



# NATIONAL TERRAZZO & MOSAIC ASSOCIATION

[www.ntma.com](http://www.ntma.com)

800.323.9736

TECHNICAL BULLETIN #G-33

6/16, 9/16, 9/17

---

## MONOCHROMATIC TERRAZZO – Caveats and Recommendations

**Overview:** Terrazzo is created by combining aggregates with a binder of either cement or epoxy, grinding to expose aggregates and then polishing. The aggregates may be marble, granite, glass, plastic, or Mother of Pearl to offer a wide variation of colors, patterns, and aesthetic nuances. Designers sometimes desire a monochromatic terrazzo floor by selecting the same size and color aggregate with a matching-colored binder.

**Caveats:** The NTMA cautions designers the aesthetic results on monochromatic terrazzo may vary through the inherent natural characteristics of aggregates. Some aggregates may not display a wide variation of shadings and veining and are selected for this specific reason. However, all aggregates will have some variation of shade. This inherent and natural shading can lead to a final appearance in the finish terrazzo that may show minor and subtle variations that may appear eye catching, since most of the terrazzo flooring is more stable in shading and density.

**Samples:** A sample or mock-up may not accurately reflect the potential spotty or shading in monochromatic terrazzo. These color and tone issues may only become apparent once in larger terrazzo floor spaces. This is the result of slight variations in color, shade, tonality, dust content pigments used and their concentration of shading values.

**Aggregates:** Variation in aggregate size generally produces best and more consistent results. Using more than one size of aggregate will benefit the terrazzo matrix with greater uniformity of chip density. This results in more even distribution and greater chip density, which is also helpful in preventing overly resin rich spots. The NTMA cautions designers in using 100% glass or marble aggregates of the same color that lack consistent variation.

**Recommendations:** To obtain optimum aesthetics, combinations of different colors of aggregate as well as varying sizes are recommended. Various colors of aggregates will help avoid potential spotty appearance that can be problematic with monochromatic poured-in-place terrazzo flooring.

Using chips of a general "angular and non-elongated" in proportion of the size desired (e.g., #0, #1, #2, etc.) will help designers achieve a more uniform terrazzo appearance and result in a better performing aggregate over the life span of the terrazzo floor. If aggregate chosen lacks consistent variation, the potential of the final appearance to contain minor and subtle variations is greatly increased.

The NTMA urges Architects/Designers to work with their NTMA Terrazzo Contractor to create a design mix that will meet the aesthetic needs and the function of the terrazzo flooring that produces the desired results.

**General Disclaimer:** *The information provided in the Technical Bulletin is for general informational purposes only. Each project and individual application are unique. All information is provided in good faith: However, NTMA makes no representations or warranties of any kind, express or implied, regarding the accuracy, adequacy, validity, reliability, or completeness of any information provided herein.*