

## UNDERSTANDING

# MARLBOROUGH TERRACOTTA

Terracotta was one of the first types of tile we began to sell over thirty years ago, and recently we have seen a surge of popularity for this beautiful natural product. Our Marlborough Terracotta has been a huge success with customers; but in order to achieve the best look with this product, it is important that the product is installed and treated in the correct way.

Being a natural product that contains none of the additional chemicals or minerals some terracotta or brick companies incorporate; Marlborough Terracotta is a pure clay product, and as such, is subject to natural variation, which must be expected and taken into consideration, especially when ordering additional or replacement material as there are likely to be variances. This is often caused by the mineral makeup of the clay itself, which can vary between batches. Due to these variances, different batches of clay can react differently to the firing process; and these variations will occur within a single batch too, which can be due to the position within the kiln. This will cause variation in surface texture, density, colour, or size.



Therefore it is always recommended to order enough to cover any extra areas you may require all together, and to allow plenty of wastage.

Another consideration is damages which can occur in transport. Whilst Marlborough Terracotta has good compressive strength, it has low tensile strength. When installed this issue is resolved as there should not be any cause for lateral (side to side) compression; provided the product is correctly installed. However, due to inevitable lateral movement in transport, it is likely that there will be some breakages- for example, it is common for some of the points to break off on the Arabesque shape, and for Parquet tiles to break along their length.

Often these broken tiles can be used for cuts along the edges of the area to be tiled; nonetheless we would always recommend allowing around at least 10% extra material for wastage allowance, and 15% for the Parquet shape when laid herringbone.



Image: Vaughan Design

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Another consideration is the appearance of the products on delivery. The tiles are delivered uncleaned and are often very dusty, as shown below; this is inevitable and to be expected. Often transportation will compound this issue.

Once cleaned, laid, and sealed, the tiles will look much better - but do not be alarmed by any surface undulations, as shown below. Once grouting has taken place, these small holes and undulations will be filled and will greatly enhance the product's appearance, giving a warm, rustic look. Choosing a more naturally toned grout such as a dark or mid grey or beige rather than a white coloured grout will help this effect.

Another important aspect is the installation of the product. Prior to installation, it is important that the material is stored out of humidity or rain, as it is best to lay the product when dry. Make sure that the adhesive used is a terracotta friendly adhesive. We would recommend our Sarsen Home Premium Semi-Rapid adhesive, or a similar product. It is very important to butter the entire back of the tile with adhesive

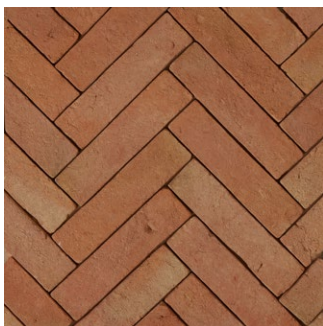


MARLBOROUGH TERRACOTTA, IN ITS RAW STATE IN THE CRATE. DUST/DIRT IS TO BE EXPECTED.

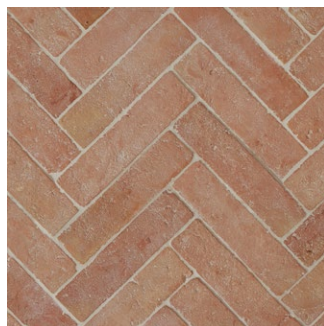
as well as fully trowelling over the substrate as this will discourage any staining. Leave to fully dry before continuing with sealing and grouting, this may take up to two days in cold or humid environments.

We would always advise sealing before and after grouting for maximum protection- and several coats will be needed to ensure all the pores are filled in.

For advice on grouting and sealing please see our installation guides (we offer two, one with guidelines to achieve a lighter final tone or a darker final tone).



MARLBOROUGH TERRACOTTA,  
UNGROUTED AND UNSEALED



MARLBOROUGH TERRACOTTA,  
GROUTED AND SEALED