

FIT TO BE

tiled

It covers backsplashes and bathrooms the world over, but tile has loads of unlocked design potential. When you play with color and pattern, hard-working ceramic and porcelain surfaces become modern mosaics, and squares of leather, glass, and other unexpected mediums add major polish. We thought outside the box to bring you renovation ideas and right-now upgrades that pave the way to a home with serious style.



Sources on page 124.

Photographs by Pernille Loof
Text by Jesse Dorris



THE DETAILS
Ann Sacks Selvaggio
Mosaics, in *Safari Bianco*
Grigio, \$59 per sq. ft.,
annsacks.com. **Benjamin**
Moore paint, in *Gray Mist*
 (on wall) and *Stardust* (on
 mantle), benjaminmoore.com. **Ash NYC Large Basic**
Suede mirror, in *Grey*,
 \$3,000, 1stdibs.com. **Wm**
H Jackson Company 168-
C3 fire set with stand,
 \$2,150, wmhjackson.com. **Gabriel**
Scott Marx stool, \$1,225,
gabriel-scott.com.
ABC Carpet & Home
vintage Afghan rug,
 \$2,400, abchome.com.

marble

MARVELS

A slab of this ancient stone always looks refined, but smaller blocks reveal its livelier side. We chose slim rectangular tiles for our fireplace surround; the format breaks up the rich taupe veining into a less-expected pattern. (And since they come as 12-inch-square mesh sheets, installing them is straightforward: Simply measure your space, cut the sheets to fit, and adhere them—there's no need to align, aka book-match, individual tiles.) The white Carrara hearth, dark firebox, and warm gray mantel bring out the surround's earthy flecks.

POWERFUL porcelain

Fired-clay tiles are built to last and brilliant for heavily trafficked floors in bathrooms and entryways.

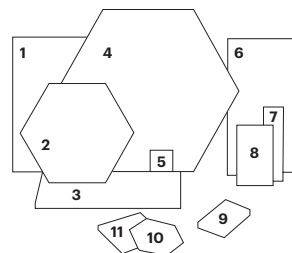
This faux-bois style, which comes in shades and grains mimicking every tree in the forest, is a high-performance alternative to hardwood. The swipe of a sponge erases muddy boot prints; the smooth, sealed surface repels everything else. Consider installing a chic herringbone pattern, traditional parquet, or horizontal rows, which help small or narrow rooms feel more spacious.



THE DETAILS

(ABOVE) **The Tile Shop Dyrewood Cinnamon Wood Look floor tile**, 8" by 36", \$5 per sq. ft., tileshop.com. **Ole Wanscher Colonial stool**, in Leather, \$2,000, carlhansen.com.

(FROM PAGE 122) **1. Fritztile Glass Brights Collection tile**, in Seafoam, price upon request, fritztile.com. **2. Ann Sacks Mixare Hexagon field tile**, in Sand, \$9 per sq. ft., annsacks.com. **3. The Tile Shop Cantana Verde tile**, 6" by 12", \$8 per sq. ft., tileshop.com. **4. Marazzi USA Urban District hex tile**, 16", in Boulevard, \$9 per sq. ft., marazziusa.com. **5. Ann Sacks Metro Nuovo field tile**, 1" by 1", in Snow in Gloss, \$63 per sq. ft., annsacks.com. **6. Michael Aram Collection for Artistic Tile Gotham White gloss ceramic field tile**, 6" by 12", \$61 per sq. ft., artistictile.com. **7. Heath Ceramics classic field tile**, 2" by 6", in % Fog, \$20 per sq. ft., heathceramics.com. **8. Artistic Tile Copper La Leaf tile**, \$110 per sq. ft., artistictile.com. **9. Waterworks Grive Brickworks field tile**, in Dirty Silver, price upon request, waterworks.com. **10. Clé Tile Zellige Weathered White hex tile**, 3.5", \$23.50 per sq. ft., cletile.com. **11. Clé Tile Zellige Natural tile**, 2" by 2", \$23 per sq. ft., cletile.com.

