



HARMONY
TIMBER FLOORS

INSTALLATION GUIDELINES

SPC VINYL



www.harmonytimberfloors.com



HARMONY FLOORING INSTALLATION GUIDELINES **FOR SPC HYBRID VINYL FLOORING**

Harmony Flooring Installation Guidelines are to be read in conjunction with the recommendations outlined by The Australasian Timber Flooring Association. The Australasian Timber Flooring Association (ATFA) | www.atfa.com.au



STEP 1: PRE-INSTALLATION PROCEDURES

Please handle, transport, and unload the flooring with care. DO NOT DROP BOXES ON THE ENDS AS THIS COULD BREAK THE LOCKING SYSTEM OR STAND THE BOXES UPRIGHT AS THIS COULD CAUSE THE FLOORING TO BOW. THE BOXES NEED TO BE STORED FLAT AT ALL TIMES. The flooring should be stored in a dry place. The flooring should not be delivered to site until the building has been closed in with windows and doors, and until cement work, plastering, painting, and all other materials have thoroughly dry. If possible, acclimatize the flooring for at least 48 hours (preferably 3-4 days) prior to installation commencing. This is not always necessary and if you have any questions in this regard, please contact the supplier. In addition, the heating or cooling system should be operating and controlled at 40°-60° RH for at least 48 hours before and during the installation process, as well as maintained after installation has been completed. Do not install the the flooring in areas that are subject to extreme seasonal temperature changes, where you cannot control the temperature. Please note that when installing the flooring in areas that are subject to large amounts of sunlight, that the windows are tinted or window furnishing installed and drawn at the time of the day when most exposed to sunlight. Failure to do so could result in UV fading of the floor and excessive expansion.

STEP 2: MOISTURE TEST

Before installing the flooring over a concrete or a particle board sub-floor, check the floor for moisture in several areas using an appropriate qualified commercial moisture meter.

Prior to installation commencing it is critical to check the moisture content of the sub-floor.

For concrete slabs, the moisture reading of the sub-floor should around 2.5% for an older concrete slab and no more than 3.9% for a new concrete slab. Check the floor for moisture in several areas using an appropriate qualified commercial moisture meter. If the moisture contents fall outside of this range, additional drying of the sub-floor will be required. It is advisable that if the moisture content of the sub-floor falls outside of the recommended ranges that the sub-floor be sealed with an appropriate sealant that is compatible with the adhesives to be used.

Please note that the sealants only act as a vapor barrier and not a moisture barrier or waterproofing membrane. The responsibility for checking the moisture contents of the subfloor lies with the installer and this information needs to be documented via marking the readings on the subfloor which are to be photographed and dated. A number of readings are required to be taken around varying locations on the subfloor. One or two readings will not suffice. If there are any areas of particular concern, then these need to be addressed before installation commences.

STEP 3: SUB-FLOOR PREPARATION

The preparation of the subfloor is a critical component in order to ensure a successful installation process. The sub-floor must be structurally sound, free of deflection or excessive movement, permanently dry, level, smooth, clean and free of any foreign contaminants such as paint, dust, dirt, grease, oil, old adhesive residue etc. Do not install the SPC hybrid vinyl flooring over a timber floor directly adhered to a concrete slab or over any type of carpet. Do not install an underlay prior to installing the SPC Hybrid vinyl flooring unless discussed and authorized with the supplier.

The subfloor must be level to within 2mm over 3 lineal meters in any direction as SPC Hybrid Vinyl flooring is a much thinner product and tolerance are lower. Please also note when installing SPC hybrid vinyl flooring, it is critical that builders black plastic with a minimum of 100µm gauge is installed prior to installation of the SPC hybrid vinyl flooring. This is necessary in order to ensure that the SPC hybrid vinyl flooring can move freely without the underlay backing grabbing onto the subfloor and preventing it from expanding. When installing the builders black plastic, overlap the joins by 100mm and tape them down with duct tape. Furthermore, run the builders black plastic up the walls by approximately 20mm or even more depending on the size of the skirting or molding being used. Movement and squeaks to the sub-floor should be well fastened with ring nails or screws to the floor joists. With regards the levels, high spots must be sanded/ground flat and low spots must be filled with a leveling compound with a minimum compressive strength of 3000 psi or greater. It is important to follow the leveling compounds application instructions and ensure they are suitable for the application purposes.

