

EASY CANNING: A GUIDE TO PRESERVING FRESH FOOD

natural

HOME & GARDEN[®]

LIVING WISELY » LIVING WELL

The Kitchen Issue

Make Your House Work for You

A Zero-Waste Kitchen

Less Trash, Less Energy, Less Waste

Eat Your Yard!

5 Steps to an Edible Landscape

Cures in Your Cupboard

18 Herbs & Spices for Better Health

A FALL GARDENING GUIDE

New Homes, Old Materials





Developing PATTERN

Available in recycled glass, ceramic and clay, today's varied sustainable tile options offer beauty and durability.

Graphic, colorful, translucent, luminous

—the right tile can bring new energy to an entire room. Tile is versatile, durable, stain- and heat-resistant, and easy to clean, making it a good choice for lasting style. Covering kitchen countertops or bathroom floors with gorgeous colors and patterns, ranging from modern to classic, can make over a space all on its own. Most tile isn't cheap. The good news for those of us on a budget is that eye-catching choices make a statement even in a small space, such as one bright backsplash or a bathroom accent wall.

What's more, eco-friendly tile manufacturers are transforming reclaimed, recycled material into fabulous décor, and more options become available all the time. Consider the depth and complexity of recycled glass, the tradition and durability of upcycled ceramic, the individuality and craftsmanship of handmade clay, and the ingenuity and comfort of cork. Today's tile manufacturers combine beauty and sustainability, giving conscientious homeowners plenty of options. Those who want to do the upcycling themselves have options, too; check local salvage yards, scheduled-for-demolition homes and Habitat for Humanity ReStores (habitat.org/restore) for old tiles you can rescue and reuse.

Oceanside Glasstile recycles more than 2 million pounds of post-consumer glass each year to create stunning mosaic tiles. Available in every color of the rainbow, some shades are more sustainable than others. For example, Midori (Iridescent shown) contains 30 percent pre-consumer and 64 percent post-consumer recycled content, whereas Red contains 55 percent post-industrial content but no post-consumer.



THE RIGHT TILE FOR THE JOB

The first consideration when choosing a tile is where you're planning to use it, which will help determine the level of durability and waterproofing you need. Nearly all tiles are safe for use on walls or as backsplashes. For flooring and showers, you need extra durability. Most manufacturers recommend using matte finishes for floors, because glossy finishes scratch more easily. For countertops, choose acid-resistant glazes. For bathrooms, make sure tiles are water-resistant. You might plan to use tile for an outdoor application; if so, it's best to contact the manufacturer to ask about water- and frost-resistance.

Once you've determined that your tile choice is suitable for your application, it's time for the fun stuff: size, color and pattern. Tiles come in a range of styles and sizes, and

while some may be more suitable for certain applications, size and style is, for the most part, a matter of preference. Consider the size of your tiles in relation to the size of the space you wish to cover—large tiles in a small space can help make the area feel larger; small tiles covering a large area can look busy.

To determine how much you'll need, first measure the area you wish to cover in square feet. Then take a look at how many tiles fit in one square foot and multiply. For example, if you choose a 1-inch square tile, you'll need 164 tiles to cover a square foot, whereas 16 3-inch tiles fit in a square foot. Most manufacturers offer size charts and recommend ordering 10 percent more tile than you need to cover unforeseen mistakes or miscalculations.

WELL MADE

Most tile options get a few health and environmental points from the get-go: Tile is durable, nontoxic and inert, easy to clean, insect-resistant and recyclable. To take it a step further, choose tile made of a responsibly sourced material such as rapidly renewable cork or recycled content. If you're shopping for recycled tiles, look for those with the highest percentage of post-consumer content. This indicates that the tile materials were once another item—say, a glass bottle—and have been diverted from the landfill waste stream. Post-industrial recycled content, on the other hand, is scrap from the manufacturing process. Make sure tiles made of natural materials such as cork were harvested sustainably. Cork is a particularly great option from an environmental and comfort perspective because it can be harvested from the bark of the cork oak tree every few years without damaging the tree, and its absorbency helps dampen sound. Another tile option, clay, is environmentally benign for the most part, but it does require energy and landscape disturbance to mine, and firing clay tiles requires massive amounts of energy. Clay tile manufacturers that are even partially fueled by a clean energy source save tons of carbon dioxide from being released into the atmosphere. It's always wise to ask manufacturers about their material sourcing and production techniques. Some manufacturers take extra steps such as processing and reusing wastewater on-site or reducing electricity demands with daylit factories. If nothing else, your interest shows that consumers are searching for home products that are made with health and sustainability in mind.