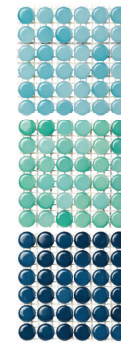


Color-Block Your Counter

Soft stripes reminiscent of Neapolitan ice cream sweeten an all-white kitchen. Plus, they protect the front of this counter from kicking feet. We picked smaller-scale halfpenny porcelain tiles over standard-size ones to add more texture. (Their 12-inch square format makes getting even rows a no-brainer.) To emphasize the tonal colors, we used grouts in matching shades.

THE DETAILS

Waterworks Penny Tile penny mosaic, ½", in (from top) Sand Glossy, Armor Glossy, and Latte Glossy, price upon request, waterworks.com. **Custom Building Products Fusion Pro grout**, in (from top) Quartz, Cape Gray, and New Taupe, \$55 per gallon, homedepot.com. **Fossil quartz** (on countertop), from \$75 per sq. ft., megamarble.com.



a cooler combo

Waterworks Penny Tile penny mosaic, ½", in (from top) Gulf, Seafoam, and Nautilus, price upon request, waterworks.com.





THE DETAILS

Fritztile terrazzo, in Atrium C520265 (on floor), \$8 per sq. ft., fritztile.com.

Industry West Mineral pendant, in Amber, \$200 each, industrywest.com.

Tom Dixon Offcut stool, in 650mm Natural, \$390, tomdixon.net.

Lostine maple hanging cutting board, \$160, food52.com.

This Venetian material has a party going on under its surface: confetti-like chips of marble, glass, granite, or quartz embedded in cement. Sealed terrazzo is practically impossible to damage, since it won't stain, chip, or scuff; also, machine polishing can give even a decades-old surface brand-new luster. Factor in all the potential base and chip combinations, and you've got hundreds of happy ways to customize a floor.

TIMELESS

terrazzo

subway

STYLE

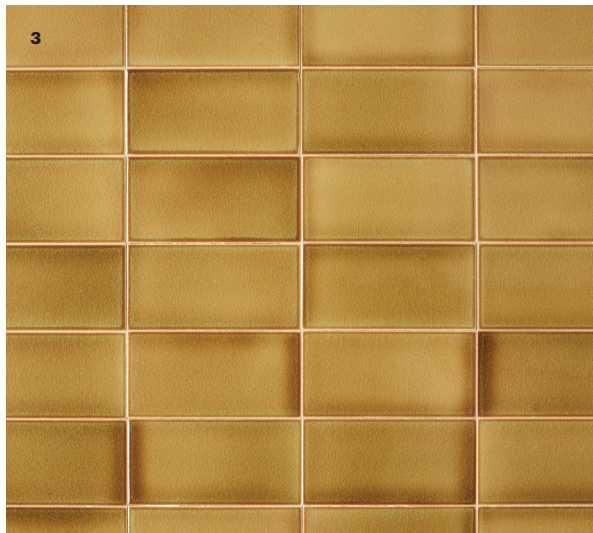
Like the public-transit system it's named after, this utilitarian ceramic surface has mass appeal. We love how the neat rows of white rectangles lend a Victorian sensibility to this bathroom (opposite); when they're paired with a classic marble countertop and brass finishes, the effect is clean but elegant. These rectangles can go in lots of different directions, however. Here are six creative ways to work them.



1. USE A NEW HUE
Offset rows in pale jade look as serene as a spa. **Jeffrey Court ceramic field tile #74202**, 3" by 6", in *Spanish Moss Gloss Crackle*, jeffreycourt.com. **Custom Building Products Fusion Pro grout**, in *Haystack*, homedepot.com.

2. SEE SQUARES
Pale-pink grout invigorates a standard parquet. **Jeffrey Court ceramic field tile**, in *Royal Cream*, homedepot.com. **The Tile Shop Wild Rose sanded grout**, tileshop.com.