If areas are required to be built up in order to achieve a uniform finished height throughout, ensure that plywood sheeting is used. Install the plywood in a brick bond pattern with a 6mm expansion gap around the perimeters. Each Plywood sheet must be adhered to the subfloor with a construction adhesive and fixed to the subfloor with either screws when dealing with a particle board subfloor and 25mm into a concrete subfloor. Ensure that any height variance between the plywood sheeting does not exceed 0.75mm. Finally, ensure that the edges of the floorboards do not sit directly over the 6mm expansion gap between the plywood sheeting to avoid excessive movement on the edges, which would cause them to snap or creak.

STEP 4: BEFORE INSTALLATION

Unpack 80% of the required flooring that you will be installing on the day, sort out the floorboards into colours/shades and lengths where applicable. Prior to installation of the flooring, set it out by roughly placing the floorboards out in a manner that is pleasing to the eye, ensuring a random mix of colours/shades and lengths. Our quality control procedures at the factory ensure that very few, if any boards are defective when delivered to the consumer. However, it is important to remember that the installer should inspect each floorboard prior to installing them for potential defects, damage etc. and if any are found, these should be removed and returned to your supplier to be exchanged if found to be defective. Alternatively, these floorboards can be installed in areas such as under the dishwasher or fridge or in cupboards, where often these defects can be cut out. Please note if defect floorboards are installed without informing the supplier of these defects, it is the installers' responsibility to remove and replace them. Warranty claims will not be accepted for defective flooring that has been installed. It is critical to check each floorboard prior to installation commencing for any defects.

Please note that not all jobs are the same and some consumers have specific requirements that they want met. If the consumer has any specific questions they wish addressed, please feel free to ask your supplier prior to installation commencing. Furthermore, if the consumer wants to install their flooring outside the parameters of the manufacturer guidelines, they need to consult the manufacturer prior to installation commencing and obtain clarification in order to ensure that all warranties are upheld. If the consumer fails to work within the manufacturers guidelines, this could have an impact on the warranties and failure to comply fully with them will result in the product warranty being null & void in part or in full.

STEP 5: INSTALLATION

Tools required include the following: Pencil, Tape measure, Multi-Tool for undercutting the door jambs or alternatively a Handsaw, Utility Knife, Pull bar, Rubber Mallet, Rubber Tapping Block, Spacers/Wedges, Jigsaw, Drop Saw or Guillotine, Broom, Dust Pan, Vacuum and relevant Safety and Protective Personal Equipment (PPE).

It is important to note that SPC hybrid vinyl flooring can only be installed via the Floating method of Installation.

Stage 1

Follow steps outlined in Step 1: Pre-Installation Procedures and check the moisture contents of the subfloor as discussed in Step 2 Moisture Test.

Stage 2

Seal the subfloor if required. Install builders black plastic as discussed in Step 3: Sub-Floor Preparation as well as rectify the levels if required.

Stage 3

Unpack the boxes as described in Stage 4: Before Installation. Remove any skirting if applicable and undercut the door jambs with either a Multi-Tool or Handsaw, using an off cut of the flooring as a guide to achieve the correct heights.

Stage 4

Commence installation working from left to right placing the Spacers/Wedges at the ends and edges where the flooring meets the walls. It is critical to leave expansion of a minimum of 8mm around the perimeters of the flooring, depending on the size of the area. If possible, cut and remove the base of the gyprock approximately 10mm up from the sub-floor in order to gain an extra 10mm expansion. For larger areas it may be necessary to compartmentalize the floor to ensure sufficient expansion is allowed for by installing expansion joints. For areas large than 6 meters in width, the floor will need to be compartmentalized. Please contact your supplier for clarification in this regard.

WHEN INSTALLING THE FLOORING USE AN OFF CUT OF THE FLOORING (UNDERLAY FACING DOWN) AND PLACE IT ON TOP OF THE BUTT JOINTS AND THEN TAP NOT HIT THE OFF CUT WITH A RUBBER Mallet TO LOCK THE FLOORING TOGETHER. HITTING THE BUTT JOINTS OR ANY JOINTS FOR THAT MATTER, WILL CAUSE THEM TO FRACTURE OR BREAK. THIS IS CRITICAL TO ENSURE A SUCCESSFUL INSTALLATION OF THE FLOORING AND AVOID BREAKAGE OF THE FLOORING, WHICH ONLY HAS A THIN LOCKING SYSTEM.

Stage 5

Once the first floorboard has been installed and the Spaces/Wedges placed at the ends where the flooring meets the walls, lock the butt joints (short end of the floorboards) by inserting the tongue into the groove at an angle and drop in place. Continue this procedure until you get to the end of the row. Cut the last floorboard with a Drop Saw or Guillotine. A Guillotine will be a cleaner option. Use a Pull Bar and the Rubber Mallet to lock the final floorboard in position. You can use a tapping block and a rubber mallet to secure the lock, ensuring you do not hit it too hard causing damage to the locking system. Failure to close the gaps will compromise the locking system. When tapping the short end of the floorboard, use a Rubber Tapping Block, tapping on the edge of the floorboard, not directly on the locking system so as to avoid damaging the locking system. When tapping on the long end of the floorboard, you can use an off-cut piece of the flooring, which you can lock into the adjoining floorboards and close any gaps that are present.

