

INSTALLATION INSTRUCTIONS FOR VINYL FLOORING: FULL SURFACE GLUE-DOWN INSTALLATION



1. GENERAL INFORMATION

Incorrect installation may cause permanent damage or conditions not covered by the warranty. Before installation, read these instructions carefully and comply with the general installation requirements, recognised flooring industry practices, applicable European standards and the recommendations of professional associations relating to subfloor preparation and floor covering installation. We recommend that glue-down flooring is installed only by professional flooring installers with the appropriate knowledge, tools and experience, including the ability to assess the suitability of the subfloor and prepare it correctly. Flooring installation is a finishing trade and should only begin once all structural, wet and dirty works have been completed.

2. INTENDED USE

Vinyl flooring is suitable for installation in indoor residential and commercial areas. The intended use, performance class and product properties are stated on the product packaging.

3. HANDLING, STORAGE INSPECTION AND ACCLIMATISATION BEFORE INSTALLATION

3.1 Material inspection

Handle all packs carefully during transport and storage to prevent damage to the flooring.

After delivery and before installation, check:

- the correct decor – this must be approved by the customer before installation; claims regarding the selected decor cannot be accepted after installation
- the batch number
- the packaging, products and individual planks/tiles for any visible damage or defects
- that the quantity delivered is sufficient, including the required allowance for cutting waste.

Despite careful production and quality-control procedures, storage and transport, damage or variations in material quality may occasionally occur. The installer is responsible for visually inspecting the vinyl planks/tiles before and during installation.

The installer must inspect every plank/tile before installation and set aside any unsuitable pieces.

The supplier is obliged to replace defective material but does not cover the cost of removing and reinstalling planks/tiles that were installed despite a visible defect.

If a defect, unacceptable imperfection or any other non-conformity is identified during installation, the installer must stop work immediately and agree the most appropriate solution with the customer and supplier.

3.2 Preparation and acclimatisation of the material

Before installation, the packs of vinyl flooring must be acclimatised in the room where they will be installed for at least 48 hours. Place the packs horizontally on a flat, dry, clean and shaded surface, away from walls, radiators, stoves and other heat sources, as well as from glazed areas through which solar heat may reach the flooring.

Before acclimatisation begins, the following conditions must be established in the room:

- room temperature: 18–24 °C
- relative humidity: 40–65%
- windows must be shaded
- the room must be enclosed, draught-free and thoroughly

cleaned

- no other work may be carried out in the installation area at the same time.

These conditions must be maintained without significant change for at least 48 hours before installation, throughout installation and for at least 48 hours afterwards, until the adhesive has fully cured. The indoor climate should remain within the recommended ranges above throughout the service life of the flooring.

Stack no more than five packs high during acclimatisation. Leave at least 10 cm between stacks to allow better air circulation and faster acclimatisation. We recommend storing the flooring with the decorative surface facing upwards.

All installation materials, including the adhesive, must also be acclimatised.

During preparation, acclimatisation and installation, the room must remain closed and protected from dirt and unauthorised access. Windows must remain shaded.

Correct acclimatisation makes the product more flexible, facilitates installation and reduces the risk of open joints.

4. UNDERFLOOR HEATING

Vinyl flooring is suitable for installation over hydronic underfloor heating systems embedded in the screed.

The heating system must be installed in accordance with the manufacturer's instructions and at least 30 mm below the screed surface to ensure even heat distribution across the floor.

Before installing flooring over a heated screed, the complete standard heating-up and screed-drying protocol must be carried out. Refer to and follow the separate instructions for the underfloor-heating commissioning protocol.

The underfloor heating must be switched off at least 48 hours before installation so that the subfloor can cool to 18–20 °C. It may be restarted gradually no earlier than 48 hours after installation, or once the adhesive has fully cured. When restarting the system, increase the temperature gradually by no more than 3–5 °C per day until the desired temperature is reached. The floor surface temperature must never exceed 27 °C.

The maximum permitted surface temperature of the finished floor is 27 °C. The highest floor temperatures typically occur beneath rugs, furniture and other areas where heat dissipation is restricted. If the building is insufficiently insulated and a floor temperature of 27 °C does not provide the required thermal comfort, an additional heat source should be used rather than increasing the floor temperature.

4.1 Electric underfloor heating

Vinyl flooring may be installed over electric underfloor heating provided that the heating element is embedded at least 30 mm below the screed surface.

The maximum permitted effective output of the heating system is 60 W/m². An expansion joint must be provided between heated and unheated floor areas.

The system must regulate and limit the temperature so that the warmest part of the floor surface never exceeds 27 °C. It must be controlled by a smart thermostat that monitors both room-

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air temperature and screed temperature. The complete heating system must be installed by a qualified professional.

Installation over electric heating mats positioned directly beneath the floor covering is not permitted and is not covered by the manufacturer's warranty.

5. COLOUR AND SHADE VARIATION

Minor shade variations between individual planks/tiles may occur during production. Such variations are normal and are not considered a product defect. More noticeable differences may occur between production batches; therefore, flooring from different batches should not be mixed within the same room.

