Maintain grout for lovely tiles

or beauty, durability and ease of cleaning, it's tough to top tile. But it has a weakness, the grout lines.



cause problems.

It's important to repair the damaged grout as soon as possible. If left unchecked, moisture can escalate a small job into a full-blown, tear out and replacement of the entire floor, wall or countertop.

Getting to it

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Remove as much of the damaged grout as possible using a tool called a grout saw. (It may also be called a grout rake or simply a grout-removing tool). These are inexpensive and available where tile is sold. Try to remove the grout down to the base material. Eye protection is a good idea for most any job but essential for this part. Vacuum the grout chips and dust.

If you are lucky, there will be a partial bag of dry grout left from the original application. If not, take a few larger pieces of the broken grout to help match the existing color with you when purchasing new grout. It may be necessary to mix two or more colors to obtain a good match. Mix a small sample and let it dry for several days for comparison.

Mix the dry grout with a latex additive rather than water. This additive increases the bond strength and makes

Dampen the area and work the grout in the space between the tiles. As the grout begins to setup, (about ten minutes or so) match the shape with the sur-rounding area using your finger or a sponge. I suggest waterproof gloves if you have sensitive skin or the grout has deep color.

When to use caulk

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When to use caulk

If the broken grout occurred
near dissimilar material such
as a door threshold or shower
base it will likely reoccur. This
is caused by the different
expansion and contraction rates
of the materials. It's best to use
a caulk instead of grout to
repair these areas. Caulks are
available in a wide range of colors that will closely resemble
the grout.

Seal the grout after the drying time specified by the scaler
manufacturer.

Broken tiles need to be
replaced. Remove the grout
around the tile (using the grout
any). Then, with an electric
drill and a masonry bit, drill
several holes in the tile. Avoid
drilling through the tile into
the base material. Use a hammer to break up the old tile.
Hold a rag over the tile to prevent aplatter and use care not
to damage the base material.
Scrope away as much of the old
adhesive as possible. Glue the
as above, a ground and the side of the cold
and is the general contractor for
Horizota for Humanity, Western
Wayne County.

Since we wante as comendation.

Mayne County.

Since we all seem to ask our fathers for repair or remodeling advice, Jachym writes "Ask Dad," a column on home issues

Dad," a column on home issues ranging from repairs and maintenanc to building and remodeling pro-jects. He is a Plymouth resident. Send any questions or com-ments to Harry at askado@com-cast. net or in care of Susan Steinmueller, 805 East Maple, Birmingham, 48009.

Dog of the Week

Jake is an adorable and extremely friendly 2-year-old Siberian Husky / Border Collie male mix. A rescuer found the frightened boy try-ing to cross busy traffic. This hand-



some and smart louing dog has very expressive, sweet blue eyes. As part Border Collie, he's very friendly and is a natural-born herder who will watch and is a natural-born herder who will watch after children and other pets. Since he gets very excited when he's given affection, he might do best living in a home with older children. He's already neutered, vaccinated and very housebroken and would rather be in a good home instead of a cage at the shelter. To give this loving dog a second chance in life please call Michigan Humane Society Westland Shelter, (734) 721-7300. Cat of the Week

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Sunrise is a 6-year-old Domestic
Shorthair female with a terrific personality. This gentle cat has a fabulous white coat with black and tan calico markings. She loves to be held and cuddled. Sunrise needs a home with gentle owners as her life in the past hasn't been casy — she deserves a family who will give he lots of affection. Because she is already spayed, vaccinated, and litterbox trained, she is able to go to a new home today! To bring Sunrise home, visit the Michigan Humane Society Rochester Hills Shelter, (248) 852-7420.

GARDENING CALENDER

Community House Carden Club: At 7 p.m. on Monday, March 11, the Community House Garden Club from Birmingham presents "Creative Container Gardening," given by George Papadelis, owner of Telly's Greenhouse in Troy, Learn how to use

both classic and new plants to create great container gardens. Includes annuals, perennials, tropicals, grasses, and even woody plants. Cost is \$5 for guests. For more information, call Pat Jerry at the Community House at (248) 644-5832.



