



WHAT IS TRUE PORCELAIN?

The difference between real and false porcelain cannot be detected by eye. ... Suppliers of falsely-labeled porcelain are defrauding the consumer and benefitting from the popularity and market value of genuine porcelain.



Porcelain tile has become increasingly popular over the past decade. The American National Standard Specifications for Ceramic Tile (ANSI A137.1) require tile to have a water absorption of 0.5% or less, to be classified as porcelain, when tested per ASTM C373, the most stringent test for measuring water absorption.

Manufacturing tile that meets this standard—true porcelain—requires porcelain-grade clays and other unique raw materials, plus precision milling processes and kilns set to extremely high firing temperatures (2100°F to 2500°F). The required raw materials, energy, and manufacturing equipment needed to produce such low porosity, high density tile are why real porcelain is typically more expensive than non-porcelain tile.

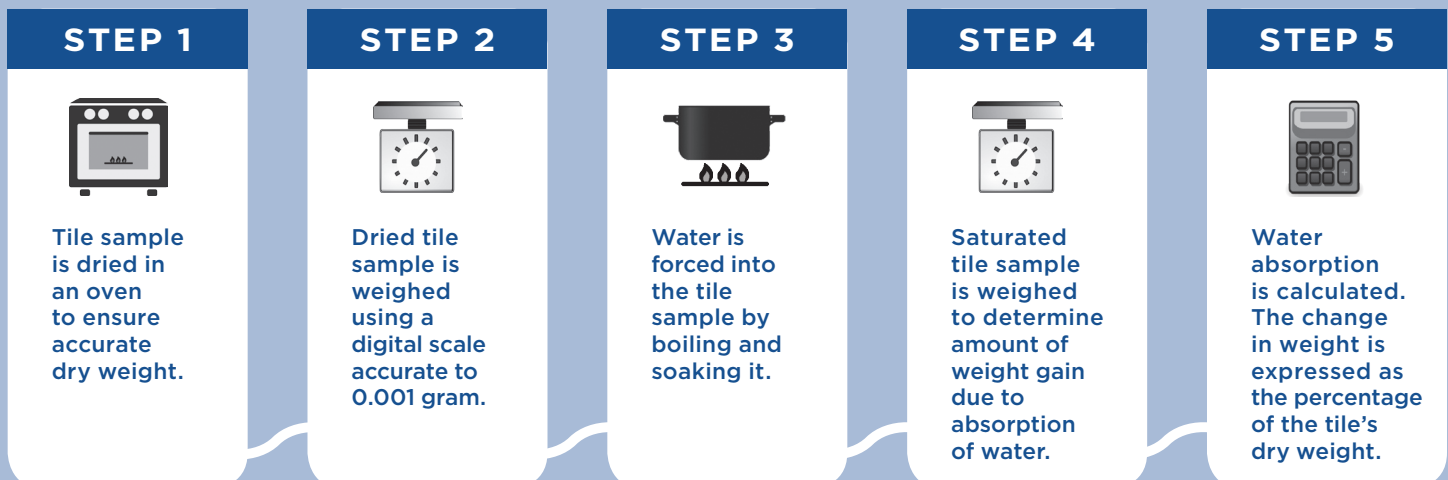
The difference between real and false porcelain cannot be detected by eye—the only way to know is to have a laboratory verify the tile’s water absorption is 0.5% or less. Through its lab, Tile Council has identified 305 series (out of 1,274 total tested) of falsely-labeled “porcelain” tiles with a water absorption well over 0.5%—sometimes as high as 3%.

Suppliers of falsely-labeled porcelain are defrauding the consumer and benefitting from the popularity and market value of genuine porcelain. This is particularly true for imported tile, and, considering that approximately 70 percent of the tile sold in the United States is imported, much of the “porcelain” being sold may be falsely labeled.

ASTM C373 Water Absorption Test

For ceramic tile, *water absorption* refers to the maximum amount of water that a tile can be made to absorb. In the lab test ASTM C373, water is forced into the deepest pores of the tile.

So, measuring water absorption can also be looked at as measuring available tile porosity—the more water that can be absorbed, the more porous (less dense) the tile.



BE SURE

The Certified Porcelain Tile logo means the tile tested met the requirement of 0.5% or less water absorption for porcelain tile of the American National Standards Institute's A137.1 standard.



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