

Chapter 3. Handling large format tiles

Current standards prescribe handling large format tiles with great care: at least two people are required and special tools and equipment should be used.

To facilitate handling the tiles, it is recommended to carry and install them with runners and frames with suction cups to keep them more rigid and limit any twisting or bending.

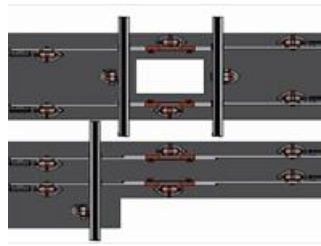
Once the tiles have been removed from their packaging, care must be taken when putting them in position by resting the long side of the tiles on the ground at an angle of 30° to the support.

Before handling and moving the tiles, it is recommended to clean the surface of the tile and the suction cups with a damp sponge to get a better grip.

There are two types of suction cups available: the traditional type and those with an in-built pump. The latter type is more secure and provides a better grip and the vacuum in the sucker cup can be re-established using the pump, even after a certain period of time. Always ensure a good vacuum has been created between the lifting device and the surface of the tile.



If the tile has been cut and is potentially weaker in that area, it is recommended to add more runners or cross-members to reduce any bend or twist.



To get a neat cut or make an accurate hole, the tile must be placed on a stable, flat and sturdy work surface.



When making a straight cut, place the cutting guide on the tile along the line to be cut and block it in place with suction cups.



Make a small cut 1 to 2 cm long at each end of the tile from the inside towards the outside.



Then complete the cut from one end to the other, making sure you apply the same amount of pressure on the cutting tool for the entire length of the cut.



Break each end of the tile along the line of the cut with tile snips.



The tile is then broken in two by simply bending it until the two pieces come apart.



It is generally recommended to use two people for this operation so that the cut piece does not fall or break.



If there is reinforcement mesh in the tile, this can be cut and trimmed with a cutter.



If the edges of the tile are sharp or uneven after it has been broken, clean and smooth the edges with a diamond pad or an abrasive disk.



A straight cut may also be made with a disk cutter which runs along the cutting guide. A through cut or a partial cut may be made with this method. In this case, the tile will have a cleaner and better defined edge than by cutting or breaking the tile.



Making round holes: use a dry or wet diamond cutter.

- Place the tile on the work surface and mark the position where the hole is to be made.
- Start making the hole with the cutting head placed at an angle with respect to the tile so that it cuts through it more accurately.
- Once the cutting head has started to make the hole, press down and apply a small circular movement.
- Keep the cutting area wet if using the wet method or remove all the resulting dust during the drilling operation if using the dry method.



Making rectangular holes

- Start by making a round hole at each corner of the rectangle.
- Then make straight cuts between each hole with a disk cutter with a diamond disk. This will prevent excessive stresses being

generated at the corners of the rectangle which could then form a crack in the tile itself.