

MITREPLAN PROJECT PLANNER

Take on the wall tiling



- An easy-to-follow guide to achieving a perfect result.
- Outlines all the tools you will need for the job.
- Includes a materials checklist.

PLEASE NOTE:

Before starting this project or buying any materials, it is worth your time to read all steps thoroughly first to be sure you understand what is required.

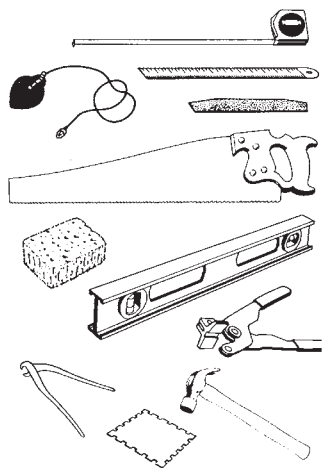
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MIGHTY HELPFUL™ MITRE 10

MIGHTY TOOLS FOR YOUR MITREPLAN



Hammer
Tape measure
Tile cutters
(scribing and/or heavy duty)
Tile nibblers
Tile file
Notched
adhesive spreader
Spirit level
Plumb-bob
Straightedge
Sponge or squeegee
Hand saw or
circular saw

Other essential tools depend on the surface that you're laying your tiles on and its condition. These could include paint scrapers or filing knives for repairing holes and cracks. Refer to Step 2.

✓ MIGHTY HELPFUL CHECKLIST

	ORDER
Tiles	
Adhesive*	
Grouting	
50 x 35mm timber batten lengths	
Piece of round dowel	
Tile spacers	

*Always choose waterproof adhesive in wet or steamy situations, such as shower cubicles. Check manufacturer's specifications and follow the instructions carefully. Or seek the advice of your Mitre 10 specialist. You may also need paint stripper, sandpaper, patching compound or plaster primer, depending on the condition of the walls. Refer Step 2.

Verbal quotes are indicative only. Written quotes on materials are available upon request from your Mitre 10 store.

Calculating the number of tiles

Area to be tiled (sq.m)	Number of tiles needed		
	100 x 100	150 x 75	200 x 100
1	100	89	50
2	200	178	100
3	300	267	150
4	400	356	200
5	500	445	250
6	600	534	300
7	700	623	350
8	800	712	400
9	900	800	450

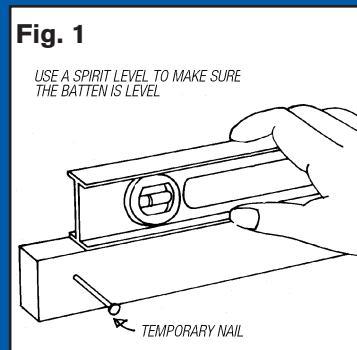
Tiling a wall is easier – with a little help from Mitre 10.

You can make a kitchen, bathroom, laundry or, for that matter, any room look good for years with ceramic wall tiles.

Not only are they decorative, but they resist water, heat, steam, stains, and require virtually no maintenance. And they are available in what seems like an endless variety of colours and designs (including smaller mosaic tiles) so you'll have no trouble creating your decorating ideas. You won't believe how easy it can be to do it yourself, either.

With a little planning, proper surface preparation and modern adhesives, the home handyperson with no previous experience can tackle the job with ease and confidence.

Just as important, you'll get a real kick out of doing it yourself – with the right tools and the right advice from Mitre 10.



Step 1: Planning

Regular ceramic wall tile sizes are commonly 100 x 100, 150 x 75, 150 x 150 and 200 x 100mm but interlocking circular, hexagonal and Provencale-shaped tiles are also available. They can be bought singly, by the square metre or in boxes.

Mosaic tiles consist of smaller ceramic tiles mounted on mesh backing sheet about 300 x 300mm. They come in various shapes, from 22mm square to round, hexagonal or Provencale. The number of tiles on a sheet varies from 12 to about 80 depending on the size and shape of each tile.

Before buying tiles, especially if tiling large areas or using a pattern, it is well worth doing a little planning first. To calculate the number of tiles you'll need, measure the length and width of the area and divide each measurement by the size of tile you're using, counting part tiles as whole ones. Then multiply the two figures to give the number of tiles needed. Add 5% for breakages. For patterns with two or more different tiles, it is best to sketch your design on graph paper using colours to mark where the different tiles go and then counting up the totals needed for each pattern.

