

# LOOSE LAY VINYL

## INSTALLATION GUIDELINES



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### IMPORTANT INFORMATION

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Read all installation instructions and warranties prior to installing your Loose Lay Vinyl Plank floor.

The Owner/Installer should carefully inspect material prior to installation. Materials installed with visible defects are not covered by warranty. Unacceptable material should not be installed. Rejection of material must be made on the full order shipment of product, not box-by-box or piece-by-piece. Our flooring is manufactured within accepted industry standards. It is recommended to add 10% to order quantities to allow for installation waste and nonconforming product, add 18% if installing in a diagonal pattern. It is recommended that additional flooring be purchased and retained in its original, unopened packaging for future repairs or plank replacement, if needed.

**Inspect the Flooring:** Inspect material from several boxes and get customer approval for appearance, color, and finish. Only after the flooring is approved by the end user should installation begin. During installation, set aside pieces that may not be acceptable if installed. If the culled amount exceeds 10% of the flooring material, contact manufacturer before you proceed with installation.

### MATERIAL HANDLING & ACCLIMATION

- Lay flooring cartons flat on the floor or on a similarly flat, stable surface in the jobsite for 24-48 hrs. prior to installation and until all flooring has reached the same temperature as the jobsite.
- Do not allow flooring cartons to sag or bend during acclimation.
- For residential installations, acclimate flooring to room temperature which must be between 65°F and 80°F. Once all flooring is the same temperature as the room and subfloor, it is ready to install.
- Leave flooring in its original cartons until ready for installation. Open only the amount of flooring that can be installed within 24 hours.

- The flooring environment should be continuously maintained between 65°F and 85°F (18°C and 29°C) after installation.

### ACCEPTABLE INSTALLATION CONDITIONS

- Loose Lay Vinyl Plank is not designed for continually wet environments, 3-season rooms or outdoor applications. Residential bathrooms, kitchens, and laundry rooms are acceptable rooms for installation.
- RWS&D warranties do not cover damage from heavy medical equipment such as powered wheelchairs, chair lifts, or medical beds.
- Direct sunlight over extended periods of time can fade or discolor your floor. Use UV-tinting or window treatments to help protect your floor. Occasionally move rugs and other furnishings to avoid defined lines in the floor.
- Loose Lay Vinyl Plank will expand and contract in response to temperature changes. Avoid exposure to excessive heat or cold and maintain stable environmental conditions. Sudden or extreme temperature fluctuations may result in excessive flooring movement.
- Large amounts of direct sunlight can heat the floor beyond the recommended temperature range, causing excessive expansion and contraction. Use blinds, curtains, UV-resistant window film, or other appropriate shading devices to minimize direct sunlight exposure.
- Loose Lay Vinyl Plank is designed from real wood images. Blend and mix planks during installation to randomize the natural features of the floor.
- RW is not liable for any loss, damage, claim, or complaint arising from the use of an incorrect installation method or adhesive system, or from any failure to strictly follow the adhesive manufacturer's instructions and recommendations. It is the installer's responsibility to verify that the selected adhesive is suitable for both the subfloor type and the Loose Lay Vinyl Plank being installed.
- Recommended adhesives are:
  - Uzin KE 39
  - Wakol MS 552

