.

For laying, please follow instructions as detailed earlier in this document i.e. 4:1 sand/cement screed, butter underside of tile with PVA etc.

The tiles can be left unsealed (but will weather quickly) or indeed can be sealed with HG Impregnator or proprietary waterproofing seals such as Aqua Seal. Either way the tiles will gradually acquire a well-weathered look as though they have always been there.

August 2006

—YORK—  
Handmade



RECOMMENDED PROCEDURES FOR THE FIXING  
AND SEALING OF OUR YORK TERRACOTTA  
FLOOR TILES FOR INTERIORS

**PLEASE READ ALL OF THE FOLLOWING  
INSTRUCTIONS BEFORE STARTING TO LAY YOUR  
NEW FLOOR WITH OUR TERRACOTTA FLOOR TILES.**

The procedure for fixing and sealing our 'York Handmade Brick Terracotta Floor Tiles' is simple and straightforward. It may be that your own builder or tiler wishes to follow their own 'well-tried' method. However, we would suggest the following method for guidance only.

### PRE-FIXING

Please inspect the tiles as soon as they arrive. This will give you a chance to rub down any chipped edges with emery cloth or, in severe cases, with the edge of another terracotta tile. Also terracotta tends to come in 'batches' and tiles of the same uniform colouring are best separated at this point and mixed to produce the most attractive overall effect. Make sure that the sub-floor is sound and level and, of course, clean and free from dust and paint etc. If the sub-floor is of timber construction the floor should be adequately supported to prevent flexing. It is usual to have a finish consisting of 5/8" thick plywood which should be sealed with primer before fixing with galvanised screws at 12" centres. A galvanised metal mesh to provide good bonding should be fixed to this base.

Because of the natural curves in our tiles, it is necessary to apply a fixed preliminary screed (4:1 sand to cement) of about 10-15mm. Then 'bed' the tiles in after 'buttering' the underside of the tiles with PVA or another building adhesive i.e. Unibond. This will produce a good bond and also eliminate any risk of tiles absorbing moisture from the screed which may activate efflorescence.

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## POINTING

Pointing can commence straight away.

We use the word 'pointing' rather than grouting as the mixture should not be allowed to spread over the edge of tiles, thus risking cement stains.

We recommend a proprietary 'wide-joint grouting compound' designed for floors, again the products from Bal and Arduit are ideal. Other products may be used for colour effect e.g. Bal Mortar Sandstone or a 1:2 mixture of cement and sand fairly dry, but these are not specifically formulated for floor use and if above average traffic is envisaged (i.e. for semi-commercial use) then a proper floor grout as recommended above must be used.

Joint between tiles are to personal taste, we suggest a 10mm width. Only half a dozen tiles should be pointed at a time and the surface cleaned of grout straight away. Any grout on the surface of the tiles should be wiped away immediately with a clean, slightly damp, sponge or rag.

## SEALING

**DO NOT APPLY SEALER UNTIL THE FLOOR IS COMPLETELY DRY** (see note

on EFFLORESCENCE) then seal the entire floor, including joints, with a coat of boiled linseed oil or HG Impregnator. For sealing we recommend two methods (as above) - **BOILED LINSEED OIL** which darkens the tiles or **HG IMPREGNATOR** which allows the colour to remain.

**BOILED LINSEED OIL** is a natural sealer which enriches the colour of terracotta and continues to harden long after application. This makes polishing increasingly easy with time. More than one coat will normally need to be applied.

## Application

**BOILED LINSEED OIL** should be applied with a paintbrush and worked well into the tiles so that the surface appears dry (matt) within 5-10 minutes. We suggest that you experiment on a couple of tiles first but please remember that excessive applications of oil can be counter-productive.

**CHECK THE SURFACE WITHIN 30 MINUTES OF SEALING TO ENSURE THAT THERE IS ABSOLUTELY NO SURPLUS OIL REMAINING ON THE TILES. IF THERE IS, WIPE OFF STRAIGHT AWAY WITH A DRY CLOTH OR WORK INTO THE TILE WITH WHITE SPIRIT ON A CLEAN, NON-FLUFFY RAG.**

**HG IMPREGNATOR** is a special undercoat solvent sealer containing no silicones which allows the tiles to breathe naturally. It will deeply impregnate, seal and enhance the natural colours of our terracotta floor tiles without darkening or altering the natural characteristics of the surface. It takes 3 days to fully cure but only 2 hours are required between coats. Resists most staining and once fully cured is almost impossible to remove. Two coats will normally need to be applied.

## Application

Apply by spray, brush, good quality lambswool paint-roller or with a clean, lint-free cloth. Apply as evenly and as thinly as possible. Do not dilute. One litre will cover approximately 10m<sup>2</sup>.

## POLISHING

Allow 7 days after sealing before the floor is polished.

We recommend:

**JOHNSON'S TRAFFIC WAX** IN PASTE FORM IF USING **BOILED LINSEED OIL**. The secret of polishing is to use the polish sparingly but finish with plenty of action and a soft cloth. If you have an electric polisher this will help enormously.

### **HG COTTO WAX AND COTTO WAX PASTE**

both deepen the colour intensity and provide a warm, very silk-matte glaze. One litre will cover up to 10m<sup>2</sup>. Cotto Wax and Paste must be applied at temperatures above 15°C. Apply with a soft brush evenly from grout joint to grout joint at a maximum of 2m<sup>2</sup> at a time. After 10 minutes, rub in thoroughly with a cloth or buffing machine. After 3 hours, the floor should be given a final polish.

**HG GLOV POLISH** will put a lovely sheen on the surface of the tiles. It is quick drying and should be used undiluted. One litre will cover up to 40m<sup>2</sup>. The bottle should be shaken prior to use and a spray **SHOULD NOT BE USED**. Use a clean non-fluffy cloth or a clean mop. The HG Glov Polish should be poured on a clean, dry floor and spread in straight lines in one direction across the surface as thinly as possible. The polish will dry in about 20 minutes. When dry, apply a second and final coat at right angles to the first. When the floor is dry it is immediately serviceable but will take 3 days to fully cure. This procedure can be done as often as you feel it needs it.

For a high shine and extra durability keep applying polish. There is no limit to the number of coats the tiles can take.

**HG CLEAN & SHINE** is a washing/shining liquid.

Apply half a cup of polish to a full bucket of warm water, or for dirty floors a full cup to a bucket of water, then wash. Always rinse the mop out in clean water before soaking up some more polish and this will leave a shine on the floor as well as washing it.