Once the first row has been installed use the leftover piece of the cut floorboard and start your next row with it ensuring that the spaces between the butt joints are at least 25-30 cm apart. Lock the long edge of the floorboard by inserting the tongue at an angle and drop in place.

These procedures are then replicated throughout the installation process. When cutting around built-in cabinetry or fitting the floorboards underneath the door jambs, use either a Utility Knife or Jigsaw to make the cuts, ensuring the relevant expansion has been left at all times.

Step 6

Fix the skirtings to the walls, not to the flooring. If you chose to leave the skirting in place, fit a molding to the skirting, not the flooring to cover the expansion. Against any built-in cabinetry, fit a molding to cover the expansion. Install transition strips against the tiles, carpet, windows and sliding doors etc. ensuring that the floorboards are not adhered to the subfloor. Use a flexible adhesive or a clear silicone to fix the transition trims. Please discuss the different transition strips with your supplier so they are able to advise you of the best choices in this regard.

Step 7

On completion of the installation process, sweep up large pieces of debris and dispose in a responsible manner. Vacuum the remaining debris up, ensuring the brushes are out on the vacuum head

For further hints and guidelines please feel free to visit the ATFA website: <https://www.atfa.com.au>.

SAFETY AND PERSONAL PROTECTIVE EQUIPMENT (PPE)

- When installing any products supplied by Harmony Timber Floors Pty Ltd, the installer is to wear the relevant PPE, which includes Earmuffs, Eye Protection, Gloves and a Respirator Mask with a filtration system that are conform to Australian Standards. It is recommended to get any Respirator Masks properly fit tested. This is of particular relevance when cutting the flooring. This is the responsibility of the installer to ensure this is followed at all times.
- When installing any products supplied by Harmony Timber Floors Pty Ltd on construction sites, the installer is to wear the above recommended PPE and any other PPE required in accordance with the construction site guidelines, such as Steel Caps, Visibility Vests, Long Sleeve Shirts, Long Pants, Hard Hats etc. This is the responsibility of the installer to ensure this is followed at all times.
- When cutting any products supplied by Harmony Timber Floors Pty Ltd, the installer is required to attach a vacuum to the equipment in order to reduce the spread of dust. This is the responsibility of the installer to ensure this is followed at all times.
- When working with any adhesives, solvents, chemicals etc. it is essential that the installer refer to the Safety Work Method Statements (SWMS) and Data Sheets provided by the companies' manufacturing these products before using them, in order to ensure that the correct guidelines are followed when in use. This is the responsibility of the installer to ensure this is followed at all times.
- When using power tools, it is essential that the installer consults the manufacturers' guidelines before using the power tools in order to ensure they are using them correctly and for their intended purposes, thus avoid risk of injury. This is the responsibility of the installer to ensure this is followed at all times.

HANDY INSTALLATION TIPS

•**Read the instruction first** - Before commencing the installation process, read the manufacturers' instructions and guidelines for all products to be used first and consult your supplier if you are uncertain of anything.

•**Direction of the flooring** - Usually you will want to orientate the floorboards in the direction of the major source of incoming light, so that light is shining down the length of the floorboards or install the floorboards with the length of the room. Sometimes these two situations do not work in unison, in which case the consumer will need to take into account things like expansion or the overall look they want to achieve.

•**Skirting** - A far more professional outcome is achieved when the skirting is removed prior to installation commencing and re-installed on completion of the installation process. It is also highly recommended to undercut the architraves unless they are steel architraves that are structural. Where a client does not wish to remove the skirting, a molding or scotia can be fixed to the skirting. Never nail the timber beading or scotia to the flooring as this could cause expansion issues. When fixing the skirting or kickers etc. it is extremely important not to push hard down on the skirting. Gently sit the skirting or kickers on top of the flooring and fix to the walls. Failure to do this could cause expansion issues and the flooring may not be covered by the manufacture warranty. Furthermore, by using an 18mm skirting as opposed to an 11mm skirting will gain extra expansion and possibly reduce the need for expansion joints. Please contact your supplier for clarification in this regard.

