

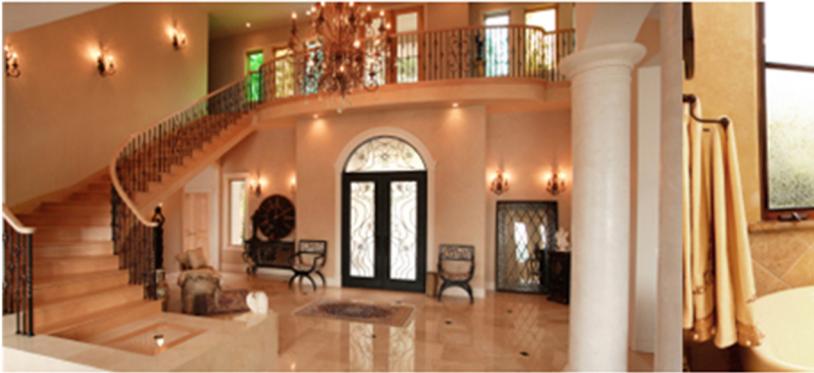
# Consumers Guide to Cleaning & Restoring Your Tile & Grout Hard Floors

Read this 14 Page guide and you'll discover:

1– The 4 Basic Types of Tiles *(p4)*

2– What You Should Expect From Your Tile & Grout Cleaner *(p5)*

3– How To Maintain Your Tile & Grout Floor *(p7)*



4– Tile & Grout Challenges and How To Deal With Them *(p8)*

5– 7 Mistakes to Avoid When Choosing a Floor care Company *(p9)*

6– 4 Steps to a Clean Fresh Floor

**Dear Home Owner,**

Choosing a Hard Floor cleaner & restorer isn't easy.

Why? Because you're bombarded with misleading advertising, confusing claims and simply bad information.

From super-low prices and high-pressure sales - to unqualified technicians and near worthless methods – how do you ever find a qualified, competent, professional floor cleaner?

You start by reading this Consumer's Guide. In this fact-filled booklet, **you'll discover the old myths about floor cleaning, the 6 step cleaning & restoration process, few tips how to keep your floor clean and the top 3 reasons why waiting to clean your floor can destroy their beauty and their value.**

We wrote this guide to help you better understand floor cleaning. Now, with this information, you can make an informed, intelligent decision.

And if you have any questions about floor cleaning, you're invited to call us 020 8687 1711. We've dedicated our business to educating consumers. We'll be happy to help you in every way.

Cordially,

*Kevin Goodwin*

*Direct Cleaners Ltd*

*Specialists in Cleaning, Care & Restoration*



## **Kevin Goodwin**

...is the owner of Direct Cleaners Ltd. Kevin has been in the Cleaning Service Industry since 1990.

Kevin is Certified by TrustMark, CheckATrade, Woosafe and is a Senior member of the NCCA . These are world leading certification and educational bodies for the cleaning and restoration industry.

Kevin has dedicated himself to helping homeowners get the highest return from their carpets, rugs, upholstery, natural stone and hard floor surfaces. Your enquiries are welcome we will gladly answer your questions over the telephone.

*Direct Cleaners Ltd*

*Specialists in Cleaning, Care & Restoration*  
Phone 020 8687 1711

## THE 4 BASIC TYPES OF TILES

**CERAMIC TILE** – is a man-made, clay fired material. Glazed ceramic tile (single-fired, double-fired, etc...) does not normally require any protective treatment. It is the glaze itself that gives the tile its excellent protection and resistance to the absorption of dirt. Many of the new ceramic tiles in today's market are manufactured to look like real stone. These imitations are quite impressive and can fool many uninformed hard surface cleaning firms. As a general rule the clean ability of ceramic tiles is outstanding and the process is generally relatively simple. Professional cleaning and sealing will restore the tile and grout to a like-new condition.

**PORCELAIN TILE** - is a very hard material that is particularly resistant to chemical agents, scratches, freezing and the absorption of water. Porcelain is ideal for paving floors in public places such as restaurants, airports, schools, hospitals and shopping centres. It has also more recently begun to be used in residential applications. Porcelain Tile can be given a polished surface industrially. This produces the "polished" version with its mirror-like shine. However, unlike the "natural" or unpolished versions, this is more likely to mark. It can even be honed and polished, but this is usually a very difficult and time consuming process.

**QUARRY TILE & PAVER BRICK** – Quarry Tiles are an unglazed ceramic material. They are particularly well suited for exterior paving due to their low absorption and resistance to freezing (the high baking temperatures and high quality clay used in manufacturing, along with other raw materials make this type of floor one of the most durable on the market today).

