

Turning your  
house into  
your dream  
home

Vol. 2, #9

# DOING IT RIGHT

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## Out With The Old...

### Grout, that is

Stained, cracked or missing grout not only looks bad it can cause damage if water is allowed to get behind the tiles.

Leaving it makes easy entrance for the ever opportunistic mold and mildew. Despite what you may think repairing damaged grout is not a complicated job.

### Using the Proper Grout

- ⇒ If you have colored grout try breaking off a loose piece to take with you to a home improvement store so you can get a proper color match
- ⇒ If the space between your tiles is larger than 1/8" use sanded grout—it gives the grout more strength and allows it to hold together better
- ⇒ If the space is less than 1/8" use an unsanded grout—this allows the grout to flow smoothly into the narrower spaces
- ⇒ Never use sanded grout if you have marble tiles as the sand will scratch the tiles—they can't be repaired

### The First Step

Before you start on any repairs you need to make sure the grout is clean. Use a commercial grout cleaner to remove all soap

residue, mildew and other everyday grub. Allow to dry thoroughly before proceeding to the next step.

### Out With the Old

If there's limited damage simply dig out the old grout of the affected areas.

If the damage is more extensive—large gaps, nasty cracks, extensive blackened areas that won't come clean you'll have to dig out all the joints.

### Slow and Meticulous Wins This Race

Slowly and cautiously dig out the affected areas with a grout saw or razor knife. Use the saw to break away any loose grout. Be careful to avoid scratching or chipping any tiles. Be sure you've removed all loose material from between the tiles. Vacuum away the dust and debris after you're done.

Once you're sure the grooves are clean take a wet rag or small paint brush and dampen the empty grooves. This helps the grout, which is a masonry product, to adhere to the surface. Be sure it's damp, not wet or with standing puddles.

### In With the New

If you have only a small area to do a small tub or tube of premixed grout is all you'll need.

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*Allow grout to set overnight before wiping off any remaining film with a clean, dry cloth.*

Larger areas will require you to mix up a batch of powdered grout. Use polymer-modified grout for greater strength.

With a rubber grout float work the grout across the joints at about a thirty degree angle. Imagine you're spreading icing on a cake.

Remove excess grout by working diagonally across the tiles with the float held almost perpendicular to the tiles. Don't worry about any grout still sitting on the tiles. Let set for ten minutes.

### **Make It Shapely**

Wipe off any extra grout with a clean, damp grout sponge using a slow circular motion. Run the rounded edge of the sponge along the joints to give them the proper shape.

Rinse the sponge and make one final pass across the tiles using gentle pressure. A thin haze will form as the tile dries—just polish it off using a clean, soft rag.

Take a moment to inspect your work. If you see any small gaps around the edges simply repeat the process. Don't worry, it's not uncommon to have to do it twice.

### **You're Almost Done**

Once you're satisfied with the results it's time to seal the grout. The sealer protects the grout against stains and mildew. Once the sealer has dried simply take a wet rag or sponge and remove any residue on the tiles. Allow the tiles to dry and then polish with a dry rag. Take two steps back, admire your work and take a moment to congratulate yourself on a job well done.

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### **Upcoming Topics**

⇒ Winter maintenance

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### **For more information:**

If you are interested in protecting the value of your home, turning your house into your dream home or simply have remodeling questions or needs -call Mike Spruyt at 572-4812

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## *The D<sub>4</sub> Guarantee*



**D<sub>1</sub>** – Your job will be done for the price specified—there are no surprises or hidden costs.

**D<sub>2</sub>** – Your job will be completed the way you want it done.

**D<sub>3</sub>** – If you aren't satisfied with the finished product we'll fix it for free.