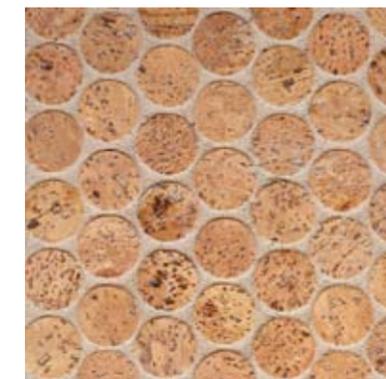
INSTALLATION INFO

Unless you're an accomplished do-it-yourselfer, it's best to hire a professional installer. Tiles aren't cheap, and you don't want to waste your investment with a poor installation. If you use an installer, it's wise to select the professional before you order the tile. Their expertise can help ensure you order the correct amount and type for the job. If you're going it alone and you've never tiled a wall or countertop before, consider taking a few classes first. Check local home improvement centers for class offerings. You can also get instructions online (to watch how-to videos, visit tileshop.com and click the DIY tab) or in remodeling books such as *Tile Your World* by John P. Bridge.

Whether you hire a pro or do it yourself, make sure you use low-VOC installation and finishing products to protect your health and indoor air quality. For most tile installations, you'll need tile adhesive, grout and grout sealer. Low-VOC versions of all of these products are available. It's important that your adhesive, grout and sealant be waterproof if you are using them in the bathroom, and heat-proof if you're using them in the kitchen. See Resources on page 69 for eco-friendly options.

AT RIGHT, TOP TO BOTTOM: This cork mosaic tile from Habitus Collection is recycled from the wine-stopper industry. The circles come on sheets and can be installed on floors and walls using mortar and grout. ■ Bungalow Bill offers a wide variety of vintage and antique tiles. Antique tiles can be expensive—these range from \$5 to \$150 each—so it's best to use pieces like this Celadon Green Art Nouveau tile as accents to complement less-expensive field tile. ■ This funky Ogee Cloud pattern is from Clayhaus Ceramics, a Portland, Oregon, company run by a young husband-and-wife team and powered by 100 percent renewable energy. They offer fun shapes and sizes in 45 lead-free glazes. ■ Even big-name companies such as Walker Zanger are beginning to offer more sustainable options. The Waterfall collection, shown in Rain Pattern, combines naturally honed slate with up to 70 percent post-consumer recycled glass.

OPPOSITE: Fireclay's Debris Series graces the kitchen backsplash in this renovated 1902 Colonial Revival home. Available in 112 lead-free colors, the ceramic tile is made in the United States and contains more than 60 percent locally sourced pre- and post-consumer content. PHOTO BY MICHAEL KEENY; KEESITES.COM.



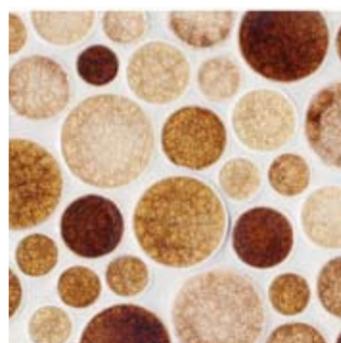


Ontario by Monocibec is a glazed porcelain tile that resembles wood and is suitable for indoor and outdoor use. Although it's made in Italy (as many ceramic tiles are), it contains 40 percent recycled content and is manufactured using a cogeneration system—meaning the byproduct heat is used to generate electricity instead of being released into the environment. Monocibec also contributes to an annual carbon offsetting program.