Step 2: Preparing your surfaces

Tiles can be laid on brick, cement sheet, concrete, dry plaster or fibro surfaces as long as they are flat, firm, free from dirt, grease or flaking material. If the wall is painted, remove the paint with stripper. Uneven, chipped or cracked surfaces need to be filled and leveled with cement or a patching compound. If plasterboard, it must be firmly fixed. New plaster needs a month to dry out before tiling and a plaster primer applied. Wallpaper should be stripped completely as it could be pulled off the wall by the tile adhesive. Laminates can also be tiled over so long as the entire sheet is flat, soundly fixed and roughened to provide a key for the tile adhesive.

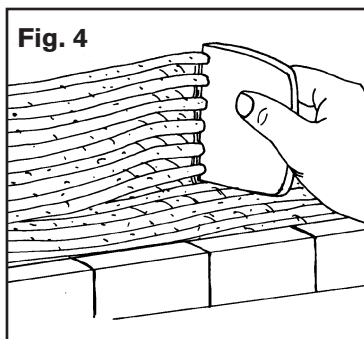
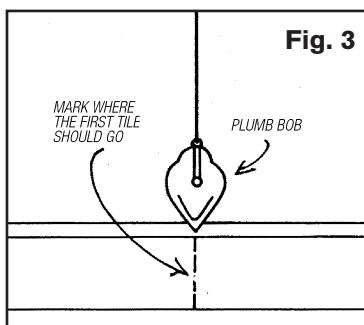
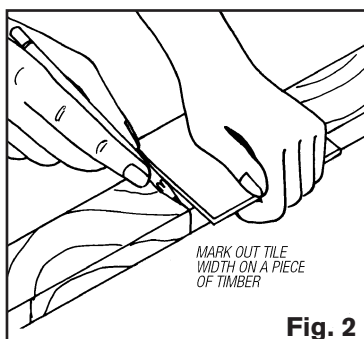
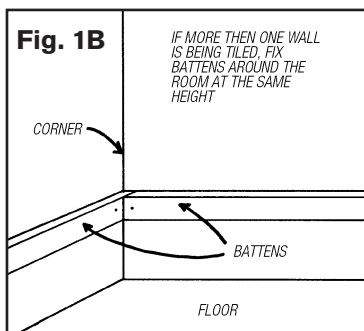
Step 3: Marking Out

Since few rooms are perfectly square, you cannot use the floor or skirting boards as a true horizontal, or corners as your vertical guide. To overcome this, mark the wall one tile high from the floor or skirting board, depending on where the tile is to end. Next, nail a perfectly straight timber batten across the full width of the wall so that the upper edge of the batten is on a line with your mark. Use a spirit level to make sure it is perfectly level (Fig. 1).

Don't drive the nails fully in – the battens will be removed later. If more than one wall is being tiled, continue to fix battens around the room at the same height using the spirit level to check the horizontal. (Fig. 1B).

The battens also prevent tiles from slipping by supporting them until the adhesive has dried.

To ensure equal-sized cut tiles at the edges, the simplest way is to carefully and accurately mark out your tile widths on a piece of timber the length of the wall (Fig. 2). Start marking in the centre and then mark the tile widths on both sides of this allowing for grouting gaps. This will quickly tell you how the tiles will end up and let you make any adjustments before laying your tiles to avoid narrow, awkward cuts along the edges.



Now, establish a true vertical line by hanging a plumb-bob down the wall so that the vertical line passes through the point where you decide the first tile should be laid and mark it (Fig. 3).

A good rule is to always start tiling from the bottom left-hand side.

Step 4: Laying your tiles

Begin where the vertical line meets the horizontal batten and smooth on a layer of adhesive. Spread over one square metre only at a time to prevent the adhesive drying out before you reach the end. Then 'comb' the adhesive with a notched spreader (Fig. 4). Place the first tile on the batten and line up against the vertical, pressing it firmly into the adhesive with a slight twist. Don't slide them as this squeezes up adhesive between joints. If your tiles come with built-in spacing lugs on the edges for grouting, butt them up closely so the lugs touch.

