

# SUBWAY TILE

A GUIDE TO UNDERSTANDING AUTHENTIC PRE-WAR TILEWORK

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WWW.SUBWAYTILE.COM

## WHAT IS SUBWAY TILE?

THE HISTORY BEHIND THE  
TILE AND ITS SIGNIFICANCE  
IN PERIOD ARCHITECTURE

## WHY IS OUR COLLECTION UNIQUE?

FAITHFULLY REPRODUCED USING  
HISTORICALLY AUTHENTIC METHODS

## CHARACTERISTICS AND COMPONENTS

LIMITLESS POSSIBILITIES  
FOR TIMELESS TILE DESIGN

# What is SUBWAY TILE?



Subway tile is a style of glazed ceramic tile originally used on the walls of the New York City subway stations in the early 20th century. First seen in 1904, the gleaming white, 3" x 6" tiles covered the walls of new subway platforms and allowed for easy cleaning and graffiti removal. The tiles were often accented with colorful tile mosaics of the subway station names or prominent buildings in the area.

The design aesthetic of "Subway Tile" quickly became fashionable in pre-war bathrooms and kitchens around the country. Easy to clean, stain resistant and light-reflective, the tiles epitomized what those rooms should be: sanitary.

More than a century later, ceramic subway tile is a favorite for homeowners, designers and craftsmen.

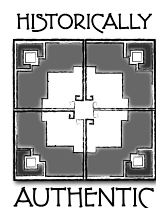
## CHARACTERISTICS OF SUBWAY TILE

- Clean white appearance of the tilework.
- Flat tile surface with pencil thin grout lines.
- Standard 3" x 6" field tiles.
- Specialized mouldings and corner pieces for miter-less installations - no right angles!
- Cove base mouldings transition between floor and wall surfaces.
- Cap mouldings elegantly terminate top edges.
- Tiled-in glazed ceramic accessories such as ceramic towel bars and recessed soap dishes.



## HISTORICAL SIGNIFICANCE

- Classic example of the principle of "form follows function" inherent in sanitary ceramic tilework of the Victorian time period.
- A uniquely American standardized system of tilework components and installation methods.
- Represents early 20th century tilework for residential home and commercial building construction.



## WHAT MAKES OUR COLLECTION UNIQUE?



- + Authentic reproduction tiles using the original historic catalogs and specifications as the basis for manufacture.
- + The tiles are manufactured using traditional dry pressed technique - this ensures that the tiles maintain a flat surface with sharp edges.
- + Glazes are reproductions of original colors and finishes.
- + All tile components are proudly made in the USA. Subway Ceramics received European CE certification - mandatory, conformity mark of quality.
- + Designed to complement the Subway Mosaic collection with classic unglazed porcelain floor mosaics and accent designs.

Interested in mosaics?  
Check out [SubwayMosaics.com](http://SubwayMosaics.com) to learn more.



## DESIGN APPLICATIONS

- Residential bathrooms and kitchen backsplashes.
- Restaurant bathrooms, bars, and prominent design features.
- Retail stores.
- Hotel restaurants, bars, and bathrooms.
- Public buildings and transportation.

NOTE: Subway Tiles are not recommended for flooring applications.



