

METHOD ONE INC.

Pre-Apprenticeship Program

9-Month Ceramic Tile Installation Curriculum Framework

Built on Four Pillars:

Trade Skills • Lifestyle & Personal Development
Trade Mathematics • Leadership Development

Developed in Partnership with Versa-Tile & Marble, Inc.

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Program Overview

The Method One 9-Month Ceramic Tile Installation Curriculum is a structured workforce development pathway designed to take participants from zero experience to job-ready competency. Every week of the program is organized around four pillars that develop the whole person — not just the tradesperson.

PILLAR 1 Trade Skills	PILLAR 2 Lifestyle & Personal Dev.	PILLAR 3 Trade Mathematics	PILLAR 4 Leadership Development
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Each pillar is delivered every week, every month, for the full nine months. This is not a trade school with a few added soft skills sessions. It is a fully integrated program where who you are and how you think are developed alongside what your hands can do.

Program at a Glance

Duration: 9 months (36 weeks)

Trade Focus: Ceramic Tile Installation

Delivery: Integrated weekly instruction across all four pillars

Assessment: Monthly competency assessments + final capstone project

Outcome: Transition-ready for full apprenticeship with Versa-Tile & Marble, Inc.

The Four Pillars

Pillar 1 — Trade Skills

The technical core of the program. Participants learn ceramic tile installation from the ground up: subfloor prep, layout, thinset, setting, cutting, grouting, wall tile, and advanced applications. Skills are introduced, practiced, and assessed monthly.

Pillar 2 — Lifestyle & Personal Development

A tradesperson who can't manage their life can't sustain a career. This pillar covers financial literacy, health and wellness, professional behavior, time management, relationships, and personal vision. It treats participants as whole human beings with real lives to manage.

Pillar 3 — Trade Mathematics

Every tile job involves math: measuring rooms, calculating material quantities, reading plans, estimating job costs, and understanding waste. This pillar builds practical math fluency directly tied to real work — not abstract classroom exercises.

Pillar 4 — Leadership Development

The goal of this program is not just to produce tile setters. It is to produce leaders in the trades. This pillar builds self-awareness, communication, accountability, problem-solving, and the professional character that separates good workers from great ones.

Month 1: Foundations

Building the Base — Who You Are and What You're About to Learn

Participants are introduced to the trade, the program culture, safety, and themselves. This month sets the tone for everything that follows. No one picks up a trowel without first understanding why they're here and what they're building toward.

Week	Pillar 1: Trade Skills	Pillar 2: Lifestyle & PD	Pillar 3: Trade Math	Pillar 4: Leadership
Week 1	Intro to ceramic tile: history, types, and industry overview. Jobsite orientation and safety rules. PPE requirements and proper use.	Program orientation: rules, stipend system, expectations. Personal goal-setting exercise. What does success look like for YOU?	Basic number review: whole numbers, fractions, and decimals. Why math matters on the jobsite.	What is leadership? Self-assessment: strengths and growth areas. Introduction to accountability culture.
Week 2	Tool identification and proper use: trowels, levels, spacers, utility knife, wet saw overview. Tool care and storage.	Time management: being early, planning your day. Morning routines that set you up to win.	Units of measurement: inches, feet, yards. Converting between units. Reading a tape measure accurately.	Showing up as a leader before you have a title. Peer relationships and first impressions.
Week 3	Subfloor assessment: what to look for, how to identify problems. Surface prep basics. Introduction to leveling compounds.	Financial literacy intro: understanding your paycheck, taxes, and deductions. What does \$1,000/week actually mean?	Measuring rooms: length x width = square footage. Practice calculations with sample rooms.	Communication fundamentals: speaking clearly, listening actively. Role-play: talking to a foreman or client.
Week 4	Dry layout practice: chalk lines, finding center of room, planning tile placement without adhesive. Week 1 competency check.	Stress and pressure on the job: healthy coping strategies. Building resilience.	Calculating tile quantities: square footage ÷ tile size + 10% waste. Practice problems.	Month 1 reflection: what have you learned about yourself? Group discussion and individual journaling.

