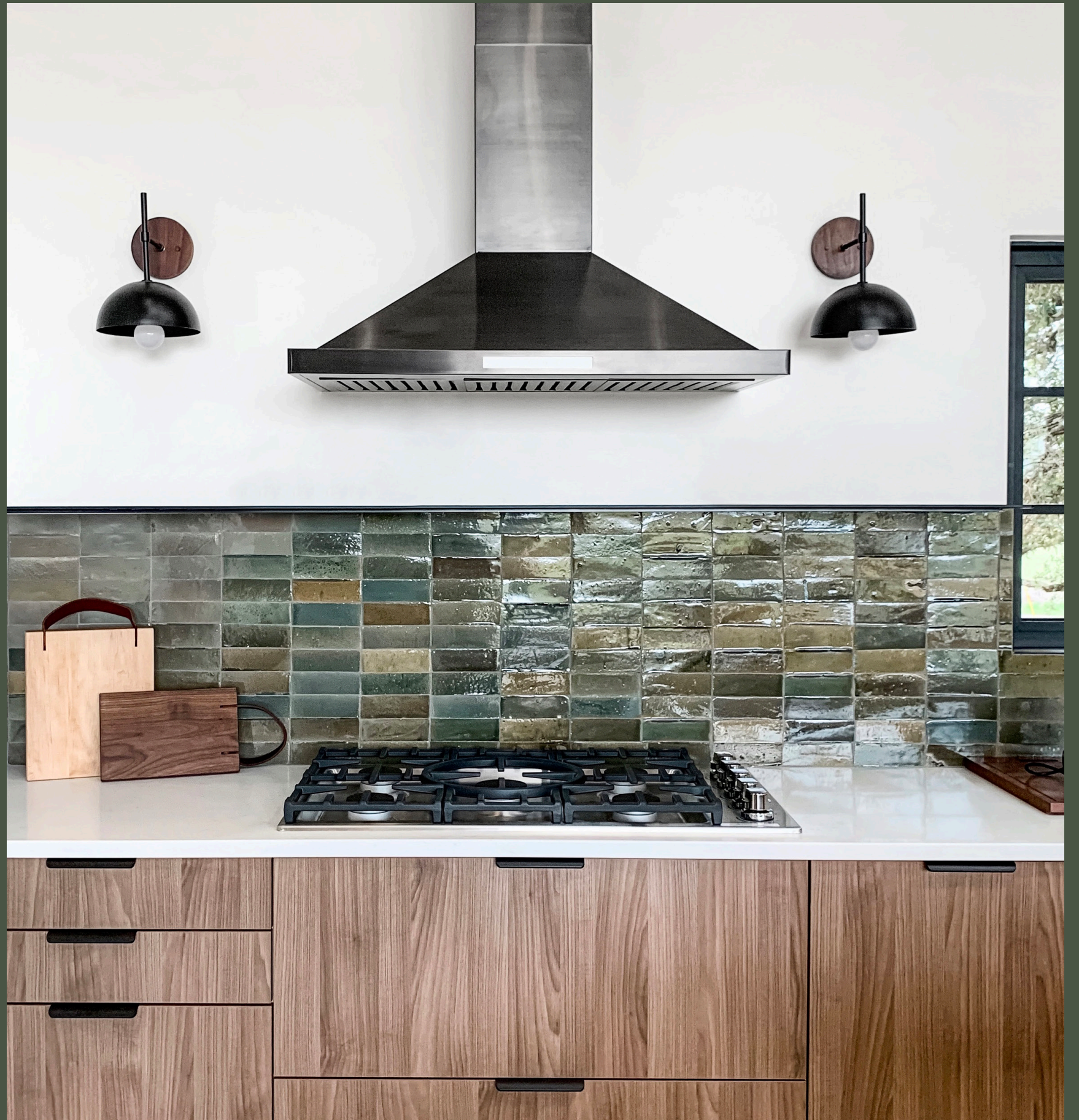


## 6 Mistakes to Avoid When Choosing Tile for Your Project

clé





Designs/redesigns are an investment. Whether it's your home, office, commercial space or any other room, choosing the right design elements is an important part of the process. A simple kitchen backsplash, utilitarian tile for your bath, or a make-a-statement tile wall that elevates an entire room... you don't want to regret your decision from an aesthetic perspective.