3. FORM ROWS
Far from corporate, an Excel-spreadsheet style in rich ochre would make a striking fireplace surround. **Subway Ceramics tile**, 3" by 6", in *Ginger*, subwaytile.com. **Custom Building Products Fusion Pro grout**, in *Antique White*, homedepot.com.



4. GO VERTICAL
Gray contrasting grout helps this grid pop. **Nemo Tile Metro wall-tile collection field tile**, 3" by 6", in *Smoke*, nemotile.com. **Custom Building Products Fusion Pro grout**, in *Nutmeg*, homedepot.com.



5. ZIG AND ZAG
Robin's-egg tiles and burgundy grout are a dramatic pairing for classic herringbone. **Daltile Rittenhouse Square tile**, 3" by 6", in *Spa*, daltile.com. **Custom Building Products Fusion Pro grout**, in *Sable Brown*, homedepot.com.

6. TAKE A TURN
A quarter-rotation reads as more modern. Martha has vintage tiles like these ombré ones in her bathrooms in Maine. **Subway Ceramics**, 3" by 6", in *Blush*, subwaytile.com. **Custom Building Products Fusion Pro grout**, in *Bright White*, homedepot.com.



ERIC PIASECKI/OTTO

LUXE leather

These tactile squares—available in smooth, suede, faux croc, and more—are surprisingly versatile. The rich, buttery one-eighth-inch-thick sealed cowhide tiles we mounted in this master bedroom could also cover a tray, a desktop, or (now we're talking) a walk-in closet's floor. Apply them to a substrate (like plywood) first, then to the surface you want to cover.

Float Your Headboard

We adhered these tiles to a four-by-eight-foot birch plywood sheet using contact cement (try **Wilsonart H20 contact adhesive**; \$56, cabinetmakerwarehouse.com), then hung the plywood with two French cleat brackets (**Ook 200-pound French cleats**, \$19 each, homedepot.com). Line it up 18 inches from the floor or with the bottom of your mattress, then frame it with **whitewashed quarter-round molding**.

THE DETAILS
Edelman Leather floor and wall tile, in *Very Natural*, price upon request, edelmanleather.com. **Blu Dot Clad nightstand**, in *Hickory/White*, \$799, bludot.com. **Urban Electric Co. Audley sconce**, in *Truck Black*, \$1,402, urbanelectricco.com. **Garnet Hill Eileen Fisher Farmhouse bedskirt**, in *Soft White*, \$138; and **Eileen Fisher Washed Linen Collection sheets**, in *Pure White*, from \$78, garnethill.com. **Serena & Lily Woven Stripe quilt**, from \$288, serenaandlily.com.



glass

ACT

Subtle variations in color and shine make this medium ideal for creating mod monochromatic installations. And though a glass surface may sound delicate, it's quite sturdy: Small-scale tiles are less likely to break than a solid sheet.



Top Your Table

We traded the original inset glass top of an inexpensive side table for a creamy custom-tiled one: Have a piece of wood cut to fit, then spread on thin-set mortar to adhere glass tiles to it. (Trim the tiles to fit at the edges with a glass cutter, if needed.) Then use a rubber float to fill in the cracks between tiles with stain-resistant grout. Wipe away the excess with a sponge or rag, and let it dry completely.

THE DETAILS

Artistic Tile Miles Modular glass tile, in *Be Bop White*, \$32 per sq. ft., artistictile.com. **Granada Tile Toscano #908A**, \$6 each, granadatile.com. **IKEA Nyboda table** (top removed), in *White/Gray*, \$50, ikea.com. **Serena & Lily Casablanca pom throw**, \$498, serenaandlily.com.

STUNNING cement

The vibrant hues of cement tiles make them highly covetable. Don't just take our word for it—see the hundreds of thousands of Instagrammers who follow @ihavethisthingwithfloors. Each is hand-poured into molds, not painted, so a turquoise like this won't chip or fade, and fewer grout joints mean there's nothing to interrupt the bold patterns. (Speaking of joints, preseal these tiles before you grout, to avoid stains.) Indoors, they help your home stay both warm and cool. Outdoors, their smooth finish feels like silk on bare feet.