- Wakol D3320
- Mapei 373
- Mapei 399

## **SUBFLOORS**

- Subfloors must be smooth, flat, and structurally sound. Variations shall not exceed 3/16 in. (4.8 mm) within a 10 ft. (3 m) radius or 1/8 in. (3.2 mm) within a 6 ft. (1.8 m) radius. Abrupt changes in elevation shall not exceed 1/32 in. (0.8 mm). High spots shall be ground smooth, and low areas shall be filled with a suitable patching or leveling compound prior to installation. Loose Lay Vinyl Plank is not intended to bridge substrate irregularities, and such irregularities may telegraph through to the finished flooring surface.
- Subfloor joints shall not exhibit more than 1/32 in. (0.8 mm) vertical offset, and all gaps greater than 1/16 in. (1.6 mm) shall be filled and smoothed prior to installation.
- Loose-lay flooring shall not be installed over unsupported seams or voids.
- The subfloor should be firm, structurally sound, and free from excessive deflection. It should not flex, bounce, or move noticeably under normal foot traffic.
- The subfloor must be dry. Excessive subfloor moisture can damage the subfloor, surrounding structure, adhesive system, and installed flooring. All subfloor moisture issues must be corrected prior to installation. Prior to installation, subfloor moisture shall not exceed 8 lbs./1,000 sq. ft./24 hours MVER as measured by ASTM F1869 (Calcium Chloride Test) or 85% Relative Humidity (RH) as measured by ASTM F2170 (In-Situ Relative Humidity Test). Moisture conditions exceeding these limits must be properly mitigated before installation. For commercial installations, subfloor moisture testing is required, and test results must be documented and retained by the installer prior to installation.
- Moisture may evaporate freely from an exposed subfloor prior to installation. After loose-lay flooring is installed, evaporation can be restricted, potentially trapping moisture and increasing the risk of subfloor damage. Therefore, a properly installed moisture barrier is strongly recommended, even when pre-

installation moisture readings are within acceptable limits.

- NOTE: Damage to Loose Lay Vinyl Plank flooring, or to the subfloor, caused by mold, mildew, hydrostatic pressure, or excessive moisture in the subfloor are not covered under warranty.
- The subfloor must be clean. Remove all construction debris, dirt, dust, and all other foreign substances from the subfloor prior to installing Loose Lay Vinyl Plank.

**DO NOT SAND, DRY SWEEP, DRY SCRAPE, DRILL, SAW, BEAD BLAST, OR MECHANICALLY CHIP, OR PULVERIZE ANY PART OF THE EXISTING RESILIENT FLOORING, BACKING, LINING FELT, ASPHALTIC "CUTBACK" ADHESIVE, OR OTHER ADHESIVE. THESE PRODUCTS MAY CONTAIN ASBESTOS FIBERS AND/OR**

**CRYSTALLINE SILICA. AVOID CREATING DUST. INHALATION OF SUCH DUST IS A HAZARD TO THE RESPIRATORY TRACT AND CAN CAUSE CANCER. INDIVIDUALS WHO ARE SMOKERS WHO ARE EXPOSED TO ASBESTOS FIBERS SIGNIFICANTLY INCREASE THEIR RISK OF SERIOUS BODILY HARM. UNLESS POSITIVELY**

**CERTAIN THAT THE PRODUCT IS A NONASBESTOS-CONTAINING MATERIAL, YOU MUST ASSUME IT CONTAINS ASBESTOS. STATE REGULATIONS MAY REQUIRE THAT THE MATERIAL BE TESTED TO DETERMINE ASBESTOS CONTENT. CONSULT A CERTIFIED ASBESTOS TESTING LAB FOR REMOVAL BEFORE DISTURBING EXISTING RESILIENT FLOORING, BACKING, LINING FELT, ASPHALTIC "CUTBACK" ADHESIVE, OR OTHER ADHESIVE.**

## **ACCEPTABLE SUBFLOORS**

- Concrete
- Plywood and OSB
- Tile, Terrazzo, and Marble
- Resilient Flooring without padding or cushioning

## **CONCRETE SUBFLOORS**

- Grind high spots and use a cement-based leveling material (minimum compressive strength 3000 psi) to fill all low spots. Follow the leveling compound manufacturer's instructions. Leveling compounds must be

allowed to thoroughly cure and dry prior to flooring installation.

