

# Installation Instructions

## Installers Responsibility

SPC Flooring Installation Guidelines should be reviewed by installers prior to commencement of installation. These instructions are intended to assist in achieving optimum installation AND to avoid installation-based flooring issues. Any variation to these instructions may affect the warranties. Should you have any queries in relation to the below recommendations, please contact your place of purchase.

### **SPC flooring can ONLY be installed as a floating floor system.**

Preferably, the installation should be performed by a professional installer. The installation process and method selected is solely the responsibility of the installer and you must be satisfied that the installer is qualified to carry out your site installation. Should you have any concerns either contact your retailer or visit the helpful site at <https://www.atfa.com.au/>

**Warning - Floating floor installation systems should NOT be used if loads are likely to exceed 200kg/object area or if the load is greater than 30kg/cm<sup>2</sup> – only direct stick products should be considered. Heavy objects and furniture such as large bookcases, full sized billiard tables or kitchen units should not be placed on any floating installation.**

## Before you start

### PRE-LAYING CHECKS

It is the installer's responsibility to verify that the product and accessories supplied are the correct product, colour, pattern and quantity. Prior to installation, each plank should be carefully checked in good natural light for any obvious visual defects including but not limited to:

- Colour variation
- Gloss variation
- Physical damage
- Pattern irregularities

The planks must be carefully inspected prior to installation to detect any imperfections. As an installer you must use reasonable selectivity and keep out pieces that should not be installed or cut off any deficiencies whatever the cause.

**Never install defective product. If the product is incorrect or has any visual defects or damage, contact the place of purchase.**

Installation equals acceptance of quality and the installer will be responsible for any visible defects after the floor has been cut and/or installed. A waste factor of approximately 5-10 % is required for length cutting, sorting and visual selection. If excessive product faults are detected please contact the point of purchase immediately for advice. Incidental scratching, chipping and indentations from external sources are site related and therefore will not be covered by warranty provisions. Please cover flooring with adequate protection if construction or painting is still occurring at the site. The finished floor should be protected from intense direct sunlight. Screens or Blinds should be used to inhibit direct sun. Always store planks on a flat surface-never put them on their ends or in an upright position.

**Large objects such as Kitchen Island benches should not be placed on a floating floor. The flooring needs to be installed around the perimeter of the Island Bench or under the bench kick boards / fascia to allow for natural floor movement. As such, kitchen benches should be assembled prior to install.**

### SITE TESTING AND CONDITIONING

The Sub-floor is a crucial element in every successful floor installation. All sub-floors should be prepared in accordance with the Australian Standards AS1884:2012. All sub-floors should be primed and levelled, because the slightest unevenness in the subfloor could lead to vertical movement (bouncing) or breaking of the profiled locking system.

Concrete sub floors must be tested in accordance with AS/NZ1884:2013 for moisture using the relative humidity in-situ probe test. RH levels can be up to 95%.

SPC Flooring do not need to be acclimatised. However if boxes are exposed to extreme temperatures within the 12 hours prior to installation please refer to the Extreme Temperatures notes below.

### EXTREME TEMPERATURES PRIOR TO INSTALLATION

Should your SPC flooring be exposed within the 12 hours prior to installation to extreme temperatures (under 5°C or over 50°C) (which may be due to warehousing environments, storage in vehicles or transport to or at site), acclimatisation is required at a room temperature between 18°C to 28°C for a minimum of 48 hours, in unopened packages prior to installation. Ensure individual stacks are no more than 3 packs high and they are spaced at least 200mm apart to allow airflow between stacks. The temperature must remain within this range for the entire installation period and a minimum of 48 hours after installation completion. The ambient relative humidity in the installation area should be maintained at 30-60% to prevent condensation forming under the laid flooring.

### SUB FLOOR PREPARATION

All Subfloors must be:

- Structurally sound
- Clean: Thoroughly swept and free of all debris, surface irregularities, dust, oil, grease, chemical substances, paint or other materials or roughness.

Concrete floors must be cured, completely dry, with a surface free of irregularities. When a straight edge 3 metres long is placed at rest at 2 points 3 metres apart, no part of the surface shall be more than 3mm below the length of the straight edge. Depressions and cracks must be filled using a suitable (taking into account the traffic loads) approved levelling compound in accordance with the manufacturer's instructions. All irregularities must be levelled.

