





## Installing pool Tile

Most adhesives, mortar, and other materials are compatible. However, you must read the printed instructions and cross-check limitations to make sure they are. **Inspect all materials before starting your installation.**

## Substrate preparation

An installation is only as good as the foundation it rests on. A pool installation is an expert-level contracting project. Pool tank construction must be of reinforced concrete and waterproofed. The tank surface must be free of grease, oil, wax, or other coatings. Cement mortar beds must be cured a minimum of 7 days prior to installing the glass tile.

## Waterproofing

Waterproofing is necessary to protect your installation.

- Primary waterproofing is sometimes done by the substrate contractor, but don't assume the tank is waterproof.
- Secondary waterproofing (typical tile system waterproofing).

- Make sure that your product is rated for submerged applications.
- Use a crack-isolation membrane.

## Layout

Using a paper-faced glass tile ensures that you can achieve 100 percent mortar coverage. This is critical for this type of installation. Use proper equipment to cut your tiles. Glass tile should be cut with a wet saw using a blade made for glass. Be sure to follow all safety precautions and protections recommended by the manufacturer. Blend tile materials to ensure consistency throughout the project area.

### ***Tilebar Tech Tip:***

- For a waterline installation, choose a tile or dimension so that you do not need to cut the top or bottom row
- Cutting Paper Face Tile. Use a piece of ¼-inch backer board for a solid consistent support. Make

## Adhesives and mortar

Use mortar made for glass tile and make sure it is rated for **submerged application**. Glass tile requires special considerations for mortars; since most glass is translucent, you will want your mortar to be as white as possible. Make sure you use the proper directional troweling techniques and the proper trowel size. To achieve the appropriate coverage, we suggest a 3/16- to ¼-inch V-notched trowel.

*another backer board for the top with a piece of compressible weather stripping on one end. Mark the glass tile sheet on the paper side. Set the blade up on the marked line and then lay the weather-stripping board just outside the cut line with the stripping facing down. After cutting, towel-dry the front and back.*

## All tiled pool, waterline, race lanes and targets install overview

NOTE: Installation instructions are assuming a faced mounted tile. If your tile is not face mounted then ignore those references.

1. Primary cementitious waterproofing (if necessary) Refer to TCNA P602.
2. Mortar bed: Cure for seven days (if necessary) Refer to TCNA P601MB or P602.
3. Secondary waterproofing (this needs to be a cementitious membrane if this is only waterline, race lanes and targets)
4. Mix the mortar per the instructions.
5. Clean the substrate with a damp sponge.
6. With the flat side of the trowel, “burn” the mortar into the substrate.
7. Trowel material on the floor or wall with the appropriate-sized trowel in a consistent direction, leaving a ridged setting bed.
8. Use the flat side of the trowel to flatten the ridges.

9. Lay tile in the mortar and flatten the mortar with firm, even pressure.
10. Use a piece of wood beating block and a finish hammer to bed the tile material.
11. After 15-30 minutes, begin wetting the paper with a damp sponge. Keep wiping several times over the next few minutes. Keep the paper damp, but be careful not to flood the installation.
12. Once the paper has fully absorbed the water, the glue will release. Pull the paper from one corner diagonally. If the paper pulls the tile from the thinset go back to step 8.
13. Now adjust the glass while the thin set is still fresh. Pay attention to where the sheets meet to blend in those lines.
14. Make sure grout joints are clear of extra mortar materials.
15. Let system cure fully before grouting, usually 24 hours.

**Tilebar Tech Tip:**

- There are some mortars that can be blended with the grout color. When you have a thin glass, sometimes thin set is visible in the grout joints. This will minimize the cleaning of those joints.
- Do not work too far ahead. Make sure that the mortar stays fresh and has not skimmed over.

- Minimum mortar coverages should be evenly distributed and cover 80 percent of tiles in a dry area and 95 percent in wet areas. Once you set tiles, pull up a couple to check for proper coverage
- Directional troweling: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Way5bMh-eYg&t=31s>

## Grout

Grout can make or break a new tile project. A great grout job can aesthetically enhance the project while a poor one can undermine even the best work. First, choose the appropriate grout joint size, and remember, smaller is not always better. Take a step back and make sure the size of the perimeter joints between sheets or tiles is the same as the joints within each sheet. For mosaics, if you can make out individual sheets you may need to adjust them.

## Install overview

The instructions below are for reference only and based on traditional cement based grout. You should always follow the printed instructions on the packaging.

1. For paper-faced tile, use a damp sponge to reactivate the glue. Then use a plastic bristle brush and water to loosen and remove the remaining adhesive. Clean rinse with the sponge and towel dry.
2. Mix the grout per the instructions.
3. Using a grout float at 45-degree angle to press in and fill all the grout joints.
4. Cut the grout off the top of the tile using the grout float, dragging it at 90 degrees angle diagonally across the tile as you would a squeegee.
5. Now that the joints are full, dress them with a sponge or scrub pad.
6. After 15-20 minutes, clean again with clean water and a clean sponge and let cure.
7. After the grout has dried, there will be a grout haze that can be buffed with dry cloth.
8. Limit use until fully cured, usually 24 hours.

**Tilebar Tech Tip:**

- Use clean water, A LOT!
- Do not get too far ahead. Clean in a timely manner what you just grouted.
- Clean sponge often, typically one swipe, flip the sponge over and one swipe, then rinse the sponge clean. Repeat.
- Make sure the joints do not have dust or debris in them. Also, any thin set that has squeezed up needs to be removed.
- All installation must have movement joints. Use a color-matched acrylic or silicone sealant to provide movement protection. Movement joints are for all transitions, base, inside, and outside corners.
- Keep the project area clean. Even the lightest dust could permanently stain any uncured grout joints.
- Use the right grout for your specific installation:
  - Standard polymer modified grout
  - High-performance cement grout
  - Premixed grout
  - Epoxy grout

## Cleaning and sealing

Keeping an installation looking new is not as difficult as you may think. Regular cleaning of the entire system with a neutral PH non-acidic cleaner should do the job. There are harsher cleaners available, but use them carefully and follow all instructions. Always do a test area in a non-visible place.

### ***Tilebar Tech Tip:***

- *Pool maintenance and water chemistry is critical. Please know your system requirements.*
- *Follow all manufacturer instructions closely.*
- *The more the area is used, the more often it will have to be cleaned and sealed.*
- *If an acidic cleaner is chosen, make sure you protect adjacent materials.*