- The installer is responsible for determining when the subfloor is dry enough to install the flooring. Loose Lay Vinyl Plank should never be installed in areas with excessive moisture.
- Subfloor moisture limits for Loose Lay Vinyl Plank installations are governed by both the adhesive manufacturer's requirements and the acceptable moisture limits of the substrate and surrounding structure.
- Unless otherwise specified by the adhesive manufacturer, concrete subfloor moisture conditions must be evaluated using ASTM F1869 (Calcium Chloride Test) or ASTM F2170 (In-Situ Relative Humidity Test) prior to installation.
- Testing around plumbing fixtures, pipes, and other areas at risk of moisture is recommended.
- Trapped moisture underneath Loose Lay Vinyl Plank can cause damage to the surrounding structure and create conditions that distort the shape of the flooring. Such conditions can develop even after the slab has been tested as dry. For this reason, a moisture barrier is strongly recommended.
- For Glue-Down installations, an approved roll-on moisture barrier is strongly recommended prior to the adhesive application.
- Concrete pH level must be between 7-10 and within adhesive or moisture barrier requirements.
- New concrete slabs must have been poured for at least 60 days, dry and fully cured.
- Concrete must be sound, free from chipping, flaking, and dusting.

Adhesive residue from previous floor coverings must be scraped, sanded, or otherwise removed prior to installing Loose Lay Vinyl Plank.

### **RADIANT HEAT SUBFLOORS**

Loose Lay Vinyl Plank can be installed over radiant heat in concrete. Consult your radiant heat subfloor manufacturer for compatibility with luxury vinyl flooring.

- Adhesive installation method required for radiant heat subfloor systems. Ensure selected adhesive is also designed for radiant heat applications.

- Radiant heating mats are not approved. The radiant heat system must be installed in the concrete subfloor.
- Hydronic or Electric systems are acceptable.
- Heating elements must be 1/2" or more below the installed flooring and heat evenly,
- Heating systems must be operational for at least 14 days prior to flooring installation to ensure proper operation and temperature regulation.
- Heating must be even across the floor and no part of the installed floor's surface temperature should exceed 30°C/85°F.
- Rooms with radiant heat should maintain a minimum 1/4 in. (6 mm) expansion gap around the entire perimeter, including transitions to adjacent rooms with the same flooring type. This may be accommodated with an in-field expansion break concealed beneath a coordinating transition molding.
- Radiant heat system must be operational continuously for 14 days before installation. It should then be turned off at least 24 hours before installation. After the flooring is installed, it can be turned back on and gradually brought to normal temperature at a maximum rate of 5°F per day.

### **WOOD SUBFLOORS (PLYWOOD, OSB)**

- Do not install Loose Lay Vinyl Plank on wood panel subfloors installed over concrete, or solid wood installed directly over concrete if they are uneven or a moisture barrier is lacking. Ensure all panels are properly fastened to the slab.
- Do not install directly over dimensional lumber (e.g., 2x6" diagonal across joists.)
- All wood panel subfloors must be properly installed per the manufacturer's instructions and meet or exceed local building codes.
- Local building codes may only provide a minimum requirement for flooring systems. If deflection or bounce occurs in the subfloor, fasten an additional layer of APA rated underlayment to the subfloor per the underlayment manufacturer's instructions.
- Loose subfloor panels must be fastened to the joists to prevent panel movement.

**NOTE: squeaks, cracking, or popping sounds and/or plank separation due to subfloor and**

**flooring movement are not covered under warranty. The installer is responsible for ensuring subfloors are firm and flat.**

- Do not install Loose Lay Vinyl Plank over treated wood panel subfloors. Fasten an additional layer of APA rated underlayment per the underlayment manufacturer's instructions over treated wood panel subfloors.
- Crawl spaces must be dry and free of excessive moisture. Loose Lay Vinyl Plank can restrict moisture evaporation from the subfloor, potentially trapping moisture beneath the flooring. Elevated moisture levels in the crawl space may adversely affect the wood subfloor, joists, and other structural components.
- Do not place moisture barrier or plastic sheeting between Loose Lay Vinyl Plank and a wooden subfloor.
- Crawl space must be a minimum of 18" from the ground to the underside of the joist.
- The crawl space earth (or thin "rat slab") must be covered 100% by a vapor retarder of 6-mil polyethylene. 6-mil polyethylene must be overlapped 6 inches and be sealed or taped as well as extended 6-inches up stem walls and vertical obstructions such as support piers.
- Crawl spaces should be properly ventilated to prevent excessive humidity and moisture accumulation.
- Crawl space vents should be properly located to foster cross ventilation.
- Wood panel subfloor moisture content should not exceed 12% before installation of Loose Lay Vinyl Plank. The subfloor should be tested in at least 10 separate places for every 1,000 sq ft to ensure adequate sampling. Testing around plumbing fixtures, pipes, and other areas at risk for moisture is recommended.