There is no particular waiting time before treating these materials because they are not generally affected by blooms, their low absorbency allows for rapid drying. In both types, protection treatments should only be carried out when the floor is completely dry. There are different products and processes for these materials according to whether they are laid indoors or out.

**TERRACOTTA TILE OR SALTILLO TILE** - is one of the oldest ceramic materials made by man. This type of tile is created by mixing clay and water, leaving it to dry naturally and finally baking it in a kiln. Saltillo Tile has particular characteristics that demand special treatment. The unique properties exist physically (with absorption), mechanically (with special finishes) and compositionally (with different types of clay).

## What you should expect from your Tile & Grout Cleaner & Restorer

**1. Free Survey** - You should always get a free survey and assessment to discuss your requirements and identify the floor type and condition. This will normally take 20-30 minutes and should give you a very good idea what to expect from the cleaning & restoration company.



**2. Written Quote** - No surprises!! Make sure the price you are quoted includes everything. The best way to do this is to have a written quote that explains exactly what you are getting and what is not included. Avoid quotes a given over the phone or having a 'verbal' quote.

**3. Written Guarantee** – Is their work guaranteed? If so, how long for? Is the guarantee in writing? If you are not sure, these are the question you should be asking before you go ahead with any work.

**4. Proof of Training & Certification** - I have seen so many problems arising from poorly trained or untrained technicians. Just because someone has been doing this for '20 years' doesn't mean they have been doing it right for '20 years'! Ask to see their last training certificate, ideally it should be less than a year old, even if they have been doing it for '20 years'.

**5. Membership of a Quality Trade Association** – Look for trade association logo's on the companies ad's or paperwork etc. This can give you some back-up should a problem arise. If in doubt, you can always check with the association the company is really a member.

*"The men did a good job. I would recommend you. The staff worked hard and next time I would have the same people. They were polite & hard working."* Mrs Dozell, Wimbledon.

*"Very good, very efficient. I will most certainly use you again & tell my friends."* Mrs Lee, Sanderstead.

## Our Cleaning Process

- 1. Protect Walls, Doors & Skirting Boards** – The first step is to protect your walls, doors and skirting boards with masking tape. This is to ensure no cleaning solution can mark or damage your property.
- 2. Pre-Vacuum Dry Soil** – An important stage in any type of professional floor cleaning and one that is often over looked or completely skipped. Removing dry soil before scrubbing the floor also helps prevent unnecessary scratches happening.
- 3. Apply Pre-Treatment** – A pre-treatment solution is quickly applied to a large area of the floor being cleaned. The solution is normally left to dwell for between 5-15 minutes.
- 4. Rotary Machine Scrub** – The solution and floor is now scrubbed with a rotary machine using nylon brushes or coloured pads depending on the type of floor. This is where the deep cleaning really takes place.
- 5. Hand Scrub of Corners and Edges** – The rotary machine will not be able to reach all the 'hard to get' areas, so we use a smaller brush or pad to hand scrub these areas.
- 6. Hot Water, High Pressure Rinse** - Now for the noisy [but very effective – and expensive] machine we use to thoroughly clean and rinse your floors. The high pressure hot water unit we use cleans much better because it heats water to a very high temperature and then shoots the rinsing solution into the floor & grout at high pressure. This helps to break up the dirt, bacteria and soils. The machine then produces a huge vacuum volume to draw the dirt out. This is like a hot pressure washing unit, enclosed in a sealed unit so the floor is left almost completely dry.
- 7. Apply sealant / protector** – An impregnator sealer should be applied to the grout to help protect it from ongoing usage and spills etc. Depending on the floor type, you may also be able to protect the tile with a type of seal and/or polish. The type of finish required should be discussed during the time of the survey as this depends on the type of tile and grout you have.
- 8. Guarantee** – You will be given a minimum of a 30 day after care service guarantee with all our cleaning. For maintenance plans the guarantee is extended to 12 months.



## How to Maintain Your Tile and Grout Floor

Okay, so you've now got a lovely, new looking, clean floor... How do you keep it looking clean?!



The following is to give you a guide on how to keep your floors looking great and well maintained for a long time. Please note, I cannot cover all types of floors and conditions so this is intended to give you a general idea on maintaining tile & grout floors.

**Regular Vacuuming** – This is the best way to remove dry soil, dry mud, dog & cat hair, dust from your tile & grout floor. Ideally, vacuum everyday if you have time, but at least once a week should be adequate.