For a more uniform appearance, install planks/tiles alternately from at least three different packs from the same batch, mixing them as installation progresses.

6. DIMENSIONAL STABILITY AND JOINT VISIBILITY

Visible joints are an inherent characteristic of vinyl flooring. Their visibility is primarily affected by:

- room and floor temperature,
- temperature fluctuations, including localised solar heating,
- the type, quality, moisture content and preparation of the subfloor,
- the type of adhesive used,
- installation accuracy.

Vinyl flooring is dimensionally stable under moderate temperature fluctuations, but most vinyl products are sensitive to large or rapid changes in temperature.

6.1 Installation in areas with large, glazed surfaces

For areas exposed to strong direct sunlight and solar heat, such as next to glazed walls, beneath glass roofs or roof windows, we recommend consulting a flooring professional in advance regarding the choice of flooring and installation method.

In these areas, lighter decors and an appropriate installation system are recommended. External shading is the primary protective measure. If the floor surface temperature rises significantly above 30 °C, permanent visible changes to the flooring may occur.

In areas exposed to intense solar heat, we recommend high-quality purpose-designed two-component PU adhesives or MS polymer-based adhesives, in accordance with the adhesive manufacturer's recommendations.

Prolonged exposure to direct sunlight may accelerate light-induced degradation and result in greater colour differences between more and less exposed areas of the floor.

7. SUBFLOOR PREPARATION

A sound and correctly prepared subfloor is essential for a successful glue-down LVT installation. Immediately before installation, clean the subfloor thoroughly and vacuum it with an industrial vacuum cleaner.

The subfloor must be:

- sound, stable and free from cracks and defects,
- flat and smooth, without abrupt changes in level; maximum permitted deviation 2–3 mm per linear metre,
- permanently dry and suitably absorbent,
- clean and free from dust, residues and contaminants,

- adequately thermally insulated, acoustically insulated and protected against moisture,
- properly detailed at all structural and expansion joints,
- free from old adhesive residues or other substances that could chemically affect the adhesive or vinyl flooring.

Maximum permitted residual moisture content of the subfloor:

Subfloor type	Maximum permitted residual moisture
Cement screed	2.0% CM
Cement screed with underfloor heating	1.8% CM
Calcium sulphate (anhydrite) screed	0.5% CM
Calcium sulphate (anhydrite) screed with underfloor heating	0.3% CM
Timber-based subfloors (OSB, existing parquet, particleboard, etc.)	7–9%

If the subfloor is not sufficiently flat, smooth or absorbent, it must be levelled with a suitable smoothing compound applied at a minimum thickness of 3 mm, or otherwise professionally repaired. The smoothing compound must be selected and applied in accordance with the manufacturer's instructions and technical data sheet. Ensuring reliable adhesion between the smoothing compound and the subfloor is a critical part of subfloor preparation.

An unsuitable subfloor may telegraph imperfections through to the surface of the vinyl flooring and may cause debonding, staining, gaps or other defects.

Vinyl flooring must not be installed across structural expansion joints, movement joints or unstable subfloors.

Existing subfloors:

Soft floor coverings, including textile flooring, cushioned flooring, existing vinyl and any floating floor covering, are not suitable substrates and must be completely removed together with all old adhesive residues. Existing ceramic tiles and timber-based subfloors must be thoroughly cleaned, degreased where necessary and sanded, then covered with a suitable smoothing compound at a minimum thickness of 3 mm. Existing subfloors must always be permanently dry, sound and stable. Suitable primers must be used where required to ensure proper adhesion of the smoothing compound to the subfloor.

8. GLUE-DOWN INSTALLATION

Before installation begins, the installer and customer must agree on the installation direction, transitions, expansion joints and details, laying pattern and any other project-specific requirements.

Use flooring from the same production batch within each room.

If arrows or other directional markings are printed on the back of the flooring, install all planks/tiles with the markings facing the same direction.

Use only a high-quality, purpose-designed adhesive suitable for glue-down LVT.
For more demanding conditions, particularly where there is:

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- a risk of frequent surface moisture,
 - frequent or intensive wet cleaning,
 - expected exposure to elevated temperatures,
 - high concentrated mechanical loads,
- a specialist adhesive designed for these conditions must be used.

Installation may begin along a straight reference line next to a selected wall, from the centre of the room or as otherwise planned. For patterned installations, particularly herringbone and chevron, carefully measure the room in advance, plan all details and mark the starting points and reference lines before applying adhesive.

Apply the correct quantity of adhesive. Select the appropriate notched trowel and notch size in accordance with the adhesive manufacturer's instructions and technical data sheet, taking into account the type of flooring and subfloor. Do not use worn or damaged trowels. The adhesive must be applied evenly over the entire area.

Follow the adhesive manufacturer's application instructions, including the specified airing-off time for dispersion adhesives and the open time. Apply adhesive only to an area that can be covered within the stated open time, taking the site conditions into account.

Position each plank/tile accurately and press it firmly into the adhesive over its entire surface. While the adhesive is still fresh, roll the installed flooring thoroughly in multiple directions using a floor roller weighing at least 50 kg.