## TILE, TERRAZZO, MARBLE

- Loose Lay Vinyl Plank can be installed over existing hard surface flooring like ceramic tile, terrazzo, and marble provided the existing flooring is stable, firm, fully bonded to the substrate, and free from moisture issues.
- Ensure Adhesive is compatible with the specific hard surface subfloor.

- Tile grout lines or other gaps greater than 1/16" should be filled and level with a cementitious leveling compound.
- Uneven tile or natural stone flooring should be smoothed and leveled with a cementitious leveling compound.

**NOTE: The integrity of Loose Lay Vinyl Plank flooring's installation is subject to the structural integrity of the hard surface flooring underneath. Problems in the underlying hard surface flooring can result in damage to Loose Lay Vinyl Plank flooring.**

## RESILIENT FLOORING

- Loose Lay Vinyl Plank can be installed over sheet vinyl and monolithic vinyl (poured vinyl) flooring.
- Do not install flooring over multiple layers of vinyl. Only one layer of vinyl flooring is acceptable.
- Do not install flooring over existing vinyl flooring with a pad underlayment.

## ADDITIONAL UNDERLAYMENTS

Loose Lay installation over an additional underlayment is typically not allowed. Contact RW for approval of any underlayment being considered.

## INSTALLING THE FLOOR

Inspect the Flooring: Inspect material from several boxes and get customer approval for appearance, color, and finish. Cull out pieces that may not be acceptable once installed. If the culled amount exceeds 10% of the flooring material, contact manufacturer before proceeding.

**NOTE: The manufacturer does not accept responsibility for any costs incurred when plank(s) with visible defects have been installed. Installation is acceptance of the product.**

**NOTE: squeaks, cracking or popping sounds are not covered under warranty. Proper subfloor preparation and flooring installation should minimize these noises.**

- **Undercut Door Casings:** If needed, undercut all door casings higher than the thickness of the flooring being installed. To do this, use a scrap piece of flooring as a guide. Lay it on the substrate and cut the casing with a handsaw,

oscillating saw, or a powered jamb saw set at the correct height.

- **Blending of Cartons:** Loose Lay Vinyl Plank are designed from real wood images. To achieve a natural appearance across the entire floor, we highly recommend opening and working from several cartons at a time. This will allow you to blend the planks for maximum aesthetic appearance. Make certain the room is well lit to ensure color is consistent and that any visual defects can be seen and removed.
- **Match Transition Moldings:** For best appearance, blend all transitions and moldings to planks that have similar color and imaging. Set them aside for use as needed.
- **Layout of Flooring:** Laying out several rows prior to installation is essential to achieve a random appearance. Never waste materials; the end cuts from starter rows should be used at the opposite end of the room to complete rows, and end cuts can be used to start subsequent rows.
- **Large Spans:** Loose Lay Vinyl Plank may be installed using the loose-lay method for areas up to 26 linear feet (7.9 m) in any direction, provided the loose-laid section is fully framed with a 6 in. (152 mm) wide adhesive strip around the perimeter. For installations exceeding 26 linear feet (7.9 m), additional 6 in. (152 mm) wide adhesive strips shall be installed at intervals not exceeding 26 linear feet (7.9 m) and at all perimeters to help minimize shifting and maintain floor alignment. When the installation passes through a doorway or transitions into an adjacent room, each room shall be independently framed with a 6 in. (152 mm) wide perimeter adhesive strip, regardless of the 26' rule. Installations utilizing a full-spread adhesive across the entire floor are not subject to maximum area or span limitations.
- **Commercial Installations:** Commercial installations must utilize the full glue-down method in accordance with these instructions. Additional adhesive requirements, limitations, or installation procedures may apply based on the adhesive selected and the intended commercial application. Follow all adhesive manufacturer's instructions and recommendations.
- **Stairs:** Loose Lay Vinyl Plank installed on stairs must be installed using the full glue-down

method. Loose-lay installation is not acceptable on stairs.