If not, you can insert plastic spacers, matchsticks or pieces of cardboard between the tiles for uniform grouting gaps. When you've completed the first square metre, check that the tiles are straight by holding a spirit level to the edges and make any adjustments needed. Then go on to the next square metre as before. Supporting battens should be left in position until the main tiling is finished. They can be removed later and tiles cut to fill the spaces left blank.

Mosaic Tiles

The method for laying mosaic tiles is similar. Lay the whole sheet, remembering to leave the same gap between each sheet as there is between the individual mosaics. To cut off strips of tiles from a sheet, simply trim through the mesh backing with a sharp utility knife to get the right number of rows.

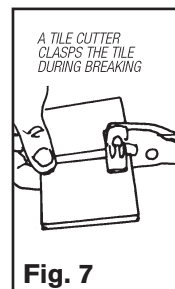
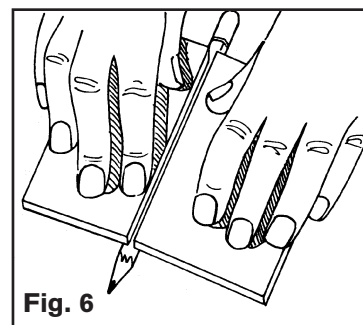
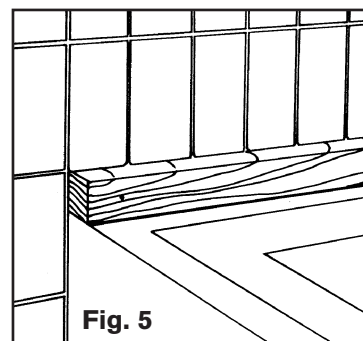
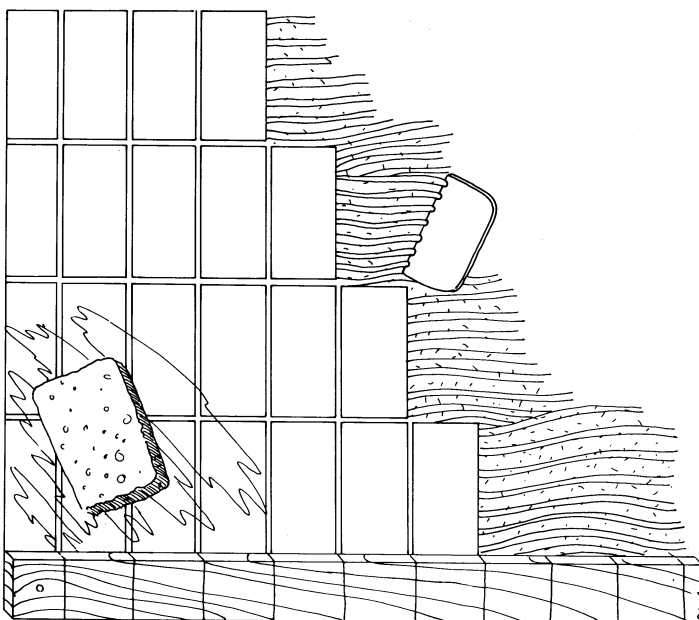


Fig. 7

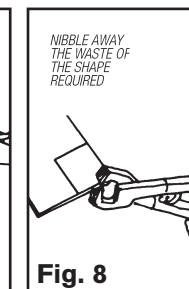


Fig. 8

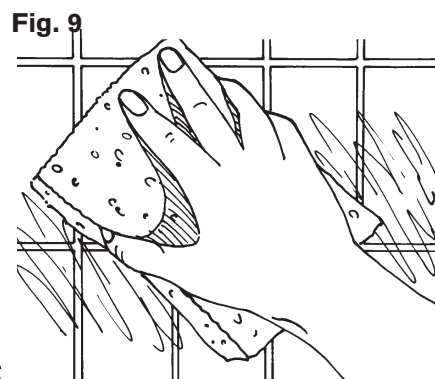


Fig. 9

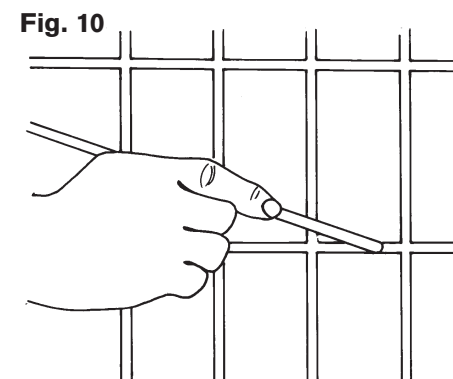


Fig. 10

Tiling Around Fixtures

When tiling around sinks, basin or other wall fixtures, follow the same steps as described for starting at floor level. Place a piece of straight timber batten above the fixture to provide support for the tiles (Fig. 5), then remove it when the main tiling is done and fill in the gaps.

