

# wall flats™

EMBOSSSED WALL TILES SIMPLE, MODERN, VERSATILE, & ECO-FRIENDLY

## INSTALLATION INSTRUCTIONS

**STOP!!! PLEASE READ THE ENTIRE INSTRUCTIONS CAREFULLY BEFORE USING THIS PRODUCT. DIFFERENT INSTALLATION METHODS REQUIRE DIFFERENT PREPARATION.**

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### SUPPLIES: ITEMS AND TOOLS NEEDED TO INSTALL

Tools and supplies below are listed mostly as an “either / or” option. Items we feel are essential are indicated with a \*. How you choose to install the tiles will determine which items you will need, so please read the instructions in their entirety before purchasing any supplies.

**CUTTING – \*UTILITY KNIFE OR MOST POWER CUTTING TOOLS**

**ADHERING – \*TILE MASTIC + 3/16” V TROWEL, CONTACT CEMENT + PAINT BRUSH/ROLLER OR DOUBLE SIDED TAPE**

**PRIMER – \*PVA DRYWALL PRIMER/SEALER OR PROFESSIONAL LEVEL FINISH PRIMERS - LOW OR NO VOC RECOMMENDED**

**FINISHING – \*PAINTABLE CAULK OR JOINT COMPOUND**

**PAINTING – \*PAINT:** Paint can be applied with a brush, roller or paint sprayer (Airless or HPLV).- LOW OR NO VOC RECOMMENDED

**HELPFUL TOOLS – \*LEVEL:** for proper alignment. **WALLPAPER SEAMER:** For applying pressure on flat areas. **\*METAL RULER:** For cutting, marking and measuring tiles. **PAINTERS TAPE:** For taping cut and drill areas and masking off paint areas. **350+ GRIT SANDPAPER:** For sanding tiles. **FINISHING NAILS:** For tacking down of stubborn areas during installation.

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### (1) SURFACE AND TILE PREPARATION

Wall Flats are made to install over flat surfaces that are clean, dry and free of loose debris. If installing over glossy plaster/paint rough up the surface with sandpaper and wipe clean with a damp rag to create tooth for the adhesive to bond to. Tiles should acclimate for 48-72 hours to environment. Wall Flats can be adhered to the wall directly out of the box with chosen adhesive.

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### (2) INSTALLATION AND ADHERING TO WALL

Determine if the installation will be wall-to-wall, a floating design that leaves an even border, a strip of tiles, etc... It's important to have this well thought out before beginning. If you are unsure, lay the tiles out on the floor or sketch it out to help you decide.

If you plan to paint the tiles, do a permanent install or in tricky climatic conditions a tile mastic (Type 1 Tile Adhesive) or contact cement is the preferred method for adhering the tiles to the wall. Whenever possible we recommend low and VOC free options. There are significant differences between mastic and contact cement so make sure all instructions are read before using.

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#### INSTALLING WITH TILE MASTIC

Follow the manufacturer's instructions for set and dry time. For smooth surfaces, use a 3/16" V-notched trowel. For irregular surfaces, a 5/16" V-notched trowel. For small areas, a putty knife may be used. If a tile has a slight bow it can gently be flexed to lay flat before adhering to the wall. If you have trouble with a stubborn area or corner, tack down with a finishing nail, leaving in until dry, and address hole(s) after priming. In addition to trowelling the mastic on the wall buttering the back of the tile on flat areas will help ensure an immediate grab. Make sure tiles are butted as tightly as possible to one another. Tiles can be offset slightly and slid into place, this will press excess mastic into the space between the tiles helping to minimize seams. Run a thin putty knife or finger along joint to remove excess mastic and level joints with tile edges. Use a damp rag to blot off excess adhesive. Minimize rubbing to avoid balling of the pulp on tiles that have not been primed.

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#### INSTALLING WITH CONTACT CEMENT

Follow the manufacturer's instructions for safe use. Contact Cement fumes can be flammable. Make sure tiles are pre-cut prior to applying adhesive. Use a paint brush or roller to apply an even coat to the wall and the flat surface on the back of the tile. Do not roll an area on the wall any larger than you can get to in 10-15 minutes. Let your wall and tiles stand for 15 minutes or until they are dry. Pay careful attention when joining because bond will be permanent upon contact. We suggest tilting the tile so only one thin edge of the tile is coming into contact with the wall initially. Once you are satisfied with placement lay entire tile flat against wall. Apply light pressure over the entire tile to ensure good contact. Contact cement is considered a fast setting glue that's useful for bonding hard to clamp objects.

