



## WHAT IS THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN STANDARD 'CERAMIC' TILES AND 'PORCELAIN' TILES?

Tile terminology can be confusing. Most types of tiles are made from clay or a mixture of clay and other materials, then kilned fired, are considered to be part of the larger classification called '**Ceramic Tiles**'. These can be split into two groups, porcelain tiles and non-porcelain tiles. These non-porcelain tiles are frequently referred to as ceramic tiles by themselves, separate from porcelain tiles.

**"Ceramic" or non-porcelain tiles** are generally made from red or white clay fired in a kiln. They are almost always finished with a durable glaze, which carries colour and pattern. Ceramic tiles are used on both floor and wall applications; they are softer and easier to cut than a porcelain tile. Ceramic tiles usually carry a PEI rating from 0 to 3, PEI being the hardness of the glazed surface. Non - porcelain tiles suited for light to moderate traffic and generally have a relatively high water absorption rating making them less frost resistant and they are more prone to wear and chipping than porcelain tiles.

**"Porcelain" tile** is a tile that is generally made by the dry pressed method from porcelain clays which result in a tile that is dense, impervious, fine grained and smooth, with a sharply formed face. Porcelain tiles usually have a much lower water absorption rate (less than 0.5%) than non-porcelain tiles making them frost resistant or frost proof. Glazed porcelain tiles are much harder and more wear and damage resistant than non-porcelain ceramic tiles, making them suitable for any application from light traffic to the heaviest residential and light commercial traffic. Full-bodied porcelain tiles carry the colour through the entire thickness of the tile making them virtually impervious to wear and are suitable for any application from residential to the highest traffic commercial or industrial application. Porcelain tiles are available in matte, unglazed or a high polished finish.