### **Additional Notes on Installation:**

- Glue down installations with a full spread adhesive across the entire floor have no space limit.
- Loose Lay Vinyl Plank installed on stairs must be installed using the full glue-down method. Loose-lay installation is not acceptable on stairs.
- Areas subject to heavy rolling loads must be installed using the full glue-down method. Loose-lay installations are not acceptable in these environments.
- Plank length should not be cut shorter than 8".
- To cut: Mark the desired line on the plank. Align a straightedge with the mark and score the plank using a sharp utility knife. Snap the plank along the score line and cut through any remaining backing material as needed. Multiple passes may be required to achieve a clean cut. Replace blades frequently to ensure clean, accurate cuts.
- Glue down lay in glue and roll

## **LOOSE LAY VINYL PLANK INSTALLATION STEPS**

### **1. Prepare the Space**

Prepare the installation area before beginning the installation.

- Remove existing flooring, baseboards, moldings, wall base, thresholds, and other obstructions as necessary.
- Ensure the subfloor is clean, dry, structurally sound, and properly prepared in accordance with these instructions.
- Undercut all door casings and door jambs using a scrap piece of flooring as a height guide to allow the flooring to fit neatly beneath the trim ensuring it is not pinched or held down by the door casing or door jamb.

### **2. Plan the Layout**

Plan the floor layout before installing the first plank. Proper planning will help avoid narrow rows along walls and short, unsightly pieces at the end of rows. Snap a straight chalk line parallel to the starting wall to establish a reference line and ensure the installation remains square.

### **3. Prepare to Install**

Place 1/4 in. spacers (or larger spacers where otherwise specified in this document) along all walls, fixed objects, and vertical obstructions within the installation area. If installing using the loose-lay method without adhesive, the first row should be scribed to fit tightly against the starting wall. If using adhesive, spread only the amount of adhesive that can be covered with flooring within the adhesive manufacturer's specified working time.

### **4. Install the First Row**

Position the first plank along the starting wall or the chalk line established during layout. Lay each plank end-to-end to complete the first row. Ensure all planks are properly aligned and squared to one another. Use a tapping block and soft rubber mallet as needed to position the planks. Continue installing the first row in accordance with these guidelines.

### **5. Install the Next Rows**

Begin the second row with the end joints offset a minimum of 8 in. (203 mm) from those in the first row. Cut the first plank of the row as necessary to maintain proper joint spacing. Position each plank tightly against the adjacent plank with no visible gaps. Improper alignment may damage plank edges or result in visible seams. Planks may be lifted and repositioned as needed to achieve proper alignment. Continue installing the remaining rows in the same manner, ensuring all planks remain square, properly aligned, and free of gaps. When the installation transitions around corners or into adjoining spaces, re-establish the layout by snapping a straight chalk line parallel to the new wall to ensure the flooring remains square and properly aligned in the new area.

### **6. Install the Final Row**

The final row may require cutting to fit. For loose-lay installations, the final row should be scribed to fit tightly against the wall. For installations requiring a perimeter expansion gap, measure the distance between the last installed row and the wall, allowing for the required 1/4 in. expansion gap (or larger where otherwise specified in this document). Mark the required width on each plank and cut along the marked line. Install the cut planks using the same procedures described above and continue until the final plank of the installation is in place.

### **7. Roll the Floor (Adhesive Installations)**

For installations utilizing perimeter adhesive, field adhesive strips, or a full glue-down method with a pressure-sensitive adhesive, roll all adhered areas with a 75-100 lb. roller immediately after installation in accordance with the adhesive manufacturer's instructions. Follow any additional rolling requirements specified by the adhesive manufacturer.

