

## TYPES OF TILES



### **Ceramic**

These are made from fired clay and finished with a glaze. They are hard-wearing, waterproof and fireproof. They are available in a wide range of designs, colours, sizes and finishes, and at a range of different prices.



### **Porcelain**

Porcelain tiles are made from hard, finer clays. They used to be made using a different manufacturing method which resulted in the design running all the way through the tile - but these days they are usually glazed and fired in the same way as ceramic tiles. They tend to be harder and denser than ceramic tiles.



The difference between ceramic and porcelain tiles can cause confusion. In my experience, ceramic tiles can often give the same effect as porcelain tiles but at a lower cost. However, the choice is yours, and I can give an equally beautiful result with either type of tile.

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### **Quarry tiles**

True quarry tiles are extruded (that is, squeezed out) rather than pressed, as most ceramic tiles are. This gives a slightly rougher finish and greater variability in shape. Traditionally a reddish brown colour, they are now available in various shades of grey and black, too.



## **Terracotta**

Terracotta or Mexican tiles are traditionally fired at lower temperatures and have more natural variation in the individual tiles. Modern terracotta tiles can be finished with a glaze, or can require a surface treatment to seal them once installed. They tend to give a more rustic, less formal effect.



## **Natural stone**

Natural stone tiles are just that - slabs of natural stone that have been cut to size and shape. Stone tends to be heavier than ceramics, and has a natural variability in colour and surface finish.



## **Travertine**

Travertine tiles are natural limestone, laid down in layers over millions of years as a sedimentary rock. Although technically incorrect, their appearance means they are often counted as a marble tile,. They are usually a lighter colour, varying from pale to darker pinks and creams.



## **Marble**

Marble is similar to travertine, but is a metamorphic rather than a sedimentary rock. This means that it has been compressed, heated and cooled during its time in the ground, so that it is actually a mass of little crystals. It is harder, denser and less porous than travertine, and has a different colour palette. Marble tiles give a very classical appearance, with a natural variation in the colour inclusions.



## **Slate**

Slate was formed in layers at the bottom of the ancient seas, then compressed and heated. It comes in a range of colours, including greys, greens, pinks and purples.



Slate is notable in having more natural variability than almost any other flooring material, both in surface finish and in thickness. This means that it is impossible to achieve a completely even finish with a slate floor. This may be an effect you want to achieve - but this can be a disappointment to some people.

Slate can look wonderful in the right setting, but it is important that you are aware of the inherent variation if you choose it for your home.

