

Choosing the right floor surface is a diligent design choice based on research, knowledge, professional advice and purpose.

Diligent Decisions and Surface Preservation for Ceramic Tiles

Three of the most commonly asked questions at Ceramic Solutions:

- Is my floor safe?
- Is it fit for the purpose it has in the building area?
- Am I using the right cleaning solutions?

Our management team work hard with clients to ensure that they make the right choice of floor and tile products. The brief we receive from a client is usually fairly straight forward and our advice scientifically proven. It goes something like this –

“Our shopping centre development must meet OH&S standards. Slippage is a big issue. We need a floor product that is safe and secure to walk on.”

Sometimes a client will **make their choice** starting with aesthetics – this colour looks nicer than that one – a visual choice.

Others will opt for a tactile choice – this surface is rougher to the touch so it must be safer – but is it really?

Of course the final decision is **your choice** but we aim to guide you, with industry specialisation and expertise, to choose the one that ‘ticks the boxes’ in the right order. Don’t be fooled that the one that looks better in a commercial or domestic venture is going to be the best fit.

Floor surface decisions can be made and monitored using the Circle of Solutions table (see below) – applicable to pool tiles, bathroom tiles, sport or leisure centres, restaurants, hospitals and kitchen tiles.

6.
Adherence to Diligence

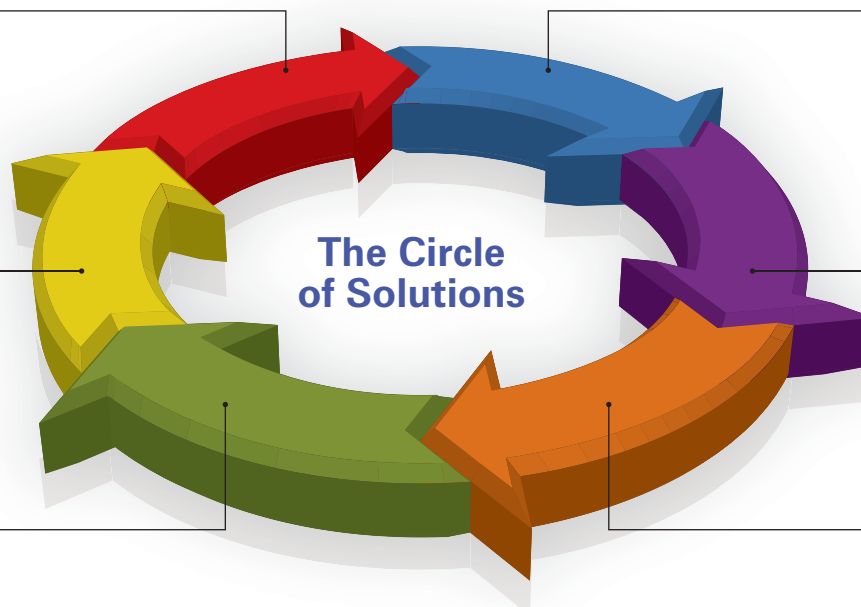
1.
Australian Standards for Slip Resistance
AS/NZS 4586 required by Law

5.
Transfer of Knowledge to contracted parties for Cleaning

2.
Designer and/or client decision on product – does the product fit the purpose?

4.
Cost of Maintenance regime and cleaning

3.
Life Cycle of the product – manufacturer’s guarantee





How Does the Circle of Solutions Work?



Australian Standards for Slip Resistance AS/NZS 4586

Floor surface provision in any construction project, be it domestic or commercial, public or private, must meet specific standards by Law. This is governed by OH&S and duty of care to those who go on to become the intended pedestrians, those who will traverse that surface on completion.



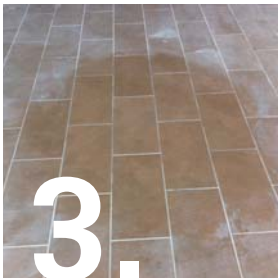
Designer and/or Client Decision on Floor Surface Product – Does the product fit the purpose? Is the surface safe?

This is no eeny meeny miny mo process. A rough epoxy floor will not be suitable where young children may fall and take off seven layers of skin, just as a smooth tile will be unsuited to a wet area (such as around a swimming pool, or commercial change rooms).

What is the criteria for the use of the area and how do we safeguard and protect ourselves, and those who enter our premises? And how do we define the word 'safe'? Industry expert definitions will differ from a generic definition. According to the Oxford Dictionary, safe/safety means "affording security or not involving danger, freedom from danger or risks, the duty of care before the fact." But it's much more than that.

Does the choice of floor surface meet the criteria/purpose for use?

A huge range of flooring ceramic tiles is available, such as hydrotect tiles that inhibit the growth of bacteria, non-slip and secure-grip floor tiles for wet-areas, hard wearing tiles for industrial applications, and decorative coloured tiles systematically matched to one another.