**Avoid the mop & bucket** – One of the biggest problems with tile & grout flooring are the gaps between the tiles. These are valley's that act like dirt traps that the dirt falls into. A mop and bucket typically moves the dirt around until it falls into the grout valleys which is why they normally get dirty quite quickly. You may find it better to use a wet & dry cleaner as explained below.



**Deal with Spills & Stain immediately** – Try not to let spills and stains absorbed into the grout. The quicker you wipe these up the better the floor will remain.

**Wet & Dry vacuum cleaner** – You can purchase a domestic wet & dry cleaner from most well known DIY stores. The good thing about these machines is that unlike a mop and bucket, they lift the dirt off the floor a lot more effectively and leave the floor much drier.

**Maintenance plan** – Have us to look after your floor for you and keep it looking clean and great all year round. We can carry out a maintenance clean of your tile and grout from once a month to once a year depending on budget, requirements and level of maintenance required.

*“Just to say thank you. I found your service from beginning to end efficient & professional and will recommend you in future”.* Noreen Cowley, Sutton.

*“Would always use Direct Cleaners. Excellent service, Kevin in particular is very polite and very experienced. Thank you.”* Ann Lawrence, Warlingham.

## Tile & Grout Challenges and How to Deal with Them

- **Pitting or Indentations in the Tile that Attracts Dirt** - There are many types of tiles like these in the stores today that are very popular. They can have a nice 'rustic' look and anti-slip properties. The problem is that dirt and soils can easily fall into the pits and very quickly get dirty. This is not an easy problem to deal with. One answer is to use a wet & dry cleaner too blast and vacuum the dirt out of the pits. If done regularly enough, this can keep the floor in a reasonable condition. Other than that, once the floor has been professionally cleaned, a regular maintenance plan will really help to keep it cleaned and maintained.
- 
- **Grout Discoloring or Looking Dirty Very Quickly** – Sometimes if you have a grout colour that is too light for the floor or area it is in, it can start to look darker or dirty very quickly. The first thing to do is to protect the grout with an impregnator sealer. If this doesn't work, or it's too late for this, then a deep professional clean could help. You may even be able to re-colour the grout to something that is more suitable to the tile and area it is in.
  - **Missing or Cracking Grout** - That tile in your kitchen or bathroom looked so stunning when it was first put down. But over time, you start to notice that the grout is cracking and pitting. You can repair the grout and give your tile that beautiful look it had just after it was put in. By following a few simple steps, you can repair cracked, pitted grout and have your tile looking great again. It involves removing all the old grout and reapplying new grout.
  - **Tile Looking Flaky or Dull** – This problem only occurs on certain types of tile, most often if the tile has been polished with a topical surface polish. This is normally due to the polish wearing out or having completely worn off the tile. The best way to solve this is to strip, seal and polish the tiles and maintain with a neutral PH floor maintainer.

### 7 MISTAKES TO AVOID WHEN CHOOSING A FLOOR CARE COMPANY

**MISTAKE No.1:** *Choosing a floor care contractor based on equipment alone.*

No question, your floor care cleaner needs first-rate equipment. But he also needs something else.

He needs employees who are skilled at operating that equipment. Many companies purchase acceptable equipment, but very few companies teach their employees how to use them properly.

The best way to know that the floor care cleaner's employees have been properly taught is to make sure the company has been certified by the IICRC.

Before you choose a floor stone cleaner, ask to see written proof of the companies and technicians IICRC certification.

### ***MISTAKE No.2: Choosing a floor cleaner based on low price.***

Low price could be a problem in three ways:

- 1) Low price can be the "bait" that attracts you but once the cleaner gets into your home he pressures you into "switching" to a much more expensive job.
- 2) Low price can be for simple cleaning. Rarely does the consumer know what this means and when told, realises that what is really required will cost much more.
- 3) Low price usually means that the company has little or cheap equipment, or poorly trained staff which will not effectively clean and refinish your stone.

### ***MISTAKE No.3: Choosing a tile or floor care company based on a single telephone call***

Instead, invite the person to your home and ask for a specific written quotation. Then you'll know exactly what the floor care company recommends – and you won't be the victim of high pressure tactics when the technician steps into your living room. *If they refuse to come out I wouldn't trust him ... would you?*

### ***MISTAKE No.4: Choosing a tile or floor care company who doesn't offer a Full Guarantee.***

In my view, every tile or floor company should be fully accountable for its work. If you are not pleased with the job in every way, you should not have to pay for it until you are happy. Period. Not all companies offer a guarantee. Or, if they do, the guarantee may be limited. Ask them if they offer a money-back guarantee and then make sure the floor care company includes his guarantee in writing.

