

## Tips for Creating Your Dream Home

by Sara Shragal

### Tried and True Tile Tips For Your Home

Want to make your master [bath](#) dazzle with enhanced [tile](#) designs, but aren't sure where to begin? Careful planning and smart spending is important because it can get you the look you want for a price that won't bust your budget. Let's face it...renovating your master bathroom or any room is about a lot more than just stone or ceramic, so planning and getting creative with your budget is an important step.

If you're thinking about replacing the tile in your kitchen or master bath and don't know where to begin, here's a little tutorial to help bring you up to speed.

**Tile 101:** Not all tiles are created equal. Sure, all tile feels hard to the touch, but some types are more durable than others. Tile is rated using a hardness scale, which you can use as a guide in determining how your room usage will affect your chosen tile.

#### Tile Hardness Ratings

**Group I** – Tiles with a hardness rating in the first group are designed to hold up only to light usage. Use these tiles where traffic will be light and consist mostly of bare feet.

**Group II** – These tiles can stand the wear and tear of normal traffic, however they will not last if placed in entryways.

**Group III** – Tiles of this hardness rating can generally be used anywhere within the home and withstand a heavy degree of traffic.

**Group IV & V** – Most likely you will not use these tiles in your home, as they are truly designed for extra-heavy, high-abrasion traffic.

Mosaic stone tile is the latest emerging trend. Available in a multitude of colors, these tiles can range in shapes and sizes, and may contain precious metals or stones. Mosaics fit nicely into both modern and traditional bathroom layouts. Feel free to mix it up by combining sizes, styles and shapes. And - while white stone tile is growing in popularity because of its ability to hide dirt and mildew and create a "clean and sanitary" look – be sure to use gray grout when installing the tile to achieve the best results. There are also several other materials and styles for you to choose from:

- Brick
- Cement
- Ceramic
- Pavers
- Porcelain
- Quarry
- Saltillo

- Terra Cotta
- Terrazzo

The styles and colors you pick usually set the tone for the rest of the room's accessories and mood so keep this in mind when choosing both color and materials.

**Shop Wisely.** Consumers with small budgets will be happy to hear that, generally speaking, larger stone tile is less expensive than smaller versions because it is cheaper to manufacture – and obviously that cost savings translates to you through the suggested retail price. The last piece of advice you should heed – plan ahead and make sure to add shipping time for products into your overall remodeling plan. This can be particularly important if you're hiring an installer to do the work. A week delay in delivery can sometimes mean much more of a delay in the installation if that vendor has a full plate.

*Sara Shragal is a staff writer for DirectBuy. For more information or other helpful tips for your home, visit [www.directbuycares.com](http://www.directbuycares.com). You can send suggestions for future columns to [questions@directbuycares.com](mailto:questions@directbuycares.com).*