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Expansion Joint Profile  
 Schluter®-DILEX-KSBT  
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## NEED A JOINT?

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#### E-MAIL US YOUR QUESTIONS, ORDERS OR HELLOS!

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Joints are needed to prevent damage and stress to tiles because of differing amounts of expansion and contraction. Expansion and contraction within a tile installation can result from a host of reasons. The following discusses a couple situations when joints are needed.

Are you tiling over concrete? Concrete is not as problem free of a substrate as one may believe. Because concrete can sometimes take as long as a year to cure, you will deal with warping, cracks and shrinkage. Placing control joints in a concrete slab will help direct where inevitable cracks in the slab go. Although your concrete slab may not have cracks in it at the time of tile installation, over time it is highly likely cracks will develop. Placing movement joints within your tile installation over concrete will help keep the tile from cracking or losing its bond over the life of the installation.

Are you tiling an area with high exposure to direct sunlight? Areas of an installation that are more exposed to sunlight than its surrounding areas will need to have expansion joints. Because the area of tile is warmer than the surrounding area, you will have movement. In the 2008 October Tile Magazine featuring an article by David Gobis CTC CSI, he points out that even porcelain tile can have minimal thermal expansion. Porcelain tile has a low expansion rate of .000004 inches per degree of Fahrenheit. That same porcelain tile covering 40 linear feet exposed to a 50-degree change in surface temperature has the potential to expand 1/16 to 3/32". This problem can also be compounded is using a darker color tile that absorbs heat as well as if your installation is a porch wrapping around a house. Just think, if you have two 40-foot runs wrapping around the house and meeting each other at the corner, you are now looking at doubling the numbers above. If your porch installation is around a brick house and using brick rowlock, not only will you need to consider using joints with in the 40 foot runs of tile, but you would also need to consider joints between the brick rowlock and the brick house.

Overall, TCNA recommends allowing for expansion and contraction in every tile installation small or large. How you accommodate for it really depends on the tile installations unique circumstances. While joints may hinder the ambiance and aesthetics of your floor tile installation, it is better to be discussed up front, because most customers do not like the end result of cracked tile or installation failures. If you are unsure and still have questions, please feel free to ask your friends at Tile Inc.

www.TILEmagonline.com. The Importance of Using Expansion Joints. David Gobis. October 2008  
[http://www.tileusa.com/movementjoint\\_faq.htm](http://www.tileusa.com/movementjoint_faq.htm). October 27, 2008.