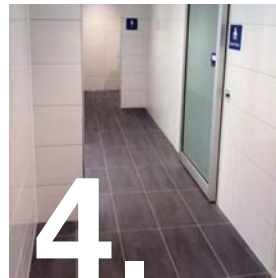
Life Cycle of the Product Governed by the Manufacturer's Guarantee and Specifications for Use and Care

The floor surface product choice will be recommended and chosen but, as with all consumer purchases, there is a manufacturer's guarantee clause.

e.g. "This tile will pass industry regulations and the wear test for a period of ten years if the following directives for use and care are carried out as per our recommendations.

- Use a cleaning solution that is weakly alkaline only (ph range >8.0 <-10.5).
- Use of a Scotch-Brite™ General Purpose Scouring pad 96, 96-20 and 96CC (green) will damage your polished surface. Use only Scotch-Brite™ Light Duty Scrubbing Pad 9030."

Choose you product wisely and instigate proper care procedures. If you drop your mobile phone in the lake you have voided your warranty. If you use the wrong cleaning tools and products your surface will erode and similarly void any wear and tear guarantees. The message is the same.



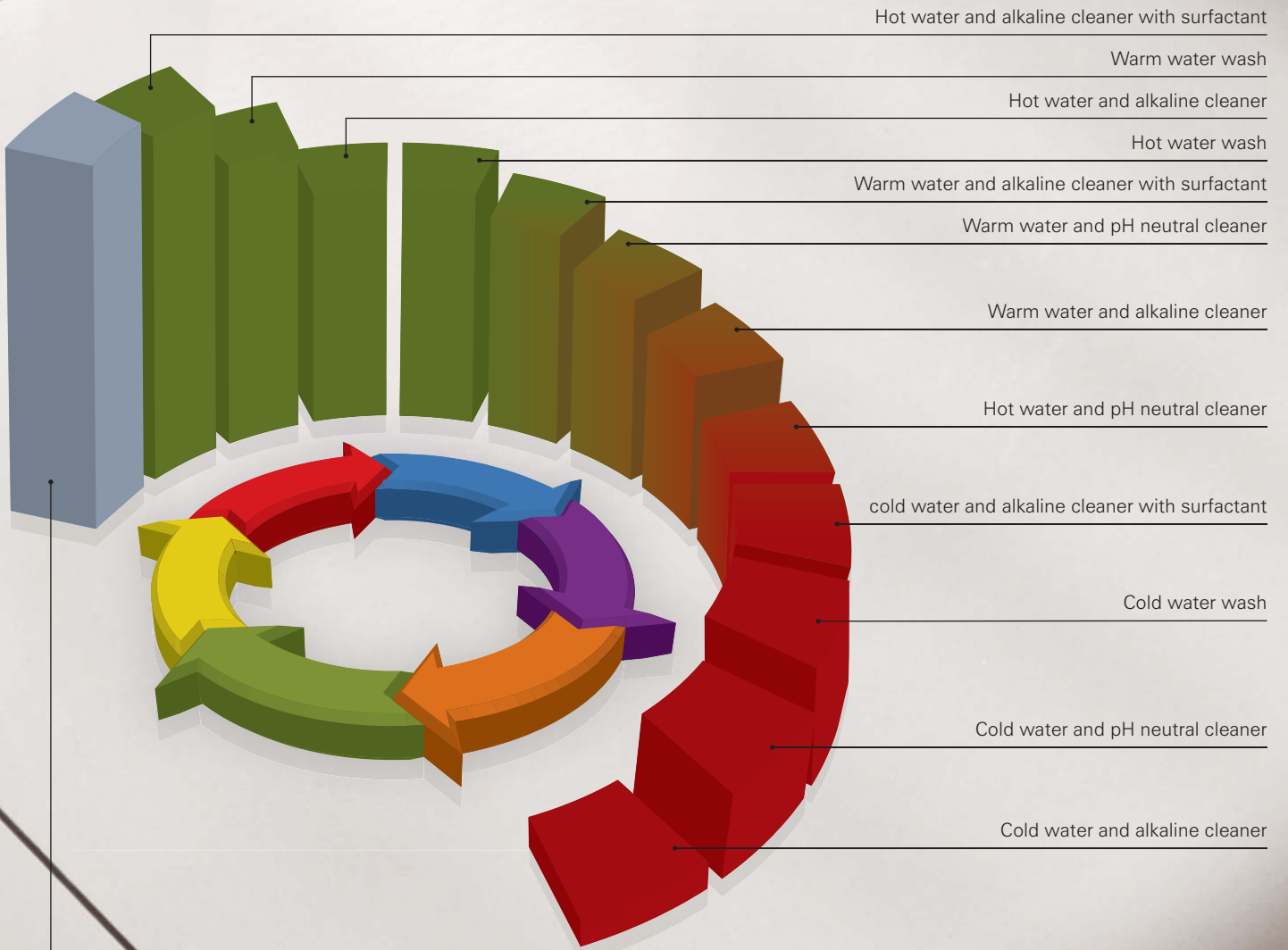
Cost of Maintenance Regime and Cleaning – How can I ensure the new floor surface stays clean and slip resistant?