### **8. Complete the Installation**

Inspect the installation to ensure all planks are properly aligned, seams are tight, and the floor is free of gaps, debris, or damage. Install all required moldings, transitions, and trim pieces in accordance with their installation instructions.

## **CARE & MAINTENANCE**

Proper care and maintenance will help preserve the appearance and performance of Loose Lay Vinyl Plank flooring.

### **Routine Cleaning**

- Sweep, dust mop, or vacuum regularly to remove dirt, grit, and other abrasive materials that may scratch the floor surface.
- Use a vacuum designed for hard surface floors. Do not use vacuum attachments with rotating brush rolls unless they are specifically approved for hard surface flooring.
- Clean spills promptly to prevent staining or slipping hazards.

### **Damp Mopping**

- Damp mop as needed to remove residues using clean water and a pH-neutral cleaner specifically formulated for luxury vinyl flooring (LVT/LVP).
- Follow the cleaner manufacturer's instructions regarding dilution, application, and rinsing requirements.
- Change cleaning solution frequently to avoid redistributing dirt and residue.
- Use a damp mop only. Do not saturate the floor with water or allow standing water to remain on the surface.

### **Recommended Cleaners**

Use cleaners specifically designed for resilient flooring, luxury vinyl tile (LVT), or luxury vinyl plank (LVP), including:

- pH-neutral vinyl floor cleaners
- Neutral hard-surface floor cleaners
- Manufacturer-approved resilient flooring maintenance products

Always test unfamiliar cleaning products in an inconspicuous area prior to use.

### **Products to Avoid**

Do not use:

- Abrasive cleaners or scouring powders
- Steel wool or abrasive scrubbing pads
- Solvent-based cleaners
- Waxes, polishes, or acrylic floor finishes unless specifically approved
- Oil soaps
- Ammonia-based cleaners
- Vinegar and water cleaning solutions
- Dish soap and water cleaning solutions
- Bleach solutions at concentrations exceeding manufacturer recommendations
- Steam mops or steam cleaning equipment
- Wet mopping, wet buffing, flood cleaning, or any cleaning method that leaves standing water on the floor
- Rubber-backed mats that may discolor the flooring

These products and procedures may damage the floor surface, leave residue, alter gloss levels, or adversely affect the flooring system. Excess moisture can penetrate between planks and adversely affect the adhesive bond (where present), subfloor, and surrounding structure.

### **Furniture Protection**

- Install non-staining felt pads beneath furniture legs.
- Rolling office chairs should be equipped with soft, non-staining casters suitable for resilient flooring. A clear protective chair mat is recommended to be placed between the casters and the flooring surface.
- Avoid dragging heavy furniture or appliances across the floor. Use plywood panels, hardboard sheets, or other suitable protection when moving heavy objects.

### **Entrance Protection**

- Place walk-off mats at exterior entrances to reduce the amount of dirt, grit, and moisture tracked onto the floor.
- Use non-rubber-backed mats that will not stain or discolor the flooring.

### **Sunlight Exposure**

- Prolonged exposure to direct sunlight may result in temperature-related movement, fading, or discoloration.
- Use blinds, curtains, window tinting, or other shading devices where excessive solar exposure is present.

### **Moisture**

- Do not allow standing water to remain on the floor for extended periods.
- Promptly investigate and correct any plumbing leaks, moisture intrusion, or excessive humidity conditions.

### **Heavy Loads**

- Use appropriate floor protection when moving heavy equipment or appliances.
- Avoid concentrated point loads and excessive rolling loads unless the floor has been installed using a full glue-down method approved for such applications.

### **Post-Installation Care**

- Protect newly installed flooring from construction traffic, paint, drywall dust, and other trades.
- Follow all adhesive manufacturer's curing requirements before exposing the floor to rolling loads, furniture, or wet cleaning procedures.