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#### INSTALLING WITH TAPE

Because of the material and texture on the back of the tiles using double stick foam or carpet tape is only recommended for smaller installations, floating art pieces and tiles that will be up for a short time. When choosing an adhesive like this, test for sticking strength on back of tile and follow the manufacturer's instructions for use. NOTE: If you plan to install with adhesive strips it is recommended to primer both sides of the tiles prior to installation on your wall.

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### (3) PLACING TILES ON THE WALL

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Regardless of the adhesion method, tiles go on the wall the same way. Make sure the first tiles are positioned straight and level. Use a level or mark lines on the wall to help with this. Take wall straightness and other obstacles into account early on. On a wall-to-wall install, when at all possible, work across the wall, moving toward the corner from the top, to reduce cutting and allow cut tiles to fall in more inconspicuous areas. If working from the center out, all tiles that fall at edges may need to be cut. Plan your design well to ensure desired results are what you expect. Remember, measure twice and cut once.

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#### CUTTING TILES

In most installations you will probably need to cut some tiles. The tiles can be cut with a standard utility knife or power tools. We recommend taping along cut lines or drill spots with painters tape to reduce pulp flair when using power tools. After the tiles are cut and tape removed, lightly sand edges to remove any pulp flair if necessary. When using power tools always follow manufacturer's suggestions for equipment use and safety precautions.

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### (4) PRIMER COAT

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After tiles are all placed on the wall and adhesives set up we recommend the first PVA primer/sealer coat be applied before any finishing work is started to seal the tiles.

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#### PROFESSIONAL LEVEL FINISH

We suggest a product called **Sheetrock Brand Tuff Hide Primer-Surfacers® from USG or Level Coat from Magnum Products** in place of regular primer. Most professional painters will be familiar with these type of products and have appropriate sprayer for application. It is a heavy, self leveling and building primer that quickly helps prepare a wall for a high level finish, hides small imperfections and provides an even surface.

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### (5) FINISH WORK

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#### ADDRESSING THE SEAMS (OPTIONAL)

A modular product will have seams. If this is planned into the design there is no need for additional work. If you would like to minimize seams use a paintable caulk on all joints before final primer coat. Keep caulk cleaned up and smooth as you go because it cannot be sanded when set up.

If you are looking to create a monolithic installation additional finish work might need to be done where tiles join together. The professional level finish application referenced above is recommended for a seamless finished look.

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#### FINISHING AROUND OUTLETS AND SWITCHES

Use extension boxes for the outlets to bring them out past the Wall Flats. Cut tiles to fit the box opening and finish caulk around edges. For switches cut an opening in the Wall Flat 1/8" larger than the cover size. With the switch(es) mounted, and cover plate not yet installed fill the voids in the tiles where the cuts were made with joint compound, let it dry and reapply. Similar to finishing sheetrock this usually takes three applications before sanding. This should be done after initial primer coat. Sand smooth. If joint compound is applied to the tiles without a primer coat the moisture from the joint compound can wick back into the tiles causing swelling at the edges and corners. It also allows for light sanding if needed and generally protects the tiles during finishing. Install plate covers after final paint.

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### RENTAL INSTALLATIONS / EASY TO REMOVE INSTALLATION SUGGESTIONS

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If you would like to easily be able to remove the Wall Flats and not damage your wall or be able to reinstall the Wall Flats in a new location at a later date we have some recommendations.

We suggest installing the Wall Flats onto a separate rigid substrate first (examples: 1/8" masonite, 1/8" melamine, 1/4" drywall or 1/4" gatorboard, all available in up to 4'x8' sheets). Then attach the larger substrate to your wall with a few screws and easily removable.

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This product is designed to be low-impact on the environment. It is made from bagasse, a byproduct of sugarcane. There are no chemical additives. The tiles are modular and nest inside one another to reduce shipping volume and costs. They are 100% biodegradable or can be recycled with other paper products when removed. To keep the product as environmentally-friendly as possible we recommend low VOC paints and glues for installation.

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