



Technical Bulletin # 114

RE: Grout Color, Texture, Lighting

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Color

There is no such thing as a single and isolated color. Colors are always seen next to other colors. A color's hue, value, and intensity, changes when the color is placed in a context of surrounding colors.

The color of an installed grout can appear different depending on the color of the tile and lighting conditions. It is frustrating (and expensive) to install a colored grout with a perfect tone for a particular scheme only to discover that it becomes a different color when applied between colored tile. Changes in color perception occur whether we want them to or not, so it is critical for job owners and designers to understand just how colors interact and to anticipate those interactions. It is highly recommended to do a test panel simulating job conditions, environment and materials.

Texture

The texture and finish of installed grout results from the type of grout used, and installation/finishing technique used by the installer. Surface texture and finish alter the way color is perceived. Rough textured areas of raised sand in a sanded grout will appear darker in color. Smooth areas found with non-sanded grout and over-worked sanded grout will appear lighter in color.

Lighting

The type and source of lighting in a tile installation can accentuate surface irregularities by casting shadows on the tile surface and grout joints. Sources of lighting include overhead or vertical light from the ceiling directly over a wall, and outside natural light through windows and doors. The type of light will also affect the way the color is perceived. Different types of lighting include fluorescent, white bulb, halogen and torch. Each of these types will make the same grout color look differently.

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