Existing timber, plywood and particleboard sub floors, must be checked for any loose boards/panels or excessive deflection or movement. If loose boards are found or movement is excessive, the sub floor should be re-affixed and damaged boards replaced, then if required, sanded to a level, smooth and dust free surface.

The floor can be installed over most existing floor coverings (e.g. ceramic tiles, linoleum, PVC etc.) provided the floor is flat, dry and in the case of ceramics in a residential installation, grout line tolerances are no more than 3mm wide and 3mm deep and tile surfaces are level adjacent to each other. Otherwise grout joints should be filled to the level of the tiles with a suitable leveller. Carpet, carpet underlay and/or existing floating floors is not a suitable sub floor.

## Under Floor Heating - NOT Suitable

SPC flooring should never be installed over any electrical radiant heating system - the speed of sudden temperature changes having the potential to negatively affect the floor.

### WET AREAS

Although SPC flooring are 100% waterproof, it should not be used as a moisture barrier, and should not be installed in areas that have a continual risk of excessive moisture/flooding such as saunas or outdoor areas. If being installed in a wet area (e.g. bathroom, laundry etc.) please refer to the Wet Area Installation note at the end of these instructions.

### PERIMETER/EXPANSION GAPS

A standard perimeter expansion gap of not less than 10mm must be maintained against all fixed vertical surfaces (e.g. walls, cabinets, sliding doors, island benches, plumbing fixtures etc.). SPC floors are extremely stable and can be installed in individual rooms up to 20 m long x 15m wide. In large, complex or multi room installations, internal expansion joints at doorways are recommended. A trim or scotia can be used to cover the expansion gap, ensuring the floor is not pinned to the substrate or vertical surfaces. Silicone or caulking compound is not recommended.

If the client objects to the inclusion of internal expansion trims when the floor requires them will leave the floor with no warranty and becomes the installers liability

**Note: For installations that include the floor passing through multiple pinch-points, for example doorways and transitional areas from smaller passageways to larger rooms, consideration must be given to providing internal expansion allowances at these points.**

## TOOLS AND SUPPLIES REQUIRED

- Spacers
- Saw/Guillotine/Utility Knife
- Soft White No 2 Rubber Mallet Ruler
- Pencil
- Tape Measure

As a floating floor, the floor should not be adhered, nailed or pinned in any way to the sub floor or structure. Additional foam or cork underlays should never be used.

1. Prepare the sub floor in accordance with instructions over page.  
**Asbestos – Prior to any take-up or removal of floor coverings, adhesives or underlay, you should be certain these do not contain asbestos. If it is known or suspected the previous flooring, adhesive or underlay contains asbestos, you should avoid creating dust and the previous flooring and/or components should only be removed by an appropriately licensed asbestos removal contractor.**
2. Plan the direction of the area to be installed to maximise the visual appearance once installed. The direction of the tile/plank grain should be confirmed and the installation should be balanced from the centre of the area to minimise waste.
3. Measure the room and estimate the number of rows required. If the last row is not at least 50mm wide, the first row should be cut so that the first and last rows are similar in width.
4. To minimise shade variation, mix and install product from several different packs alternately. After laying a small quantity of product, view from a distance that allows you to clearly see the overall effect. If there is any doubt cease installation immediately and contact your place of purchase for advice.
5. Begin installation next to an outside wall. This is usually the straightest and best reference for establishing a straight working line. Establish this line by measuring an equal distance from the wall at both ends and snapping a chalk line. The distance you measure from the wall should be the width of a plank or tile. You may need to scribe cut the first row of planks or tiles to match the wall in order to make a straight working line if the wall is out of straight.
6. You may want to position a few rows before starting installation to confirm your layout decision and working line. When laying flooring, stagger end joints from row to row minimum of 300mm. When cutting the last plank in a row to fit, you can use the cut-off end to begin the next row. Always begin each row from the same side of the room.
7. From the left corner of the room put the first plank in place using spacer blocks against the walls to maintain the minimum 10mm expansion gap so both the end and side seam grooves are facing outwards. Planks are to be installed from left to right.
8. Install the second plank in the first row by laying the short-end tongue onto the previously installed plank short-end groove. Lock the planks together using a soft, white No. 2 rubber mallet to vertically engage the lock. A couple of small taps, rather than one sharp strike are recommended to avoid damaging the locking system. Care must be taken to properly line up the end join and NEVER force the join while out of alignment, otherwise this could result in permanent damage to the end groove.
9. Continue in this manner for the rest of the first row. The last plank in the row should be cut to length while maintaining the appropriate expansion gap along the perimeter of the room or fixed vertical surfaces.
10. Cut a plank that is at least 300mm than the first plank to start the second row or use the cut off from the previous row, keeping in mind the length requirements above. Install the first plank in the second row by inserting the long side tongue into the groove of the plank in the first row at a low angle to the installed plank. Then firmly lower the plank while maintaining a slight pressure toward the installed plank. The planks should fit snugly together and lay flat maintaining the appropriate expansion gap along the perimeter of the room or fixed vertical surfaces.
11. To install the remaining planks in the second row, first align the long edge tongue into the groove of the previous row at an angle. Slide the plank to the left until it meets the previously installed plank. Firmly lower the plank while maintaining a slight pressure towards the installed piece. The planks should fit snugly together and lay flat. Engage the short edge join as in the above. **As the long side is angled in place as you fold down the short side resting in the correct position use a rubber mallet No2.**

