



**Ardex Technical Note 4.6:**

## Specifying for Swimming Pools and Leisure Areas - Best Practice

This technical note aims to demonstrate how to avoid common installation failures through guidance on best practice.

### Movement Joints

All movement joints should be incorporated in line with BS 5385 Part 4, however it's important at the design stage to consider the impact of the movement joints on the appearance of the finished ceramic tiling.

Structural movement joints in the pool shell should be avoided. Specify movement joints:-

- Over existing/structural movement joints
- Where tiling abuts other materials
- Where tiling is continuous across junctions of other background materials
- In large tiled areas, at internal vertical corners
- Where stresses are likely to be concentrated

### Tile Fixing

#### Solid bed fixing

The size of notched trowel chosen depends on the surface being tiled, the profile on the back of the tile and the degree of coverage required. For tiling walls in dry internal conditions the adhesive contact should be a minimum of 50% of the back of the tile, ideally 75%.

However, when tiling to floors, all external locations and wet areas such as showers and swimming pools, solid bed fixing should be achieved with 100% coverage to the back of the tile.

It's advisable to lift a tile now and again to check solid bed fixing is achieved. Ensure that the adhesive has been applied in ribs and the back of the tile buttered with a thin layer of adhesive before it is firmly pressed in place with a twisting and sliding action, within the open time of the adhesive prior to a skin forming. This method of fixing allows full contact of the adhesive with the back of the tile and substrate.

One method of achieving solid bed fixing is to butter the back of the tile, for floor tiling, however with pourable adhesives this is not necessary.

### Never 'blob' fixing

"Blob" fixing of tiles should be avoided. It often leads to cracking and delamination as the tiles are subject to a lack of support and differential stresses.

### Onsite Checklist

Following the research and production of the specification and contractors guidance, once the project is underway, site visits should be carried out to monitor best practice to ensure that your specification is followed. Check that -

- Future trip hazards, cracked tiles etc are avoided
- Movement joints are incorporated
- The background is as specified
- The tiles are as specified
- The adhesive installation is tiled with solid bed fixing using the advised trowels and specified products
- The grout joints are as specified and adequately filled with the specified products and well cleaned off.
- The contractor is aware of COSHH and Health & Safety on site
- A cleaning and maintenance regime is observed (especially for natural stone specification or where slip resistance is essential).

