



## **INFORMATION & GUIDELINES FOR THE INSTALLATION OF ELEMENTAL ALUMINIUM**

### **RECOMMENDED INSTALLATION**

Installation of Elemental Aluminum Mosaic tiles should be done by qualified technicians, especially when electrical work is being done around the metal mosaic. Special attention is required for areas where the mosaic tiles will be subject to high temperatures, such as fireplace surrounds, behind cook tops and kitchen ranges not equipped with a back guard. Aluminum tiles are not recommended for high traffic floors, or any areas that may be subject to heavy impact, heavy abrasion, and areas where temperatures can exceed 130 degrees Fahrenheit.

We always recommend dry-fitting your pattern first to think about your cuts in advance and to make sure you like the pattern. This will also help you choose which pieces go where, which is especially helpful with tiles that have a lot of variation.

**NOTE:** this document contains only guidelines for the installation process. A professional installer should always be consulted to discuss the specific parameters surrounding your project.

### **CURVED SURFACES**

Elemental Aluminum Mosaic tiles can be installed around gently curved surfaces. Some manipulation of the tiles may be required in order to create uniformity between each sheet.

### **SUBSTRATES**

All substrates should be firmly fixed, flat, clean, dry and free of contaminants such as dust, oil, paint, sealers etc. to ensure proper adhesion. Painted surfaces must be scuffed or sanded for the product and adhesive to bond correctly. Wet areas need special attention and require appropriate substrates, e.g. concrete, cement boards (compressed sheet), and/or treated plywood. The use of reinforced waterproof membranes is suggested.

### **CUTTING**

Cuts can be done with a sharp utility knife or scissors. For certain applications, cuts may not be necessary due to the absence of straight lines in the design of the tiles themselves. When approaching a straight edge, it is recommended to remove and replace individual mosaic pieces to avoid cuts.



Cutting must always be performed slowly to avoid the buildup of high temperatures, which could discolor the metal surface.

## **ADHESIVE**

Follow the adhesive manufacturer's instructions carefully. We do not recommend one brand of adhesive over another. Please check with your local tile supply store for alternative and comparable products. The manufacturer's literature will explain if the adhesive product is suitable for interiors and/or exteriors, as well as walls and floors. Most thinset mortars (multi purpose and polymer modified thinsets) are adequate for installing the Elemental Aluminum mosaic tiles.

A cement-based adhesive is generally suitable on masonry substrates where no movement is anticipated. Where slight movement could occur through thermal or pedestrian loads, a modified cement adhesive should be used as a minimum. A clean, 1/8" notch trowel is recommended for most applications. To make sure there is 100% coverage you can firmly press the tiles into place, do not use any hard objects to tap down the center or edges of the metal pebbles.

## **GROUTING**

**Important: Since Elemental Aluminum tiles are sensitive to scratching, a modified non-sanded grout is recommended. Installation professionals may select non-sanded grouts containing a latex additive. Different types of epoxy or gel based grouts may also be used and will prevent excessive scratching caused during the installation process.**

Grout should be suitable for joints up to 3/4" in width and designed for external or internal conditions which ever may be the case. Sanded grout is generally recommended for any grout joint larger than 1/8". For optimum results, we recommend the repetitive use of a firm sponge. A sanded grout, if applied harshly, can scratch the tiles; carefully float in the grout to avoid abrasion.

## **SEALANTS**

Although aluminum mosaics do not require sealant, it is recommended that some type of sealant be used to protect grout joints.

## **CARE & CLEANING**

Aluminum tiles must be regularly cleaned and maintained to extend their life and beauty. Most dirt and stains can be cleaned with a mild detergent and soft cloth or sponge. Fingerprints, streaks and watermarks can be removed with olive oil. When using stainless steel cleaner, avoid direct contact with grout as it may discolor. Do not use abrasive cleaners, powders, scouring pads, steel wool or sandpaper. Do not let soap, bleach or other cleaning solutions sit on the surface.

For removing light scratches, we recommend a stainless-steel polisher applied with a steel wool pad. Gently rub in a circular motion first, then wipe clean with a damp cloth.