**and not a metal hammer. On the short end of each plank gently set the click system in place by evenly tapping along the short side making sure that both short sides are flush on the surface as the floor is installed.**

12. Work across the length of the room installing planks in the second row.  
**It is critical to keep these first two rows straight and square, as they are the “foundation” for the rest of the installation. Check often for squareness and straightness while installing the floor as failure to do so can result in gapping.**
13. **The Body and the Final Row:** Continue installing the floor left to right using the rotate and tap technique described earlier. Remember to allow an adequate gap for expansion at all walls and vertical surfaces. This gap will be covered last of all. Continue installing, being certain to maintain a random pattern repeat, assisted by offsetting end joins by at least 300mm. Maintain the minimum 10mm expansion gap against all fixed vertical surfaces.
14. Check to be certain all planks are fully engaged; if slight gapping is noticed or the planks will not lay flat, simply disengage the long/top side join and then carefully slide the short/end join apart. Do not pull up on this join as it will damage the locking mechanism! Reinstall the plank.
15. The last row (possibly the first row) plank width should be no less than 50mm on the long seam. Remember to allow for the appropriate expansion gap to the wall.
16. Holes for pipes: measure the diameter of the pipe and drill a hole that is 20mm larger.
17. **Finishing Off:** Where skirting boards have been left in place, it is now time to fit colour matched scotia moulding to the perimeter of the floor to cover the expansion gap after removing the expansion wedges. Scotia is to be pinned to the skirting only so as not to inhibit the free movement off the floor. If skirting boards have been removed or are yet to be fitted, they will usually cover the expansion gap well. It is often the case where professional installers will also undercut the plasterboard to afford an additional 12mm or so expansion to the perimeter of a floor. Install wall mouldings and door transition mouldings last. Be sure that all mouldings are fastened directly to the wall; do not place any fasteners through, or adhere too, the floating floor. Care must be taken when fitting wall mouldings that they do not push down on the floor. This will affect the floors ability to expand and contract and may lead to product failure.

**NOTE: If necessary, to disassemble your SPC floor, separate the whole row by lifting it up carefully at an angle. To separate the planks, leave them flat on the ground and slide them apart. If planks do not separate easy, you can slightly lift up the planks (5°) when sliding them apart.**

## POST INSTALLATION

If construction works are still underway, the floor should be protected from site debris, dirt, soil, traffic etc. by use of a protective surface (e.g. sheet plastic, hard boards etc.). Please be careful to ensure no condensation occurs and any adhesive tape or protective material does not affect the aesthetics of the finished installation.

- Flooring should be one of the last items installed in a project. In order to protect the floors while other trades are finishing their work prior to final cleanup and turnover to the owner, use only 3M Scotch-Blue Tape to hold the protective material to the new floor.

## WET AREA INSTALLATIONS

If your SPC floor is being installed in a wet area:

1. If a floor waste is installed in the area and it is intended to grade the floor to the waste, the sub-floor must be prepared within the tolerances set out in the sub floor Preparation notes due to its rigidity, cannot be manipulated to provide any fall to waste or accommodate variations in flatness of the floor greater than those tolerances. Otherwise an alternative product should be sought.
2. Follow the instructions set out in the Installation Procedure.
3. Separate/isolate the wet area from the balance of the floor/area with T-mould or similar at the doorway or other adjoining areas.
4. Seal the perimeter of the floor using a bathroom grade silicone to prevent moisture seeping under the floor.