## **MISTAKE No.5:**

Anyone can say anything about their past jobs. And sadly, some of what they say may not be true. Make sure you ask for references or read comments from current customers so you can depend on the floor care company and their work.

## **MISTAKE No.6: *Choosing a floor care company who is not certified by the IICRC.***

If your floor care contractor is not a close friend, you may not know whether he has the knowledge or experience to clean your tiles and grout safely and correctly. If you want to be sure you are hiring a competent professional, make sure he is IICRC certified, the floor care technician must earn that certification through study, experience and successful completion of formal, written examinations. In effect, technicians who are certified by the IICRC have earned a college degree in tile and stone care.

## **MISTAKE No.7: *Choosing a floor care cleaner who is not a member of the National Carpet Cleaners Association (NCCA).***

Although the NCCA is the largest trade association of carpet cleaners in the UK, it is also the lead authority in hard surface floor care.

So being IICRC certified will show they are trained, but additionally as a member of the NCCA they must keep to a number of rules. These include:

1. Honest, Ethical business practices.
2. Staying current on the latest methods of floor care.

Have current, valid insurance.

You are making a wise decision when you decide to have your stone cleaned and maintained by a member of the NCCA.

*“I've used you several times before-at places of work in various houses and I've never been anything less than pleased with your high standards. Thank you very much again.”* Heather Cutting, Purley

*“The cleaning was good, The operator got on with his job with no disruption to me, and it looks thoroughly cleaned. I liked that the operator worked in a professional manner and yet was very friendly. Thank you for offering a caring service.”* Miss Makda, Streatham



## **6 Reasons to Have a Relationship with a Professional Hard Surface Floor Care Company**

### **Reason # 1: Product Maintenance**

Floors need to be maintained properly. Allowing yourself to become victimised by uneducated, uninformed or sometimes downright unscrupulous floor care companies certainly can have a negative affect on you. When an installation doesn't wear or clean well, you may assume that the product is defective when it may simply need to be maintained professionally. Direct Cleaners is one of the most reputable, experienced cleaning companies in South London. We will help you keep your floors looking their best at all times.

### **Reason # 2: Education**

You need to know how to best take care of your Natural or Synthetic floors. Many installations are permanently damaged due to a client's lack of proper education about maintenance. Direct Cleaners offers free information to you – just by asking. We also publish newsletters, tips and we are also available for free information over the telephone.

### **Reason # 3: Problem Solving**

Direct Cleaners is one of the most experienced cleaning company's in the country. We routinely solve unusual and difficult soiling conditions; therefore you can be sure we will give you unbiased advice and constructive help.

### **Reason # 4: Referral Rewards**

Get FREE CASH or CLEANING through our Referral Reward Program! Direct Cleaners offers a Referral Fee for every new clients you send us that use our services.

### **Reason # 5: Perks For You!**

#### **Client Special Offer**

The Most Thorough Carpet Cleaning Ever Seen – Absolutely FREE! – After we have completed and been paid for our first job we will send you a gift voucher to allow you to test just how thorough our carpet cleaning service is. We will, within the time limit of the voucher, clean up to 100 sq. ft of carpet of your choice.

All we ask from you is to allow us to carry out a FREE Healthy Home Audit, which includes a written report on the condition and cleaning requirements we believe are suitable for your home. We offer a variety of Carpet Care Packages including our 'Perfect Care Maintenance Plan' which members receive a FREE 6 monthly visit to highlight clean the most important areas in your home and also to enjoy FREE spot cleaning of your carpets from Direct Cleaners – [www.directcleaners.com](http://www.directcleaners.com)

### **Reason # 6: Perks For Your Family or Friends**

Your family or friends can try our services FREE! We will offer them (those that are new clients to us) 100 sq. ft of basic ceramic tile cleaning at no charge, no obligation, and without a high sales pitch! This free service is worth up to £80.00. We will provide you with a Free Trial Offer Cards that entitle your friends to this valuable gift. Simply write your name on it and give it to your friend as a free gift from you!

## **4 STEPS TO A FRESH, CLEAN FLOOR**

If you are thinking about having your floors cleaned, we encourage you to follow these four simple steps:

**STEP No 1:** Make a commitment to yourself to get your tiled or stone floor cleaned. The longer they remain dirty, the more they will be damaged and the uglier they become.

**STEP No 2:** List your objectives. Do you want only the soil removed or do you want the grout lines sealed? Do you want to work with an honest, reputable company – or are you willing to risk working with the company that offers the lowest price – knowing that the company might not be in business tomorrow.