Month 2: Surface Preparation & Layout Mastery

Precision Before You Place a Single Tile

Great tile work starts long before the first tile goes down. This month is dedicated to subfloor perfection, dry layout mastery, and the discipline of planning. Participants also begin exploring what it means to manage a life alongside a trade.

Week	Pillar 1: Trade Skills	Pillar 2: Lifestyle & PD	Pillar 3: Trade Math	Pillar 4: Leadership
Week 5	Cleaning and repairing subfloors in depth. Filling cracks, sanding, vacuuming, and priming. Hands-on practice.	Health on the jobsite: physical demands of tile work. Stretching, hydration, and injury prevention.	Perimeter calculations: adding all four walls. Estimating trim and border tile needs.	Setting team expectations: how to work alongside others professionally. Conflict avoidance strategies.
Week 6	Advanced chalk line techniques. Adjusting center tile placement for balanced cuts at walls. Dry-fitting full rooms.	Building credit and saving money: how tradespeople build wealth over time. Banking basics.	Ratio and proportion: understanding tile patterns and spacing ratios. Grout joint sizing.	Giving and receiving feedback. How to take correction without shutting down.
Week 7	Mixing thinset mortar to correct consistency. Spread techniques with flat and notched trowel. Scratch coat application.	Professionalism outside the shop: how you look and act matters everywhere. Social media and reputation.	Coverage rates: how many sq ft does a bag of thinset cover? Calculating material quantities for a job.	Accountability in practice: owning mistakes and correcting them. Case studies from real jobsites.
Week 8	Full dry layout simulation: plan, measure, snap lines, and dry-fit a mock room. Month 2 competency assessment.	Relationships and work: balancing home life and career. Setting boundaries and communicating with family.	Review: sq footage, perimeter, material quantities. Timed assessment — calculate materials for a 200 sq ft bathroom.	Month 2 reflection. Peer recognition exercise: who in the group showed leadership this month?

Month 3: Setting Tile — The Core Skill

Hands in the Mud — Doing the Work

This is where participants get their hands dirty. Months of preparation and planning lead here: actually setting ceramic tile with proper technique, consistent spacing, and professional results. Expect repetition, correction, and improvement.

Week	Pillar 1: Trade Skills	Pillar 2: Lifestyle & PD	Pillar 3: Trade Math	Pillar 4: Leadership
Week 9	Setting tile on a flat surface: thinset application, tile placement, pressure technique, using spacers for even joints.	Work ethic: what separates good workers from great ones. Stories from experienced tradespeople.	Lippage and tolerance: understanding allowable height differences. Measuring with levels and straightedges.	Leading through skill: how competence builds credibility. Why people follow those who know their craft.
Week 10	Checking for square: using framing square and A-square during installation. Correcting alignment mid-install.	Mentorship and finding your people: identifying who to learn from in the field.	Angles and right triangles basics: the 3-4-5 rule for squaring a room. Practical application.	Mentorship in reverse: what can you teach someone else right now? Peer teaching exercise.
Week 11	Working in sections: spreading thinset for 2x3 ft areas, keeping work manageable. Avoiding skinned-over thinset.	Managing energy across a full work week: sleep, nutrition, and recovery for tradespeople.	Time and productivity: calculating how many sq ft per hour. Estimating a job timeline.	Problem-solving on the fly: what to do when something goes wrong mid-install. Decision-making frameworks.
Week 12	Full room tile-setting simulation: apply all skills to set a mock floor from center to walls. Month 3 competency assessment.	Personal vision board activity: where do you want to be in 3 years? 5 years?	Job costing intro: labor hours x rate + materials = total job cost. Simple estimating exercise.	Month 3 reflection. What has been your biggest challenge? What is your plan to overcome it?

Month 4: Cuts, Corners & Complex Spaces

Where Skill Meets Problem-Solving

Perfect rooms don't exist. This month teaches participants how to handle the real world: outlets, doorways, curved walls, outside corners, and pipes. Cutting skill separates beginner installers from true craftspeople.

