

BODESI
GLASS TILE STUDIO

Installation
Guide

Tools overview, and step by step

Installation

Overview, Before you start

An exceptional tile project lies entirely in the preparation. Before you mix your first batch of mortar, take the time to review these essential steps to ensure a flawless, long-lasting finish.

Do your research. This is only a guide and may not cover all aspects and situations when installing glass tile.

Inspect your product

Important
Glass tile is a unique material, and variations in color, shade, and size are natural characteristics.

Check the Batches
Verify that all tile quantities and shade numbers match across your boxes before opening them.

Dry Inspection
Blend tiles from different cartons to ensure a uniform look across your installation area. Inspect tiles for any visible chips or cracks prior to installation.

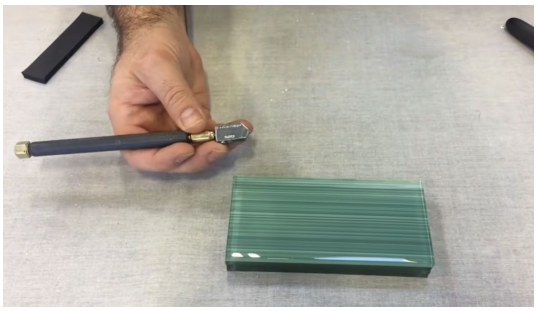
Tools and Materials

A general overview of what tools may be required during installation

Glass Cutting

Wet saw
Does not need to be fancy or expensive, but does require a fine diamond blade suitable for glass

Carbide Scoring tool.
Glass tile can be cut by hand for most cuts
score and snap method - see video link



https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=MONx8IFMnfA

Measuring Tape, chalk line, pencil
These can vary but you will need a way to measure and layout your intended design

V Notch Trowel, and flat trowel
In most cases a 3/16” or 1/4” V notch will be OK
Flat trowel is used for back buttering and notch knockdown

Cleaning and mixing Supplies
Buckets, mixing trowel. Power trowel recommended but not required. Sponges, rags, clean cloths and access to clean water

Misc Tools
Caulking Gun, flat head screw driver or plain chisel
Bubble level or laser level may help, but not required

Safety First!

Make sure to wear appropriate Personal safety protection.

Safety goggles, work gloves and respirator masks may be required depending on the materials you are handling in the process of the installation. Always check the with manufacturer of the materials you are working with for specific precautions

Be careful of dust and flying debris during installation

Installation

Part 1 - Preparation

Layout and Design

Important
Make sure your overall design and layout works with. Measure the tiles carefully, don't forget to accommodate for grout widths.

Practice Cutting the glass.

The secret to a beautiful glass tile installation is the patience.

If it is your first time installing glass, take one piece and practice a few cuts so you know how it goes.

Prepare the Substrate

The better your surface of installation (substrate) the better and easier your installation will be

Clean and Dry Ensure the substrate is structurally sound, clean, dry, and completely free of dust, oil, grease, or old adhesives.

Perfectly Flat The surface must be plumb and true. Any bumps or dips will distort the reflection of the glass. Wall surfaces should not vary by more than $1/8\text{“}$ over a 10-foot span.

Approved Surfaces Install only over approved substrates such as cured concrete, cement backer boards, or appropriate waterproof membranes.

Never install glass tile directly over drywall, plywood, or particle board.

Prepare the Mortar

Use Bright White Mortar Always use a premium, polymer-modified thin-set mortar that is bright white. Gray mortar will dull the glass color and show through the tile.

Mix to the Right Consistency Mix your thin-set according to the manufacturer's instructions until it reaches a smooth, peanut-butter-like consistency.

Installation

Part 2. Adhesion

Apply Mortar to the Substrate

Comb the Mortar Using the flat side of your notched trowel, firmly press the white thin-set into the substrate to establish a strong bond. Then, use the notched side at a 45 degree angle to comb the mortar in straight, parallel lines.

Work in Small Sections Only apply as much mortar as you can tile in 10 to 15 minutes. If the mortar starts to form a skin or dry out, scrape it off and apply a fresh layer. Never try to re-wet skinning mortar.

