

## Cutting Tiles

- Using a steel rule carefully measure the gaps between the last row of full tiles and the skirting board, work surface or floor.
- The size of each tile to be cut will vary as these surfaces are rarely even
- Mark the area to be cut on the glazed side of the tile using a china graph or wax pencil
- Ceramic tiles can be cut in a number of ways the choice of cutter dependant on the thickness of the tile and the amount of cuts required.
- The simplest method is to use a tile scribe to score the glaze then place the tile glaze side up with matchsticks under the scoreline and press down on both edges to snap along the score.
- Whenever ceramic tiles are being cut or snapped minute glazed splinters can become detached so suitable eye and hand protection should always be used.
- A cut tile will have very sharp edges so smooth these edges with a tile file.
- Where the area to be cut from the tile is very close to the edge snapping will be difficult, in this case use the tile scribe repeatedly over the scoreline to penetrate the glaze then nibble the edge away using tile nippers.
- The same process can be used for cutting curves and holes.
- Measure the area to be removed from the tile using a cardboard template and mark onto the tile surface. Place the tile into a vice taking care to protect the glazed surface from scratching then nibble away the edges with tile nippers.



- Alternatively a tile saw with tungsten carbide blade can be used this is a slower method but more accurate and produces a smoother cut.
- To cut a hole for pipes mark a straight line vertically down the tile which passes through the centre of the hole required. Then snap the tile into two and cut two semicircles at the cut edges using nippers.
- When the tiles are placed back together the cut semicircles will create the hole.
- A development on from the tile scribe and matchsticks is the tile cut 'n snap which uses a tungsten carbide wheel to score the tile and a lever action to facilitate the snap.
- When cutting through thicker wall tiles especially with more dense 'porcelain' body and for floor tiles quarry tiles porcelain floor tiles and natural stone tiles more robust methods of cutting will be required.
- FLATBED TILE CUTTERS are the fastest method of cutting thicker ceramic tiles. A Tungsten Carbide cutting wheel scores the tile in an upward scoring motion held steady by thick cutting rails. Then the handle is used to apply force to a snapper bar which places equal pressure to each side of the score over a central reinforced bar.
- Flat bed cutters are available in a variety of sizes to suit varying tile sizes.
- DIAMOND WHEEL TILE CUTTERS use diamond coated cutting blades cooled with water and are suitable for textured tiles as well as natural stones, Porcelains, Quarry tiles, floor tiles and even glass with special cutting blades.
- A fast rotating blade cuts the tile as it is passed through against a rip guide which ensures the tile remains straight.

- You need to make sure that your hand is kept at the side of the blade and that suitable eye and hand protection is used.
- These tile cutters are best used outside as they are quite noisy and will create dust and water spray. The blade should be allowed to run at full speed before the tile is passed through for cutting.
- Prices range from around £40 upwards depending on power and features and if you have a considerable amount of cuts or intend to do a few tiling projects they will probably pay for themselves many times over.