*The Regatta Hotel - Brisbane, Australia*

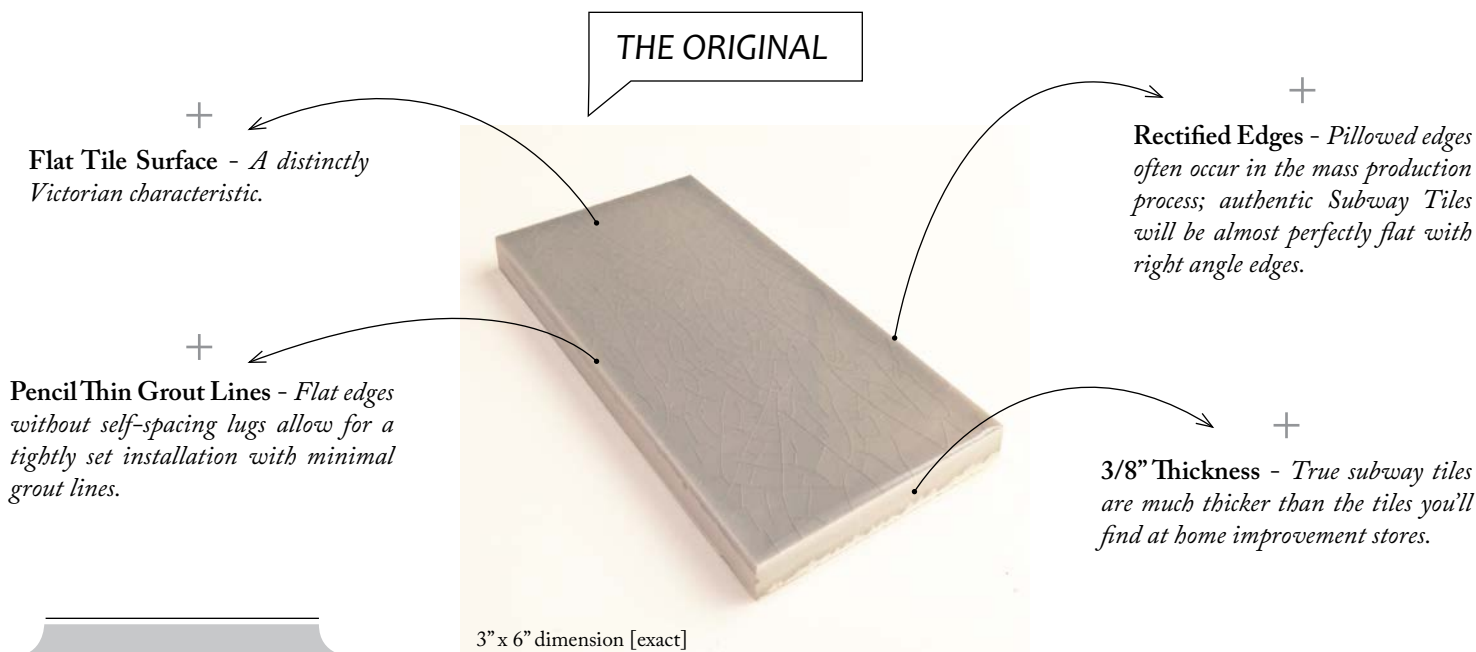
*Featuring 3"x6" bevel subway tile in Gloss White*

# Subway Tile Basics

TIPS, TERMS, AND DEFINITIONS FROM THE HERITAGE TILE EXPERTS

## LEARN TO SPOT A HISTORICALLY AUTHENTIC SUBWAY TILE

Mass production processes do not replicate the historically accurate manufacturing process to which Heritage Tile is committed. How is our Subway Tile different from what you'll find at a big box reno center?



## GENERAL COMPONENTS

**P-Cap Mouldings** - Used to terminate the top edge of a field of tile, or as an accent within the field.

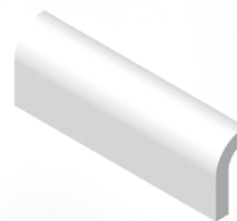
**Field Tiles** - Used as the more prominent tile throughout the largest area of the installation between the Cap and Base mouldings.

**Trim Elements** - Used to transition around outside corners and within inside corners to provide a gently curved surface.

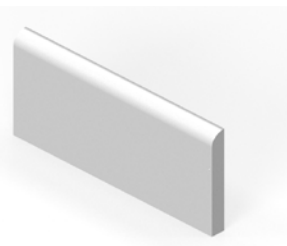
**Base Mouldings** - Used at the bottom of a wall to provide a clean transition between wall and floor.



**Mud Cap Mouldings** - Used to terminate the top edge of a field of tile, or to transition around corners.



**Trim Elements - Surface Bullnose** - Conventional bullnose commonly used to terminate the top or side edge of an installation.



For a complete catalog of our Subway Tile glazes and components, see our Design Guide.



## GLAZE FINISHES

We have three different glaze types available for Subway Tile:

**GLOSS** - *Highly reflective finish with solid color.*

**SATIN** - *Soft, subtle sheen with solid color.*

**CRACKLE** - *Highly reflective, cracked finish with slight color variation within each tile.*



### HELPFUL HINTS & GUIDELINES

Subway Tile from Heritage Tile is

- Sold by the square foot, in five square foot increments.
- Made with a nominal thickness of 3/8" and an actual dimension to specified size post firing.
- Complemented by corner elements and accessories which are more difficult to make, therefore are sold on a per-piece basis.
- Provided as loose tiles; they are not supplied pre-mounted.
- Most suitable as a wall covering and not generally recommended for floor applications.

#### ***Grout and grout lines***

Medium unsanded grout is generally recommended; this will give a traditional grey appearance. Grout lines can be as small as 1/16".

#### ***Ordering***

Availability of specific tiles can change; always contact the Studio to confirm availability. We advise you to always account for some "overage" (extra tiles) when ordering.

QUESTIONS? We're here to help!  
Email us at [info@heritagetile.com](mailto:info@heritagetile.com) or call 888-387-3280.