Flatten the Ridges (The “Knock-Down”) Before placing the tile, lightly smooth down the combed ridges with the flat side of your trowel. This eliminates the air gaps between the ridges, ensuring a solid, uniform white background behind the glass.

Back-Buttering the Tile

This step is non-negotiable Back-buttering is the secret to a professional glass installation. It fills the voids on the back of the tile texture, blocks out moisture pockets, and ensures the colored backing of the tile looks completely uniform.

Apply a Thin Layer Take a small amount of thin-set on the flat side of your trowel and spread a very thin, even coat across the entire back of the tile or mosaic sheet.

Cover Edge-to-Edge Ensure the mortar completely covers the back of the tile, leaving no bare spots, gaps, or deep grooves.

Setting the Tile

Press and Beat In Immediately press the back-buttered tile into the freshly combed mortar on the wall. Use a rubber grout float or a wooden beating block to tap the tile firmly and evenly into place. This forces out any remaining trapped air.

Check Alignment Use a laser or bubble level frequently to ensure your rows stay perfectly straight. You have a brief window of about 10–15 minutes to adjust tiles before the mortar begins to set. Use tile spacers to maintain alignment of the grout lines, and correct spacing of tile

Clean As You Go Use a damp microfiber sponge to immediately wipe away any mortar that squeezes up into the grout joints or gets onto the face of the glass. Once thin-set cures on the face of glass tile, it is incredibly difficult to remove without scratching the surface. Gray mortar will dull the glass color and show through the tile.

Installation

Part 3. Grouting, cleaning and finishing

Cure Time & Pre-Grout Clean

Wait 24 to 48 Hours: Allow the thin-set mortar to cure completely according to the manufacturer's instructions. Do not disturb, step on, or apply pressure to the tiles during this time.

Inspect the Joints Before mixing your grout, inspect the joints between the tiles. Use a plastic tool or utility knife to carefully scrape out any dried mortar that squeezed into the gaps, ensuring there is enough depth for the grout to pack in.

Final Dusting Wipe down the face of the tiles with a dry microfiber cloth to remove any leftover dust or construction debris

Choose and Apply Grout

Crucial Tip Always use non-sanded grout or a specialty glass-tile grout. Traditional sanded grout contains coarse sand particles that will permanently scratch and dull the face of smooth glass.

Mix the Grout Mix your non-sanded grout to a smooth, toothpaste-like consistency. Let it slake for 5–10 minutes, then remix.

Pack the Joints Hold a rubber grout float at a 45-degree angle and firmly pack the grout into the joints. Work diagonally across the tiles to ensure the joints are completely filled from top to bottom without trapping air bubbles.

Squeegee the Excess Once the joints are filled, hold the float at a sharper 90degree angle and sweep diagonally across the tiles to remove as much excess grout from the glass surface as possible.

Expansion Joints & Caulking

Keep Corners Flexible Never fill inside corners, countertops, or joints where the tile meets a different material (like a bathtub or cabinets) with grout. As the house shifts, rigid grout in these areas will crack.

Apply Silicone Caulk Fill these perimeter and movement joints with a high-quality, 100% silicone caulk that matches your grout color. This provides a flexible, waterproof seal that accommodates natural structural movement.

Installation

Summary Review and Checklist

Summary Checklist for a Flawless Install

- Premium Bright White polymer-modified thin-set used.
- Mortar ridges flattened before embedding tile.
- Tiles fully back-buttered for 100% coverage.
- Non-sanded grout used to prevent scratching.[
- Inside corners sealed with 100% silicone caulk, not grout.

Professional Installers and commercial applications requires special attention. Please review and familiarize with ANSI a108 and a137.2 to prevent cracking, ghosting, and thermal shock. Key requirements include using premium polymer-modified thin-set mortar, applying the “Flattening” technique to eliminate trowel ridges, and strict inclusion of movement joints.

Please review our Maintenance and Care Sheet

Resources and Technical

Getting it done right the first time requires some technical knowledge.
Visit our site to find technical manuals and installation instructions.

www.bodesi.com/technical



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