Week	Pillar 1: Trade Skills	Pillar 2: Lifestyle & PD	Pillar 3: Trade Math	Pillar 4: Leadership
Week 13	Straight cuts: snap cutter technique for tiles with waste over 1 inch. Smoothing cut edges with rubbing stone.	Difficult conversations at work: how to raise concerns professionally with a supervisor.	Reading blueprints and floor plans: scales, symbols, and dimensions. Practice with sample plans.	Courage as a leadership trait: speaking up when you see a problem, even when it's uncomfortable.
Week 14	Narrow cuts: wet saw technique for waste under 1 inch. Preventing tile breakage on thin cuts.	Transportation and reliability: getting to the job every day on time. Planning for problems.	Scale and proportion from plans: converting blueprint measurements to real dimensions. Practice problems.	Leading in adverse conditions: what to do when the crew is down, materials are wrong, or weather hits.
Week 15	Outside corner cuts: marking and cutting L-shaped tiles. Fitting tile around door casings with flush-cut saw technique.	Conflict resolution deep dive: what to do when things get heated. De-escalation on the jobsite.	Geometry of cuts: calculating the exact size of cut tile needed for any gap using subtraction and proportion.	Integrity on the job: doing the right thing when no one is watching. Real examples and discussion.
Week 16	Notched and curved cuts: wet saw scoring and nibbling technique for pipes, curves, and irregular shapes. Month 4 competency assessment.	Building your professional reputation: referrals, word of mouth, and why your name is your brand.	Review: cuts, scale, geometry. Timed challenge — calculate all cuts needed for a mock room with obstacles.	Month 4 reflection and mid-program check-in. Are you on track? What needs to change?

Month 5: Grouting & Finishing

The Details That Make the Difference

The grout is what clients see. This month covers the science and art of grouting: mixing, applying, cleaning, and protecting. Participants also learn how finishing details define the quality of a job.

Week	Pillar 1: Trade Skills	Pillar 2: Lifestyle & PD	Pillar 3: Trade Math	Pillar 4: Leadership
Week 17	Grout types: sanded vs. unsanded, epoxy grout overview. When to use each. Mixing grout to proper consistency.	Client service basics: how to talk to homeowners and contractors. Managing expectations professionally.	Grout coverage calculations: how many lbs of grout per sq ft based on joint width and tile size.	The standard of excellence: what does a world-class job look like? Setting personal quality benchmarks.
Week 18	Grout application: rubber float technique, working at 45 degrees, pushing grout into joints fully. Coverage in sections.	Dress, presence, and first impressions in a client's home. Protecting property and cleaning up.	Percentages and waste: calculating exactly how much extra material to order. Real-world ordering practice.	Finishing strong: why the last 10% of a job matters as much as the first 90%. Discipline over motivation.
Week 19	Grout cleanup: timing the wash, sponge technique, avoiding pulling grout from joints. Haze removal.	Mental health and the trades: recognizing burnout, stress, and when to ask for help.	Unit pricing: calculating cost per square foot for labor and materials. Comparing bids.	Motivating peers: how to lift the energy of a crew without being in charge. Informal leadership.
Week 20	Full floor installation simulation: set tile, allow cure, grout, clean. End-to-end practice. Month 5 competency assessment.	Milestone celebration: you are over halfway through. Recognizing how far you've come.	Full job estimate practice: materials + labor + overhead for a sample bathroom project.	Month 5 reflection. What kind of tradesperson are you becoming? What does your future look like?

Month 6: Wall Tile & Vertical Surfaces

Taking the Trade Vertical

Floor tile is one skill. Wall tile is another. This month introduces the unique challenges of vertical installation: adhesion on walls, handling gravity, backsplash and shower applications, and working in tight spaces.

