



## INSTALLATION GUIDE - VINYL PLANK FLOORING

Before you begin installation, please read all notes and instructions carefully.

Inspect all material carefully for color, finish, sheen and defects PRIOR to installation. Material with visible defects found after installation are not covered under warranty. Installation implies acceptance of the quality, dimensions, and appearance of the flooring. If you are not satisfied with your flooring, please contact our customer support team and do not install until concerns have been addressed and you are satisfied with your flooring.

### **THINGS TO NOTE**

- This flooring is intended for indoor use only.
- Because your flooring has been stored in a warehouse and potentially shipped in a semi-trailer truck, we recommend a 48-hour acclimation period for both residential and commercial installation to allow the floor to sit and be brought up to normal living conditions.
- SPC Rigid Core Vinyl Plank and WPC Vinyl Plank flooring can be heavier than expected. Always use proper lifting techniques with handling. Whenever possible, use material handling equipment and/or have assistance from shipping and handling professionals.
- Store product boxes flat and ensure they are fully supported during any handling and storage. Stack no more than 8 cartons high and keep the boxes away from direct sunlight. Rough handling can cause damage to the flooring prior to installation.
- Samples are designed to be a representation of the actual product. Samples under varying light sources including sunlight and room lighting may result in a difference of appearance of the flooring under each condition. We always recommend ordering a sample and assessing it in the space of intended use by laying the sample flat on the floor under various light settings.
- While vinyl plank flooring is 100% waterproof, it is not meant to act as a moisture barrier for the home. It is best practice to test for moisture and record measurements at the time of installation. Apply a 6mil plastic vapor / moisture barrier when installing over a concrete subfloor or a silicone moisture barrier over plywood.
- Do not use additional underlayment (typically 1.5-2mm thick) when vinyl plank is constructed with pre-attached underlayment. A 6mil film vapor / moisture barrier as mentioned above will not affect the stability of the flooring.
- Do not use tape or adhesive products of any kind on the surface of the flooring. Doing so may discolor and/or damage its finish.
- Avoid direct sunlight exposure to minimize the effects of fading of the flooring. Prolonged UV exposure will likely have a uniform fading effect on building materials.

- Door jambs are recommended to be undercut to the thickness of the flooring.
- Cabinets cannot be installed on top of flooring.
- Leave a 1/4" expansion gap between flooring planks and all surrounding walls and neighboring floors.
- Areas over 80' long or 80' wide require transition pieces.
- Do not nail or screw anything through floated floors. Wall moldings and transition accessories cannot be fastened to the planks.
- Lay out the flooring, mixing boards from 2-3 boxes to minimize color and pattern repetition PRIOR to installation.
- Only install flooring after the jobsite has been thoroughly cleaned and subfloor completely dry and flat to avoid damage during installation.
- Flooring should always be the final step in a renovation project. No other tradework should be occurring at the time of flooring installation. Doing so may affect interior conditions.

### **JOBSITE / SUBFLOOR INSPECTION AND PREPARATION**

All installation areas must have a working heater & air conditioner to provide normal living conditions beginning at least 48 hours prior to installation and throughout the duration of flooring's lifespan. Normal living conditions include indoor temperature of 65-80°F and relative humidity of 35-55%. Portable & kerosene heaters are not recommended.

This flooring has been designed to float over an existing floor without glue or adhesive, and can be installed on, above, or below grade level. It is the sole responsibility of the installer or homeowner to determine whether the jobsite and subfloor conditions are environmentally and structurally acceptable for vinyl plank installation. Poorly prepared subfloors will result in problems and performance issues with the flooring installed on top. Tropical Flooring does not assume responsibility for vinyl floor failure to perform due to ill-suited or ill-prepared subfloor, subsurface, or other jobsite damages or deficiencies after vinyl flooring has been installed.

Acceptable subfloor types include concrete, wood, and most other existing hard-surface floor coverings.

All subfloors must be dry, clean (swept of any debris), structurally sound and level within 3/16" per 10-foot radius.