**STEP No 3:** Ask questions. The way you learn about a company is to ask specific questions and listen carefully to the answers. Here are eight tough questions to ask a floor care company before they begin their work:

1. What method of floor restoration do you recommend?
2. What type of equipment do you use to clean floors?
3. What system and methods would you recommend for my floor and why?
4. How long will your particular finish last before I will need it done again?
5. What training have you had in tile and stone floor care?

6. Are you a member of the NCCA?
7. Are you certified by the IICRC and will you show me your certificates?
8. Are all your cleaning technicians certified by the IICRC and can I see their certificates?

**STEP No 4:** Once you are satisfied that you are working with an honest, competent professional, invite him to your home and ask for an estimate in writing. This gives you the assurance that you will not later receive any unpleasant surprises.

### WHICH SYSTEMS DO WE USE?

Direct Cleaners uses the most advanced systems on the market today. This includes the new SX-12 which is a very light tool, weighing only 15 pounds, yet it is extremely strong and durable. It is a self-contained rotary washer, driven by water. It pressure



washers the surface and immediately recovers the soil and water at the same time. Once attached to the high-pressure line and vacuum hose from a truckmount, it is ready to clean. Under the moulded hood is the spray bar and pressure wash jets. Driven by the water pressure the SX-12 spins faster at high pressure. In addition to this we utilise a number of rotary, high and low pressure systems including powerful water vacuum. The Sealing systems we use offer the highest degree of protection possible. The Tile Care Company is experienced in all methods of Tile and Grout preservation.

*“Kevin & Jean Very professional. On time, went to work straight away. They were both very pleasant. I didn't know they were in the house. Everything back in its place. A lovely job. I am really happy to have found them, & in 1.5 hours out the does finished. Thanks Boys”*

Mrs Nolan, Raynes Park

## **“What’s the difference between my company and any other”?**

“You know how most cleaning companies quote you their cheapest price over the phone. They send a cleaner who knows little or nothing about your requirements. He tries to bump up the price by telling you, you need more than just a ‘normal’ clean. He ‘cleans’ normally rushing if you don’t pay extra. He leaves your floors wet, it takes days to dry & it’s full of residue. He’s gone before you know what’s happened.!”

**This Is What We Do: Free Survey Visits:** I come out to you completely free of charge to carry out a full cleaning inspection. I advise you the best cleaning method for you, & honest advise on potential areas and removing particular stains such as tea, coffee stains etc... I then leave you with a written quotation based on your unique requirements.

**Thorough Cleaning:** We use the most through cleaning method there is. Some cleaning methods use chemicals that leave a residue that doesn't get the dirt out, it just covers it up. Our method doesn't leave a residue and is very powerful. It cleans deep down removing harmful dirt and bacteria leaving a fresh, clean, healthy floor.

**100% Money Back Guarantee:** I personally ensure that you are 100% delighted with our work or I'll write you a cheque for every penny you have spent with us - PLUS you can keep all free gifts for any inconvenience caused.

**Honest Pricing:** I promise no high-pressure sales gimmicks, no hidden costs. The prices we quote you are fully inclusive. There are no extras. The price quoted includes all the solutions, machinery and manpower we need to get the job done right. We only have one standard of cleaning - thorough, professional and exhaustive. Unlike other less scrupulous (or should that be more unscrupulous?!) firms we do not Bait & Switch. What's that? Well, some companies will offer you the Bait of a very low price then Switch to a higher price once they get into your home. Our prices are for our highest level of service. The price we quote you is the price you pay.

**THANKS AGAIN!** ... for reviewing our **CONSUMER'S GUIDE TO TILE AND GROUT CARE**, I hope you found this information helpful.

If you have any questions or comments – or if you'd like us to give you a **written estimate** – please call me on **0800 056 2332 / 020 8687 1711**

I do invite you to call us. We'll be happy to answer your questions – although we can't give you an estimate over the telephone, we would be delighted to come into your home and give you a free **'Healthy Tile and Grout Audit'** – We'll give advice on how to restore your tiles or clean your tiles and grout or stone floors whether marble, limestone or slate and make them look great and in the process make them easier to maintain ... it only takes about 15-30 minutes then we can give you a complete written estimate for the work we recommend – without obligation of any kind.

We've dedicated our business to consumer education and service.

We'll be pleased to help you in every way. We look forward to hearing from you.

Thanks!!

*Kevin Goodwin*

Kevin Goodwin

© 2014 Direct Cleaners Ltd

Tel: 020 8687 1711



We wouldn't expect you to just trust anyone to clean your valuable carpet ... that's why Carpet Care *is proud to be recognised of these leading trade bodies!*

