

# HARD SURFACE Tile Cleaning—Identification

## INTRODUCTION

It is important to know the capabilities and the limitations of the Hydro-Force hard surface cleaning system. Identifying the kind of flooring is an important step in knowing what you can clean with this system. It is important, at least initially, to focus on the easiest, most plentiful, most profitable type of tile to clean. The tiles that fit into this category also carry the least risk for complications. They are the man-made, non-porous, scratch resistant and acid resistant tiles.

## PROCEDURE

### ➤ STEP 1

First, determine if the tile is man-made or natural. Every natural stone tile would be different in the details and usually has a 1/16" beveled edge rather than a curved or cut edge. Man-made tiles have a consistent pattern/appearance.



### ➤ STEP 2

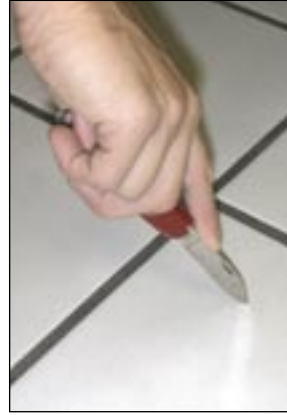
Second, determine the porosity of the tile. Some tiles and stones will show immediate absorption of water. There is a range of porosity and even the most dense stone, like granite, will allow some absorption. It could take over ten minutes to fully penetrate the surface. Most ceramic, porcelain and Italian quarry tile are non-porous. The more porous the tile, the more potential problems in cleaning.

### ➤ STEP 3

Third, check the scratch resistance of the tile and for potential coatings. Go to an inconspicuous area and scratch the surface with a steel pocketknife. Usually if the tile is not scratch resistant it is either natural, porous or both. Also check for coatings by scraping across the tile and grout in the inconspicuous place to determine if there is wax or urethane present. Coatings usually require a stripping process which adds complications to the job.

### ➤ STEP 4

Finally determine the type of grout you are cleaning and determine if it has been previously sealed. In the same inconspicuous place, try to cut the grout with the knife. Epoxy grout will cut like plastic and cementitious grout will crumble into a powder. Epoxy grout does not need to be sealed. Add a few drops of water on cementitious grout and it will darken readily unless it has been previously sealed. If it has not been sealed, you will want to sell this service. If it has been sealed, the grout will clean up easier and may not need to be resealed.



## Tools Needed



### Steel Knife

**Purpose:** Use to inspect tile and grout to determine type.

**HELPFUL HINT** – If it is a natural stone, the customer usually knows what it is because of the investment they made. It is possible to clean natural and porous tiles with some additional training.



Unsealed Grout

Sealed Grout

## Quick Guide



## PROCEDURE

- 1 Determine if tile is man-made or natural.
- 2 Determine how porous the tile is.
- 3 Determine the scratch resistance of the tile and the presence of surface coatings.
- 4 Determine the type of grout and the presence of sealers.

## PRODUCTS NEEDED

- Steel Knife

## Other Resources

**Bridgepoint Oriental Rug Cleaning  
Manual and Course**  
[www.InterlinkSupply.com](http://www.InterlinkSupply.com)  
To locate your nearest Interlink Supply  
Call 1-800-660-5803