•**Moisture** - Take the environment in which you will be installing the flooring into account prior to installation. If you are aware of any moisture issues, get these rectified prior to installation commencing. Furthermore, check the moisture contents of the sub-floor prior to installation commencing.

•**Silicone** - It is not advisable to silicone the base of the skirting or around any built-in cabinetry if the Floating Method of Installation is used as there is a strong probability that when the flooring expands, the silicone bead will break. In fact, the silicone bead could actually cause an expansion issue; hence silicone work is not advisable for the Floating Method of Installation.

•**Expansion** - If something goes wrong with the flooring, it is usually related to expansion. Leaving sufficient expansion is critical at ensuring that you do not have any issues with the flooring. Please refer to the above Step 5: Installation for expansion requirements.

•**Creating a random look as opposed to a pattern** - To avoid creating a joint pattern in the flooring, it is necessary to begin installation using starter boards. To create a starter floorboard, cut the floorboard at 2/3 the length. Start with the 2/3 length, and then install the full lengths and continue across the room. Use the 1/3 length to start the next row and continue as above keeping at least a 25-30cm distance between the end joints. Cuts made at the opposite wall should be used for starter floorboards. It is important to note that the strongest and most stable pattern is a running brick bond pattern and is advisable to use when installing SPC hybrid vinyl flooring.

•**Fixing of transition strips** - These need to be fixed with a flexible adhesive or clear silicone and where possible fixed to the actual sliding doors, windows etc. and not the flooring itself. Ensure surfaces are clean prior to applying the flexible adhesive or clear silicone in order to ensure proper adhesion.

•**Installing the flooring over existing floor finishes** - Check that the sub-floor is stable and level. Flooring cannot be installed over existing carpet, which will need to be removed first. Please note when installing the flooring over tiles, it is important to note that the tiles need to be securely adhered to the sub-floor, but this is not a guarantee that this bond will not break further down the track. As a result, caution needs to be taken when installing flooring over existing tiles. The same is applicable for linoleum or existing vinyl flooring. Please refer to Step 3: Subfloor Preparation.

•**Under floor heating** - Under floor heating is permissible, however the temperature cannot exceed 28 degrees Celsius at any given time.

•**Waste Factor** - A waste factor of 10% needs to be allowed for, whilst a 15% waste factor needs to be allowed for when a large number of angles and curves are involved.

•**Recommended areas of installation** - The flooring can be installed in all areas, excluding wet areas such as bathrooms, laundries, wet rooms, outdoors and areas exposed to excessive amounts of direct sunlight (refer to Care and Maintenance). If installed in the above-mentioned areas, it may void the manufacturer warranty. If you have any concerns discuss this with the supplier.

•**SPC hybrid vinyl flooring is water resistant** - The surface of the SPC hybrid vinyl flooring is extremely tolerant of water on the surface, however, getting water in the joins, which are extremely tight, so not easily achieved or underneath the product could promote mildew and mold, which not only could affect the performance of the flooring, but also contribute to a unhygienic environment.

•**Fixing items directly to the flooring** - Fixing items directly to the flooring may cause expansion issues and is not recommended. This includes the fixing of track, trims etc. by screwing them or adhering them with non-flexible adhesives directly on top of the flooring. This is particularly relevant to the Floating Method of Installation. The same is applicable when placing extremely heavy items directly on top of the flooring such as built-in cabinetry, a grand piano, billiard tables etc. Once again this is of particular relevance to the Floating Method of Installation.

•**Install the flooring after the other tradesmen have completed their scope of works that could potentially damage the flooring.**

•**Purchasing of spare flooring** - It is strongly advised that the consumer purchase at least a spare box of the flooring that they have purchase, in case any future repairs are required. Harmony Timber Floors regularly change their profiling, dimensions and colours of their flooring etc. to meet the needs of the market. Hence, we cannot be expected to have stock of old flooring on hand for long periods of time. If a warranty repair is required and the original materials are not available, then the repairs will be carried out using similar flooring.

These Installation Instructions are part of the Harmony Timber Floors Installation Instruction program and failure to comply fully with them will result in the product warranty being null & void in part or in full.

Please refer to the Harmony Timber Floors Care and Maintenance Information Sheet and the Australasian Timber Flooring Association website: <https://www.atfa.com.au> ,on how to maintain the correct climatic conditions within your home/interior space during the various seasons of the year and extreme weather events in order to avoid any potential shrinkage, expansion, cupping, crowning and potential fading issues.

If you have any questions or concerns, please feel free to visit our website www.harmonytimber-floors.com or calls us on 1300 725 257.

Please also visit the Australasian Timber Flooring Association website: <https://www.atfa.com.au> for further information on Installation Instructions for your flooring.