Concrete subfloors must be fully cured for a minimum of 60 days and tested for moisture. If not level, grind down high spots and fill low spots with a Portland cement-based leveling compound. For installation over concrete, a ground cover of a minimum of 6 mil black polyurethane film is essential as a vapor barrier.

Wood subfloors must be suspended a minimum of 18" above ground. Check if well secured; nail or screw every 6" along joists to avoid squeaking. If the subfloor is not level, sand down high spots and fill low spots with a Portland cement-based leveling compound.

Other existing hard-surface flooring such as ceramic tile, resilient tile, sheet vinyl, etc., must be checked to see if the existing floor is well bonded and level to the subfloor. Apply cement based leveling compound to level out uneven areas. Heavily cushioned vinyl flooring or vinyl flooring consisting of multiple layers are NOT suitable subfloors for installation. Do not sand existing vinyl as it may contain asbestos. Take proper precaution and contact an asbestos abatement company to remove old vinyl.

Crawl spaces must be a minimum of 18" from the ground to the underside of floor joists. Adequate cross ventilation must be provided (1.5% of crawl space and a 6 mil polyurethane sheeting covering any exposed earth)

### **RADIANT HEAT SYSTEMS**

SPC Rigid Core Vinyl Plank flooring is compatible with a concrete subfloor with an in-floor (embedded) radiant heating system. The heating system must be 1 ½" below the surface layer of the concrete slab. Prior to flooring installation, the heating system must be operated at normal living temperatures for 14 days. Additionally, for 24 hours before, during, and after installation, the heating unit must be turned off. Radiant Heat systems must have failsafe capabilities to ensure surface temperatures do not exceed 80°F.

Note: Use of electric heating mats and other heating units directly underneath vinyl plank flooring will void the warranty.

### **TOOLS REQUIRED**

- Miter Saw or Power Saw
- Tape Measure
- ¼" Spacers
- Rubber Mallet
- Pencil
- Straight Edge

### **INSTALLATION GUIDELINES**

Decide which direction to lay the flooring. Measure the width and length of the room and calculate plank width of the last row. We recommend having the plank width at least 2.5 inches wide.

Run lengths in excess of 80' require expansion breaks.

1. Using spacers, leave a ¼" expansion gap between walls and edges of the flooring.
2. Installing the first row:

From left to right, with the tongue-side facing the longest wall in the room, place the first board. Note that if the first row does not need to be trimmed in width, cut off the "tongue" so a solid straight edge is placed along the wall. Align and angle the second board to place the end joint tongue into the end joint groove of the first board and connect the two into place. To ensure a secure fit, gently tap the joint with a rubber mallet in a downward angled motion towards the adjoining board. Continue installing additional boards in this manner until reaching the final board in the first row. Measure and cut the final board to fit the room.

3. Installing the second row onwards:

You may use any left-over planks from the first row if greater than 8" in length. If not, cut a new board at least 8" in length and allow 8" between end joints of the previous row to the current row that is being installed. Position the first board into place by angling and interlocking the side tongue (long end) into the previous row. Ensure fit and lay down gently into place. Position the next board using the same angling technique, interlocking motion on side tongue (long end) laying down gently, leaving a 1mm gap on the adjoining board. Tap the joint with a rubber mallet in a downward angled motion towards the adjoining board until tongue and groove lock. Continue installing additional boards in each row in this manner. When you reach the final board in each row, measure and cut the final board in each row to its proper length.

*CONTINUALLY CHECK FOR GAPS BETWEEN BOARDS BEFORE MOVING ON TO THE NEXT.*

4. Installing the final row:

Follow step 3. The final row and all corresponding boards may need to be cut lengthwise (ripped).

5. Final step - accessories:

Replace the molding or wall base, allowing slight clearance between the molding and the planks. Nail the molding to the wall surface not through the flooring. At doorways and other areas where the flooring planks may meet other flooring surfaces, it is preferable to use a T-Molding, or something similar, to cover exposed edges. Check for clearance and do not pinch planks.