Make a Commotion

In Huntsville, Texas, salvage-building renaissance man Dan Phillips creates unique, fantastical, customized homes using almost exclusively rescued building supplies through his company, Phoenix Commotion. Many of his homes feature handmade mosaics made with broken tile shards, arranged into creative patterns, often by future homeowners and untrained volunteers. Get Dan's homespun, accessible instructions for making a tile mosaic by visiting phoenixcommotion.com and selecting "Tile-Shard Floors" under the "Info" tab.



TOP LEFT TO RIGHT: Award-winning California artist Ellen Blakeley uses discarded tempered glass and found objects to create stunning mosaics such as Grecian Spa in Gold. The high-end tiles have been used to create sophisticated backsplashes, fireplaces and more—rock musician Carlos Santana even used them for a fountain in his driveway.

Powered exclusively by wind and solar energy, Encore Ceramics recycles all of its clay, glaze and water waste back into its manufacturing process to produce beautiful tiles like the Circles pattern in Dune, Toffee, Thatch, Honey and Autumn. The wastewater recycling process saves more than 39,000 gallons of fresh water each year.



BOTTOM LEFT TO RIGHT: Almost all of the scraps in Florida Tile's Lawrenceburg, Kentucky, factory are diverted from landfills and used to create new tiles. Their proprietary technology allows them to crush and reuse porcelain, one of the hardest materials on earth. All of their products, including Rosa from the Cotto collection, are Greenguard-certified.

An active member of the U.S. Green Building Council, the Trend Group offers nine tile collections that contain post-consumer recycled glass and contribute to LEED points; Liberty (shown in pearl) contains up to 75 percent.

RESOURCES TILES

Ann Sacks
annsacks.com
Eco-Thinking recycled-content collection employs low-energy manufacturing methods

Bedrock Industries
bedrockindustries.com
handmade in Seattle from 100 percent recycled glass

Bungalow Bill
bungalowbill.com
vintage and antique tiles

Clayhaus Ceramics
clayhausceramics.com
made with 100 percent renewable energy in Portland, Oregon

Coverings Etc
coveringsetc.com
Cradle to Cradle-certified tiles

Eco Friendly Flooring
ecofriendlyflooring.com
recycled glass and metal tile

EcoSpec Tile
ecospectile.com
subway tiles made in California; locally sourced recycled content

Ellen Blakeley
ellenblakeley.com
mosaics made with salvaged tempered glass and found objects

Encore Ceramics
encoreceramics.com
single-fired manufacturing powered by solar and wind

Fireclay Tile
fireclaytile.com
recycled ceramic tiles made in California; 112 lead-free glazes

Florida Tile
floridatile.com
recycled-content porcelain tiles

Habitus Collection
habitusnyc.com
recycled cork mosaics

Interstyle
interstyle.ca
recycled glass tile and mosaics

Modwalls
modwalls.com
recycled glass tile and pebbles; cork penny round mosaics

Monocibec
monocibec.it
sustainable indoor-outdoor porcelain tile

Oceanside Glasstile
glasstile.com
recycled glass tile and mosaics

Terra Green Ceramics
terragreenceramics.com
ceramic tile certified by Scientific Certification Systems (SCS)

Trikeenan
trikeenan.com
reclaimed brick; recycled glass and ceramic tiles; closed-loop system; VOC-free glazes

Trend Group
trendgroup-usa.com
recycled glass tile and engineered agglomerates

Walker Zanger
walkerzanger.com
eco lines include Sobu, Studio Moderne, Vintage Glass, Weave and Waterfall

LOW-VOC ADHESIVE, GROUT AND SEALANT
AFM Safecoat
afmsafecoat.com
LEED-qualified MexeSeal, WaterShield and Grout Sealer

Eco-Wise
ecowise.com
nontoxic adhesives and sealers

Laticrete
laticrete.com
Greenguard-certified mortar and grout