Step 5: Cutting to size

Before a ceramic tile will break, the glaze must be 'scored' – on the edges as well as the surface. First, mark on the tile where it has to be cut and score a line on the glazed surface using your scribing tile cutter against a straightedge. For medium thick lines, place a pencil along and under the scored line, hold one side and press firmly on the other so it snaps along the score line (Fig. 6). For thin tiles, use matchsticks and press the edges on both sides. Alternatively, use a heavy duty tile cutter which clasps the tile during breaking (Fig. 7). To cut a shape, make a card template, place it on the tile, score with the scribing tile cutter, then nibble away the waste (Fig. 8). Use a tile file to smooth all cut edges or to slightly trim whole tiles.

Step 6: Finishing off

Grouting is the final step. Grout is the cement used to fill the horizontal and vertical gaps between tiles and can be white or coloured.

Be sure all excess adhesive is cleaned off from the surface of the tiles and grouting gaps first or it may show through after grouting and polishing. Then wait 12 to 24 hours before grouting to ensure the adhesive is completely dry. Mix the grout according to the maker's instructions and work it well into the gaps with a small sponge or squeegee to ensure complete penetration. Wipe off excess grout from the surface before it hardens with a clean, damp sponge (Fig. 9). On a very large area, grout and clean about a square metre at a time. To ensure smooth joints, round the end of a piece of dowel using sandpaper and run it gently along the grouting (Fig. 10). If you use your finger for this, make sure you wear rubber gloves – grout can irritate the skin. Leave to dry for the manufacturers recommended time, then polish with a clean, dry cloth.

MIGHTY HELPFUL HINTS TO MAKE THE JOB EASIER

■ When tiling kitchen areas, check the tile glaze does not contain lead.

■ Check adhesives and grouting suit both tiles and room conditions.

■ Avoid narrow strips – less than 25mm wide is very difficult to cut. It might be best to replan rows to use one less whole tile with two wider cut pieces at each end. Or increase grouting spaces slightly.

■ Around pipes, cut tile in two along a line where it meets the pipe's centre. Hold cut tiles to pipe and mark semi-circles to match pipe size. Score lines and nibble away waste.

■ Where basins, baths or sinks meet tiles, seal the joint with a silicone sealant.

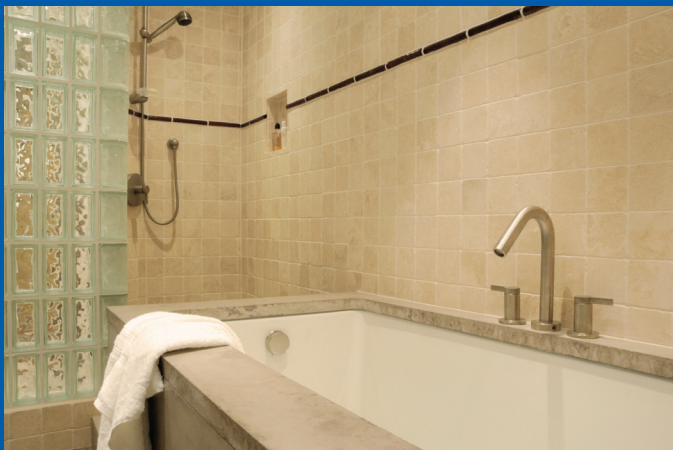
■ For large areas, use a rubber float to push grout between tiles. Work upwards and across. Remove diagonally.

■ Wipe excess grout clean as you work to prevent it setting hard.

■ When tiling wet areas like showers and kitchens, use a grout sealer to avoid stains.

■ In corners, cut tiles to fit, measuring each tile individually to allow for variation in the walls and for a fine line of grout. Place the cut edge into the corner leaving the uncut edge on show.

Take on the wall tiling



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