Engineered Vinyl Plank Installation Guide

Engineered Vinyl Plank features the patented Unilin® interlocking planks for easy installation and is installed as a floating floor. The planks lock together to provide a tight water resistant seam and can be installed over most floor surfaces. Product is suitable for both residential and light commercial interior applications.

General Information:
1. Flooring should be transported and stored in a neatly stacked fashion on a smooth flat surface.
2. Acclimate the flooring and the rooms to be installed for 48 hours at a constant temperature between 65° and 85°F (18.33° and 29.44°C) before, during, and maintained after installation.
3. Engineered Vinyl Planks should only be installed after other trades have finished and the jobsite has been cleaned and cleared of debris that could potentially damage a finished plank installation.
4. Inspect flooring for damage, defects, or shading issues before installation; claims for visual defects will not be accepted after cutting and/or installed.
5. Mix and install planks from several different cartons during installation to ensure a random appearance.
6. Leave 1/4 inch (6.35mm) for expansion around the **entire** perimeter of the flooring.
7. Flooring should be protected from direct exposure to sunlight.

Subfloors:
Planks can be installed over a variety of subfloor surfaces including concrete on all grade levels, wood and many existing hard surface floors. The subfloors must be clean, smooth, flat, solid (no movement), and dry. **Do not install planks over floors that are sloped for drainage.** Any uneven areas greater than 3/16 inch (4.76mm) in a 10 foot (3.05m) radius should be leveled with a Portland cement based patching compound. H20 Engineered Vinyl Plank is resistant to water damage but they do not prevent the transmission of moisture. Care should be taken to keep moisture from collecting on either side of the flooring to prevent the growth of unhealthy mold and mildew.

Concrete Subfloors:
Planks can be installed over concrete on all grade levels if a proper moisture barrier is used. A minimum 6 mil polyethylene moisture barrier must be used with concrete subfloors. Moisture vapor emissions should not exceed 5 lbs./24 hour per 1,000 sq. when tested with the Anhydrous Calcium Chloride Test in accordance with ASTM F 1869 or 80% RH in accordance with ASTM F 2170 “Standard Test Method for Determining Relative Humidity in Concrete Slabs using in situ Probes. Any uneven areas greater than 3/16 inch (4.76mm) in a 10 foot (3.05m) radius should be leveled with a Portland cement based patching compound. Holes and cracks in the cement should be patched, and expansion joints should be filled with a latex patching compound. Newly poured concrete floors must cure for a minimum of 90 days. Please note it is the person installing the floor and/or the homeowner’s responsibility to ensure any moisture or alkalinity issues are resolved **prior** to installing the floor.

NOTE: Excessive moisture may cause the growth of unhealthy mold or mildew and/or cause staining of

the flooring and is not covered by our Warranty.

Wood Subfloors:
Planks can be installed over a smooth, flat, level wood subfloor, underlayment grade plywood, lauan plywood and other underlayments recommended by the manufacturer for use with a floating plank floor. Subfloor should be flat within 3/16 inch (4.76mm) in a 10 foot (3.05m) radius. Wood subfloors must be suspended at least 18" above the ground. Adequate cross-ventilation must be provided, and the ground surface of the crawl space should be covered with a suitable vapor barrier. If installing over a crawl space, a minimum 6 mil polyethylene moisture barrier must be used.
NOTE: Avoid subfloors with excessive vertical movement or deflection because subfloor movement may cause the locking mechanism to wear down, or even break. Indications of excessive deflection are subfloor fastener release, squeaking, compromised or sectional contours such as bowing or dipping in floors and uneven flooring material. Nail or screw subfloor panels to secure boards with excessive vertical movement or deflection prior to installation of the flooring material. Our warranties DO NOT cover any problems caused by inadequate substructures or improper installation of substructures.

Existing Flooring:
Engineered Vinyl planks can be installed over a variety of finished floors including single layer resilient sheet flooring/ tile, ceramic, marble and terrazzo. The surface must be in good condition and show no signs of excessive moisture conditions. Grout joints and heavy embossing in tile or vinyl must be leveled so they are flush with the flooring surface. Additionally the tile may require several skim coats to achieve a flat surface. Carpet, heavily cushioned vinyl floors or vinyl floors consisting of multiple layers are NOT a suitable subfloor for installation.

Radiant Heat Subfloors:
Engineered Vinyl planks can be installed over in-floor radiant heating systems provided the subfloor surface does not exceed 85°F (29.44°C) at any point. The initial floor temperature should not exceed 70°F (21.11°C) for 24 hours prior, during, and 48 hours after installation. Thereafter the temperature should be gradually increased to the desired setting up to 85°F (29.44°C). Because heat does affect both plastic and wood, you may need additional room for expansion (larger expansion gap) and contraction (wider base to allow for contraction) Radiant heating systems that are installed on top of the subfloor surface and covered with self-leveling underlayment are not recommended.