When embarking on a new design project, here are six mistakes to avoid when choosing tile.





## Mistake 1: The Small Tile Faux Pas

Small spaces require small tiles... right? Tile shoppers often select a smaller tile, simply because their space is small. It's a common miscalculation. Small tiles actually create the undesirable effect of making the room look even smaller. The opposite in optics is that larger tiles will expand the illusion of the space.

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### THE TAKEAWAY

Don't be afraid of 8-inch tiles  
(or even larger) in small spaces.



## Mistake 2

### Grout Joint Size Doesn't Matter

Different tiles require different grout joint sizes. Sometimes this is due to the “imperfections” that we at clé actually celebrate. But, even factory-produced tiles that are more rectified (cement, stone, zellige) necessitate the use of grout joints. Larger tiles will often require larger grout joints. Our general rule of thumb is to use the smallest grout joint the tile requires.

A newer trend is to go grout-free. We have some thoughts about that, from both a functional and aesthetic purview (read all about it in our [Grout Guide](#)). In short, this approach involves mindful contemplation, despite the perceived ease presented by a popular HGTV star.

Our best recommendation is to enlist the help of either your designer or installer. Some tiles simply look better with smaller joints and some look better with larger ones—they can help you decide.

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#### THE TAKEAWAY

Follow the advice of the experts, from both an aesthetic and structural perspective.











### Mistake 3

## Getting “Creative” with Grout Color

Grout colors have emerged over the past half-century or so, adding to tile’s design potential. Unfortunately, this evolution has not been without challenges.

Grout color is extremely complex. It’s heavily reliant on the tile itself, as well as the project as a whole. For example, you could make a bold statement with white subway tiles and black/dark grout. We’ve seen it, and we love it. Yet... if it’s a surface that requires consistent cleaning, the grout color will fade, leaving you with an unwanted finish.

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#### THE TAKEAWAY

Ask your designer or installer to help you select the best grout color. (For more info on all things grout, download our free Grout Guide).









## Mistake 4

### Tile, Interrupted (Thanks to Trim)

Did you know tile trim is largely an American invention? Most other countries, many of them with an extensive history in tile-making and tile-installation, don't use trim. The preferred design strategy is to tile wall to wall, floor to ceiling—without the use of trim.

Unfortunately, many people suffer over trying to find the perfect trim to fit their perfect tile. This becomes even more difficult due to the fact that most imported tile doesn't come with trim. There are ways to finish your project without using trim that we actually find more aesthetically pleasing and truly reflect tile's tradition.

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#### THE TAKEAWAY

Consider how a floor-to-ceiling approach to tile can offer more design impact.

[See our Trim Guide](#), or ask your designer.



## Mistake 5

### Don't Be a Short-Sheeter

Short sheeting is when you stop an installation halfway up a wall. This cuts off a design approach that should be allowed to flow freely. It's a design choice often seen in kitchens, bathrooms, and around fireplaces. For many, it's seen as a way to save money—but it doesn't.

Not tiling a complete surface actually leaves the remaining surface unprotected while also raising costs of the tile installation due to high costs of trim.

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#### THE TAKEAWAY

A floor-to-ceiling design can actually be more budget-friendly than short-sheeting. Plus, it's more aesthetically pleasing.







## Mistake 6

### Being Safe AND Sorry by Sticking with the Classics

We certainly understand why choosing from the classics is the easiest and safest recommendation for tile selection. However, our mantra at clé is to select the tile you LOVE. That tile is going to be with you for a long time, so it should be something that makes you happy, not something that's generally considered "safe."

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#### THE TAKEAWAY

This is your home. Not the next owner's, not the previous one. Do what YOU want.



## Bringing It All Home

Selecting the perfect tile to meet your design dreams requires a great deal of thought. It's a powerful design element that is going to define your space—and reflect your personality. All of the additional complementary elements that go into a tile project also require careful consideration. Using tile as the centerpiece of your project, and lessening the risk of the above pitfalls, really brings it all “home.”



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