

Let's imagine: Medieval tiles

Each week the Museum is going to publish a 'Let's Imagine' activity sheet. This activity sheet will include a picture of an object in the Museum. It will tell you about the object and then it will be up to you to imagine a story, poem and/or picture inspired by this object. The sheet will include at least three questions or statements to help get you started and inspired.

This week's objects are two **Medieval tiles**, which can be found in the museum collection. Read the information in blue below to find out more about these tiles.



Imagine you have to describe these tiles to a friend. What would you say?

Design and draw your own tile.

Write a story or poem about being transported back in time to Medieval Britain. You help to make and lay these tiles. Describe your experience.

These are two Medieval floor tiles. They are also called encaustic or inlaid tiles. This means that they are clay tiles featuring a pattern on the surface which is not a product of the glaze but of a different colour of clay. There are always at least two different colours used in this type of tile, but more than two colours can be utilised. The pictured tiles feature two colours.

The pattern is inlaid into the body of the tile so the design remains even as the tile is worn down. This is achieved by using a wooden block. The wooden block is stamped on the surface of the clay tile and the indentations created – by the carved pattern on the base of the block – and then filled with a different colour of clay. The tiles would be dried, glazed and then fired in a kiln.

These tiles were expensive so were predominantly used as the flooring for churches and cathedrals, as well as the homes of the wealthy.