Important Notes:
Before removing any existing resilient flooring or tiles, please consult with flooring professional to determine if asbestos abatement is necessary to avoid exposure. See current edition of the Resilient Floor Covering Institute (RFCI) publication "Recommended Work Practices for Removal of Resilient Floor Coverings" for detailed information and instructions on removing all resilient covered structures. The products in this carton DO NOT contain asbestos or crystalline silica.
Moisture Barrier and Underlayment:
While it is not necessarily difficult to install a Uniclic floating floor, you may want to consider having it done by a professional installer. Bare concrete floors require a moisture barrier of at least 6 mil polyethylene film with the sheets overlapping 6" and taped to prevent moisture migrating to the flooring. Using a foam padding over the moisture barrier is recommended, but not required, Ask you retailer for their recommendations. You may choose to use a 2 in 1 type underlayment (moisture & padding). You can also install over sound deadening underlayments (3 in 1) with this method.

INSTALLATION

Remove wall base and undercut door jams. Do not secure individual planks to the subfloor as it is designed to be a floating floor. **Do not install cabinets on top of Engineered Vinyl Plank flooring. Separate all rooms and any floors over 40ft x 40ft using T molding.**

Pre-installation inspection:

It is the duty of the person installing the floor to inspect all flooring before installation. If during inspection the installer or buyer feels the floors is the wrong color, improperly manufactured, is off-grade or is the wrong gloss level, he/she should NOT install the flooring. Please immediately contact the retailer from which the flooring was purchased. No claims will the accepted for flooring which is visibly wrong if such flooring is installed. Installed flooring is deemed to be visibly acceptable.

1. First, determine how you want the flooring to run. Typically for plank products, the flooring runs the length of the room. There may be exceptions since it is all a matter of preference.

2. To avoid narrow plank widths or short plank lengths near the walls/doors, it is important to do some pre-planning. Using the width of the room, calculate how many full boards will fit into the area and how much space remains that will need to be covered by partial planks.

3. Start with a whole plank in the left hand corner of the room with the tongue side and end toward the wall. Lay the first row of planks along a chalk line and trim to fit to the wall allowing a 1/4 inch (6.35mm) expansion space. If starting the first row with a whole width plank it will be necessary to trim the tongues next to the wall, then place the cut ends next to the wall. To trim the planks, use a utility knife and a straight edge to score the top surface of the plank, and then bend it downward to separate the pieces, you can also use a VCT cutter for end cuts only, a table saw also works well for both end and length cuts.

4. Align and attach the end joints of the planks in the first row. Insert the tongue into the groove while holding the plank at a 20° to 30° angle to the floor. Apply pressure inward and down until the planks lock together (**Diagrams 1a & 1b**). Use spacers between the long edge and end of the planks next to the wall to maintain the expansion space.

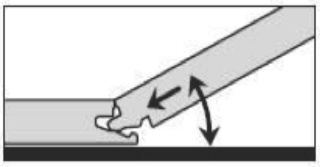

Diagram 1a

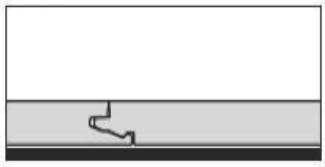

Diagram 1b

5. Start the second row using 1/3rd of a plank. Place the cut end against the wall. Insert the tongue on the long side of the plank into the groove of the plank in the first row. Hold the plank in a 20° to 30° angle while applying pressure inward and down until they lock together. To complete the second and all successive rows, it will be necessary to lock the short end into the previous plank first before locking the long side of the plank. Angle the plank and push the tongue into the groove and adjust it until the tongue locks into place. It may be necessary to lift both planks slightly to lock the joint together. Complete the second row allowing 1/4 inch (6.35mm) expansion space at the start and end of the row.

6. Start the third row using a 2/3rd length of a plank with the cut end against the wall. Complete each row thereafter using a random layout with end joints off-set by at least 8”. Plan the layout to avoid using small planks (less than 6”) at the walls. The cut piece at the end of the row can often be used to start the next row provided it achieves a random layout. Always place the cut end against the wall and allow for the expansion space.

7. Engineered Vinyl Plank planks are unique in that they can also be installed with a pull bar or tapping block and rubber mallet or hammer in difficult areas, such as the last row, and when fitting under door trim. Use a pull bar and rubber mallet or hammer to lock the joints together in the last row. Always use a pull bar on the cut edge of the plank. Factory edges can be damaged if the pull bar is used directly against them.

8. When fitting around door trim it will be necessary to slide the plank under the trim. This can be accomplished easily by starting the row on the side of the room with the door trim and then sliding the plank into place once it is attached. The row can be completed by inserting the tongue into the groove or the groove into the tongue depending on the direction. A tapping block and pull bar (**Diagrams 2a & 2b**) can also be used to lock the joints together while the planks are in a flat position. Use a series of light taps until the joint is gradually locked together.

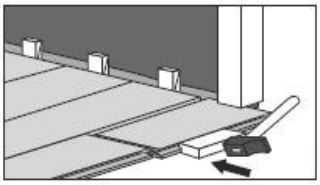

Diagram 2a

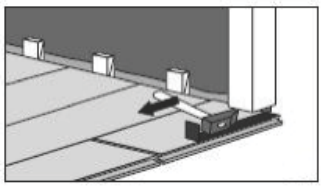

Diagram 2b

9. **Bathrooms:** When Engineered Vinyl planks are installed in a bathroom the flooring can be laid under the toilet only if the floor is separated from adjacent rooms with a doorway threshold, and a padding is not used. Otherwise the flooring should be installed around the toilet leaving a 1/8 inch (3.175mm) expansion space. Use 100% silicone caulking to fill the expansion space at the tub, shower and all wet areas to help prevent surface water seepage under the floor.