Week	Pillar 1: Trade Skills	Pillar 2: Lifestyle & PD	Pillar 3: Trade Math	Pillar 4: Leadership
Week 21	Wall tile fundamentals: differences from floor installation. Adhesive selection for vertical surfaces. Preventing slippage.	Specialization vs. versatility: should you master one thing or learn everything? Career path discussion.	Wall surface area calculations: height x width for each wall, accounting for windows and doors.	Adaptability as a leadership skill: how the best tradespeople handle change without losing focus.
Week 22	Layout planning for walls: finding center, balancing cuts, handling inside and outside corners on vertical surfaces.	Networking in the trades: joining associations, attending events, building professional relationships.	Subtraction in layout: calculating cut sizes for wall borders and corners. Practice problems.	Vision and direction: what does it mean to know where you're going? Setting 90-day goals.
Week 23	Backsplash installation: small tile, mosaic sheets, and mixed-material applications. Dealing with outlets and switches.	Tools of success beyond the trade: organization, calendars, and managing your personal life like a business.	Sheet tile math: calculating coverage when tiles come in sheets vs. individual pieces.	Delegation and trust: when you're a lead, you can't do it all yourself. Practice assigning tasks to peers.
Week 24	Wall tile grouting and caulking: where to grout vs. where to caulk (corners and transitions). Caulk application technique. Month 6 competency assessment.	6-month check-in: revisit your personal goals from Month 1. What has changed? What is still ahead?	Caulk and sealant coverage: estimating linear feet and product quantities for a job.	Month 6 reflection. Leadership inventory: how have you grown as a leader since Month 1?

Month 7: OJT & Real-World Application

Real Jobs, Real Stakes

Classroom and simulation are over. This month participants apply their skills on actual or simulated real-world jobsites under the supervision of experienced tradespeople. The focus shifts to speed, professionalism under pressure, and working as part of a team.

Week	Pillar 1: Trade Skills	Pillar 2: Lifestyle & PD	Pillar 3: Trade Math	Pillar 4: Leadership
Week 25	OJT orientation: jobsite protocols, chain of command, how to take direction from lead installers. Day 1 on the job.	Navigating the professional world: dress code, showing up, and representing yourself and the company.	Reading a work order: understanding scope, quantities, and job specs from a real document.	Being a good follower: why the best leaders know how to take direction before they give it.
Week 26	OJT: floor tile installation on a real or mock project. Focus on speed + quality. Feedback from lead installer.	Managing money during your first real job: budgeting your first paycheck as a working tradesperson.	On-site estimation: walk a job, measure, calculate materials needed. Submit a material list.	Initiative on the job: doing what needs to be done without being told. Going above and beyond.
Week 27	OJT: wall tile or backsplash project. Handling client presence, questions, and expectations professionally.	How to handle a bad day on the job: resetting, not quitting. Resilience in the field.	Change orders and adjustments: recalculating quantities when scope changes mid-job.	Representing the company: your conduct on a jobsite reflects on everyone who trained you.
Week 28	OJT wrap-up: full-day project completion. Supervisor evaluation. Month 7 OJT competency review.	Gratitude and acknowledgment: who helped you get here? The importance of recognizing others.	OJT job costing review: compare your estimate to actual materials used. What was the variance?	Month 7 reflection. What did real-world experience teach you that the classroom couldn't?

Month 8: Advanced Skills & Specialty Applications

Going Beyond the Basics

With core skills established and real-world experience under their belts, participants tackle advanced applications: large-format tile, natural stone basics, intricate patterns, and working in complex spaces. This month also introduces business basics for those who aspire to run their own operation.