Here lies a question of balance: Slip resistance Versus Hygiene. But also challenged is the question of choice of floor surface and whether the Designer/Client has made the right choice pertaining to all of the points above (Slip Resistance, Fit For Purpose/Safety and Product Life Cycle). Importantly one must then take into account whether an on-going budget has been allowed to ensure the decision to choose that surface is now sustainable – in line with the manufacturer's specifications for cleaning for both safety and hygiene.

e.g. Epoxy coated floors will be much more expensive to maintain and preserve than a Hydrotect Tile.

Prior knowledge and understanding of what you have purchased is paramount. How you go on to care for that product choice will determine whether the life cycle of that product will be achieved. It is the purchaser's responsibility to ensure that the message is conveyed to cleaning personnel AND that an adequate budget is allowed to activate cleaning procedures as specified. Here the owner of the facility has a duty to not only convey the recommendations for cleaning, but to actively provide adequate and on-going funding to allow that to happen over the life cycle of the product. The following chart on page three highlights the reduction in slip-reducing characteristics when using incorrect cleaning methods and agents.

Wet Pendulum Test Results for Various Cleaning Methods



New - uncontaminated

For the cleaning and care of ceramic coverings the use of cold water washes in conjunction with cleaning agents can lead to a reduction in slip-reducing characteristics and thus to an increased danger of slipping. Careful consideration must be made with regard to the type of cleaning process and cleaning agent. In order to avoid destruction of the tile surface and the underlying materials, it is necessary to have a good knowledge of the materials to be cleaned, the nature of the contamination to be removed and the chemical characteristics of the cleaning agent.



How Does the Circle of Solutions Work?



Transfer of Knowledge to Contracted Parties for Cleaning Duties.

Cleaning companies vary, and the adage that 'you get what you pay for' stands. Choose a quality outfit to care for your surfaces – not just one that will sub-contract the cleaning contract to the 'lowest price' contender.

Communicate the surface properties and the warranty specifications for cleaning clearly. Communicate what kinds of residue/dirt needs to be removed (e.g. body oils in change rooms), and how this needs to be done.

Specify acceptable cleaning products and tools with regards to:

- Not creating accelerated wear
- Effective removal of expected surface contaminants
- Not leaving cleaning solution residue that will affect the chemical balance of a pool, erode the floor surface and fittings, or cause poisoning through contact with the skin by any consumer/visitor who traverses the facility and touches those cleaned surfaces.

Be aware, however, that when you hand over a cleaning contract to a company or individual, it is also your responsibility to follow through by providing an adequate budget allowing for both their time, and appropriate cleaning solutions and tools.

Cleaning is a science – inferior products and abrasive methods adopted to keep costs down will cause your floor surfaces to prematurely breakdown, leaving you open to prosecution if slip resistance, safety, surface care, and cleaning care are compromised.

Cleaning and accelerated wear go hand-in-hand.



Adherence to Diligence

Here is where the circle ends, but here at Ceramic Solutions we don't consider that to be the case. If any point of management on the Circle of Solutions fails to perform their duty of care to the next point, then someone hasn't done their job properly and the circle breaks.

At Ceramic Solutions we're diligent in helping you make the right choice, and in providing you with a clear mandate for cleaning care that will see you get the most efficient wear results from your surface.

Use the right products and tools as recommended.

Diligence becomes a partnership to a successful venture once the job is done.

Once you take ownership of the building the message of diligence has to continue and become an integral part of your cleaning (and cleaner's) regime.

Proper Preparation Prevents Poor Performance and ultimately you'll enjoy many years of product satisfaction.



Ceramic Solutions (Aust) Pty Ltd ABN 14 066 306 876

5/45 Normanby Road, Notting Hill, Victoria, Australia 3168

Phone: +61 3 9545 5322 **Fax:** +61 3 9545 5611

Email: mail@ceramicsolutions.com.au **Web:** www.ceramicsolutions.com.au

For the cleaning and care of ceramic coverings, Ceramic Solutions provides professional tile and grout cleaning products that preserve your ceramic tile floors. As a special offer, a free ceramic tile cleaning procedure chart will be provided for every purchase of our cleaning agents.

To place an order email: mail@ceramicsolutions.com.au