Do not subject the floor to traffic or loads, place furniture on it, clean it or otherwise disturb it until the adhesive has fully cured.

Until the adhesive has fully cured, and for at least 48 hours after installation:

- do not change the temperature or indoor climate conditions,
- do not change the underfloor-heating temperature,
- do not raise the blinds or expose the flooring to direct sunlight.

For the best result, accurate installation is only one part of the process. The flooring, subfloor, room and adhesive must all be properly prepared and acclimatised before installation, and the conditions must remain stable while the flooring is being installed and the adhesive is curing.

9. AFTER INSTALLATION

Correct care, cleaning and maintenance, together with suitable indoor conditions, will significantly extend the service life of vinyl flooring and help preserve its appearance and performance.

After installation, the room should be maintained at normal living conditions throughout the year. The ideal air temperature is 18–24 °C, relative humidity 40–65%, and the minimum floor temperature 16 °C. Temperature changes may cause small gaps to develop between vinyl planks/tiles.

9.1 Preventive protection

Prevention is always better than repair.

During subsequent finishing or painting work, protect the vinyl flooring with suitable temporary covering.

Protect the room from tracked-in dirt. Install high-quality entrance matting to significantly reduce the amount of sand, moisture and dirt carried onto the floor and help prevent damage.

Lift furniture, household appliances and other heavy objects when moving them. Do not push or drag them across the floor, as this may damage the flooring and leave permanent marks.

Fit furniture legs with suitable felt protectors and ensure that the contact area is large enough for the load. Where necessary, place load-distribution pads beneath heavy furniture or objects to spread the weight over a larger area.

Office chairs and similar furniture with castors must be fitted with soft type-W castors. Where hard plastic castors are used, suitable polycarbonate floor-protection mats must be placed beneath the chairs. Protective mats are also recommended in heavily loaded areas, beneath pet food and water bowls, in entrance areas where wet shoes and umbrellas are stored, and in similar locations.

Protect the flooring from mechanical damage.

Never use abrasive cleaning products or tools that may damage the vinyl surface.

Do not expose vinyl flooring to hot objects.

9.2 Avoid contact with aggressive substances

Do not expose vinyl flooring to aggressive substances such as:

- strong solvents (acetone, nitro thinner, etc.),
- strong acids and alkalis,
- bleach, peroxide, hair dyes and similar products,
- chlorine-based bleach and highly concentrated disinfectants,
- aggressive cleaning agents, ammonia and sodium hypochlorite solutions,
- asphalt, bitumen and certain plasticisers,
- rubber and natural rubber products,
- and other potentially aggressive substances.

Remove any spills immediately. Some substances may damage vinyl very quickly, while others may cause damage after prolonged contact. Clean the affected area several times with lukewarm water and a neutral cleaner.

Prolonged contact with rubber can cause permanent discolouration of vinyl flooring. Do not use rubber-backed mats, rubber furniture protectors, rubber chair or sofa castors, rubber footwear or similar items in prolonged contact with the floor. In car showrooms, place suitable protective plates beneath vehicle tyres.

9.3 Cleaning and maintenance

Once installation is complete and the adhesive has fully cured, the floor should receive an initial intensive clean. Mechanical cleaning may be used where appropriate.

For routine cleaning, sweep with a soft brush or vacuum using a suitable floor attachment. Damp-mop periodically, typically once a week, using an appropriate high-quality cleaner. Always follow the instructions supplied with cleaning and care products.

The most common causes of permanent surface damage are sand and small stones, unsuitable chair, sofa and furniture feet, and indentation, sliding or dragging of heavy objects across the floor. Always dry-clean the floor before damp or wet cleaning. This removes hard particles that could otherwise become trapped in the mop or cloth and scratch the flooring during cleaning.

Some cleaning products and cleaning equipment may be aggressive towards vinyl, with damage becoming apparent only after prolonged use. We do not recommend multipurpose

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or so-called 'miracle' cleaning products or devices, including steam cleaners. Alpod can provide suitable high-quality cleaning products and advice on their correct use and cleaning procedures.

We recommend testing any new or unfamiliar cleaning product, treatment or cleaning tool on a small, inconspicuous area of the flooring before general use.

9.4 Surface protection, repairs and plank/tile replacement

Specialist products are available that create an additional protective layer on the vinyl surface and improve resistance to wear. More advanced coating systems should be applied professionally, while simpler products may also be suitable for end-user application. These treatments may alter the original appearance and gloss level of the flooring. Before application, the vinyl surface must be thoroughly cleaned with suitable specialist cleaners. High-quality protective coatings can effectively extend the service life of the flooring. In heavily used areas, the coating will need to be renewed periodically. Renewal will normally require removal of the previous coating, which can be demanding because of its strong adhesion.

A flooring professional may be able to repair certain localised damage and scratches, at least partially. More extensive damage can often be resolved by replacing individual planks/tiles locally. We therefore recommend keeping a small quantity of spare flooring from the original installation for future repairs.