Week	Pillar 1: Trade Skills	Pillar 2: Lifestyle & PD	Pillar 3: Trade Math	Pillar 4: Leadership
Week 29	Large-format tile (18x18 and above): challenges with lippage, back-buttering technique, and proper trowel size selection.	Entrepreneurship in the trades: what it takes to work for yourself one day. Reality vs. expectations.	Large-format tile math: fewer tiles, but higher material and labor cost per piece. Calculating job cost differences.	Thinking like an owner: how employees who think like owners get promoted and get opportunities.
Week 30	Decorative and pattern tile: herringbone, diagonal, and offset pattern layout. Planning and executing complex designs.	Building a portfolio: documenting your work, before and after photos, and creating a professional record.	Pattern layout math: calculating additional waste for diagonal and herringbone layouts (add 15-20%).	Creative problem-solving: when the plan meets reality. How to adapt without compromising quality.
Week 31	Introduction to natural stone tile: differences in handling, cutting, sealing, and grouting natural materials.	Licensing and certification: what credentials matter in the flooring industry. CTEF and other certifications.	Material cost comparison: ceramic vs. porcelain vs. natural stone. Cost-per-sq-ft analysis for client proposals.	Continuous improvement: how the best in any trade never stop learning. Committing to lifelong growth.
Week 32	Wet area applications: shower floors and walls, waterproofing membranes, and moisture barriers. Month 8 competency assessment.	Preparing for the end of the program: next steps, apprenticeship transition, job search strategy.	Slope calculations for shower floors: calculating pitch for water drainage (1/4 inch per foot rule).	Month 8 reflection. You are nearly done. What will you do with what you've learned?

Month 9: Mastery, Assessment & Launch

Proving What You Know — And Stepping Into What's Next

The final month is about demonstration, documentation, and transition. Participants complete a capstone project, receive formal evaluations, and prepare to step into full apprenticeship or employment. This month honors the journey and launches the next chapter.

Week	Pillar 1: Trade Skills	Pillar 2: Lifestyle & PD	Pillar 3: Trade Math	Pillar 4: Leadership
Week 33	Capstone project planning: design, measure, and lay out a complete tile installation from scratch. Plan submitted for review.	Resume and trade portfolio development: documenting skills, certifications, and project experience.	Full capstone estimate: complete material and labor estimate for their capstone project. Submit for review.	Leadership legacy: what example have you set? What will others remember about how you showed up?
Week 34	Capstone project execution — Phase 1: surface prep, layout, and tile setting. Evaluated by instructor.	Interview preparation: how to talk about your skills, experience, and work ethic to an employer.	Actual vs. estimated review: compare capstone estimate to actual material used. Calculate variance %.	Teaching what you know: each participant teaches a skill or concept to the group. Peer learning session.
Week 35	Capstone project execution — Phase 2: grouting, cleanup, finishing, and final inspection. Punch list corrections.	Job offer negotiation basics: knowing your value, understanding benefit packages, and asking the right questions.	Final math assessment: comprehensive exam covering all 9 months of trade mathematics.	Transition planning: written plan for the next 90 days after program completion. Goals, actions, accountability.
Week 36	Final trade competency assessment: evaluated on all core skills across the 9-month program. Instructor sign-off.	Graduation and celebration: honoring the journey, recognizing growth, and committing to the next chapter.	Math portfolio review: participants present one math challenge they solved and what they learned from it.	Program closing ceremony: each participant shares their biggest leadership lesson. Certificates awarded.

Competency Assessment Framework

Participants are assessed monthly across all four pillars. Assessments are designed to be practical, observable, and tied directly to real-world job performance.

Monthly Trade Assessments

Each month concludes with a hands-on trade competency check. Instructors evaluate participants on the skills introduced that month using a standardized rubric. Results are documented and used to guide instruction in the following month.

Ongoing Behavioral Assessment

Consistent with the Method One behavior and accountability system, participants are evaluated weekly on attendance, professionalism, PPE compliance, and attitude. Weekly color status (Green / Yellow / Red) reflects this ongoing assessment.

Month 9 Capstone Project

The capstone project is a complete tile installation executed by each participant independently. It is planned, estimated, executed, and finished over the final four weeks of the program. The capstone is evaluated by the lead instructor and, where possible, a representative from Versa-Tile & Marble, Inc.

Transition Criteria

To be recommended for full apprenticeship transition, participants must:

- Complete all monthly competency assessments with a passing score
- Maintain consistent Green or corrected Yellow status through the program
- Complete the Month 9 capstone project to instructor satisfaction
- Demonstrate professional conduct consistent with jobsite expectations
- Complete all four pillars of the curriculum through Month 9