

Customize Your Kitchen with a Tile Backsplash

DIY Step-by-Step

Overview

- The following instructions are specific to installing 3x6 subway tile in a running bond pattern on drywall. The joints will typically be 1/16-in between tiles with a 1/8-in perimeter joint.
- Other types of tile may require different installation steps.

1. Prep

- Turn off power, remove electrical covers, move appliances away from the wall, and cover countertops with craft paper and painter's tape. Remove existing tile, if needed.
- Using a level, determine wall flatness. It should be flat within 1/4-in over 10-in.
- Fill deep dips/dents with fast-setting joint compound in layers.
- Sand existing paint with a medium-grit (100-150) sandpaper.
- Clean walls with a mixture of TSP and water according to the instructions.
- Prime unfinished drywall or joint compound with a tile/underlayment primer following manufacturer's instructions.
- Where there is no countertop (such as behind the stove) mount a ledger board to help hold the tile in place. It will be removed after installation.

2. Plan the Layout

- Choose the largest wall or the "focal" point wall in your kitchen.
- Locate the horizontal center point and mark a vertical reference line.
- Starting at the reference line, dry-lay tile with spacers horizontally on the countertop along the wall.
- Make a story pole – mark a board following the tile and spacer layout.

- If a cut tile will be too narrow, adjust the layout for wider pieces at both sides.
- Check the vertical layout too. Smaller cut tiles should be hidden.

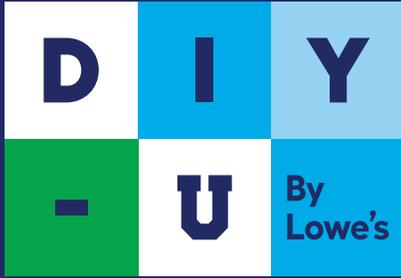
3. Set the Tile

- Mix a small batch of mortar in a 5-gallon bucket according to the package directions.
- Spread the mortar onto a small section of the wall with the flat side of the trowel.
- With the notched side of the trowel, comb over the mortar in a straight line.
- Using your guidelines, carefully press the tile into the mortar.
 - > Move the tile perpendicular to the combing pattern to collapse the mortar ridges and form a solid bond.
- While setting the tile, use spacers to keep the joints uniform.
- Allow 1/8-in space for movement joints where the tiles border other surfaces.
- Use a grease pencil to mark the center of a tile to line up the running bond pattern.
- Use the level and a grout float to check everything is even.
- Cut the tile, mark and set the tile in a snap cutter. Score the face then break along the line.
 - > For smaller tile cuts around outlets, use a rotary tool with a tile cutting bit and cutting guide attachment. The outlet cover will hide rough edges.
- Wipe away excess mortar on the face of the tile with a wet sponge.
- If the mortar begins to harden, mix a new batch, **DO NOT ADD MORE WATER.**
- Allow to dry for 24 hours.



4. Grout

- Remove the spacers between tiles. Leave spacers along expansion gaps.
- Mix the grout in a bucket according to the package directions.
- To help spread the grout, slightly moisten the tile surface with a damp sponge.
- Force the grout into the joints with a grout float held at a 45-degree angle.
- Use the float to remove excess grout.
- Let the grout firm up in the joints – typically 15–30 minutes.
- With light pressure, pull a damp sponge diagonally across the grout joints to remove the excess. Also use the sponge to smooth the surface of the grout joint.
- Turn the sponge over and make another pass in an adjacent area.
 - > To rinse the sponge, use two buckets of water – one for rinsing the grout residue from the sponge, and one for wetting the sponge in clean water.
 - > Change the water in the buckets frequently to help limit haze on the tile.
- After the grout cures (about one day), caulk the expansion joints along the countertop, cabinets and along the perimeter.
- If you didn't use trim or edge piece at the ends of the layout, apply a bead of matching caulk to cover the tile edge, then smooth it out with a smoothing tool.



Customize Your Kitchen with a Tile Backsplash

Tools & Materials List

- | | |
|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> _____ Tile | <input type="checkbox"/> _____ Rags |
| <input type="checkbox"/> _____ Screwdriver | <input type="checkbox"/> _____ Electrical Box Plate |
| <input type="checkbox"/> _____ Cardboard | <input type="checkbox"/> _____ Spacers |
| <input type="checkbox"/> _____ Joint Compound | <input type="checkbox"/> _____ Gloves |
| <input type="checkbox"/> _____ Sponges | <input type="checkbox"/> _____ Thinset Mortar |
| <input type="checkbox"/> _____ Roller and Roller Cover | <input type="checkbox"/> _____ Craft Paper |
| <input type="checkbox"/> _____ 1x4 Board | <input type="checkbox"/> _____ Long Level |
| <input type="checkbox"/> _____ Tape Measure | <input type="checkbox"/> _____ Sanding Block (100 - 150 grit) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> _____ Notched Trowel | <input type="checkbox"/> _____ TSP |
| <input type="checkbox"/> _____ Grout Float | <input type="checkbox"/> _____ Tile/Underlayment Primer (Primer T) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> _____ Smoothing Tool | <input type="checkbox"/> _____ Screws |
| <input type="checkbox"/> _____ Safety Glasses | <input type="checkbox"/> _____ Spacers |
| <input type="checkbox"/> _____ Grout | <input type="checkbox"/> _____ Tile Nippers |
| <input type="checkbox"/> _____ Painter's Tape | <input type="checkbox"/> _____ Caulk with Caulk Gun |
| <input type="checkbox"/> _____ Dremel Oscillating tool | <input type="checkbox"/> _____ Utility Knife |
| <input type="checkbox"/> _____ Drywall Knife | <input type="checkbox"/> _____ Dust Mask |
| <input type="checkbox"/> _____ Buckets | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> _____ Roller Pan with Liner | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> _____ Drill with Bits | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> _____ Pencil | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> _____ Drywall Knife | |



Notes

GET \$10 OFF*
your next \$75 purchase.

Discount applicable on full priced items only. Limit one coupon per transaction.

Valid through 10/02/22

Need help locating items in your store? Simply download our app or ask an associate.



View this on-demand workshop at [Lowe's.com/DIYU](https://www.lowes.com/DIYU)

This one-time use promotional coupon ("Coupon") is good for \$10 off eligible in-stock or special order full-priced merchandise single receipt purchase of \$75 or more (calculated before taxes). Discount will be applied across all eligible items, but discount for each eligible item can't exceed selling price (Max Discount may not be reached depending on items purchased). Coupon is not a credit or debit card, has no implied warranties & can't be used in conjunction with any (i) other markdown, coupon, rebate or offer including any Lowe's volume or special discount programs (such as but not limited to, Contractor Pack, Buy in Bulk, Value Savings Program ("VSP"), Military Discount, Employee Discount, Lowe's Price Promise, & credit discount offers), or (ii) associate discretion price adjustments. Coupon is not redeemable for cash, not transferable & can't be replaced if lost or stolen. Void if altered, defaced, copied, transferred, or sold (thru any on-line auction or otherwise). Limit 1 Coupon per household. Redeemable in-store, on Lowe's.com or Lowe's mobile applications. Not Valid on: Lowe'sPro.com; any Lowe's branded website operated by a 3rd party; previous sales; multiple transactions; purchase of services, installation, or extended protection plans; gift cards; or Webber or Kichler products. Customer must pay applicable sales tax. Coupon can't be used to make payments on any charge or credit account. Cash Value: \$1000 cent. Valid in the U.S. only. Lowe's reserves the right to withdraw the Coupon at any time for any reason. ©2022 Lowe's.