

HDPC® Rigid Core Vinyl - Installation Guide

Wellmade® HDPC® is a rigid waterproof High Density Plastic Composite flooring with patent pending technology that uses no adhesive to bond the vinyl layers together and features patented Unilic®/Unipush locking system and is installed as a glueless floating floor. The interlocking planks lock together to provide a tight water resistant seam, can be installed over most floor surfaces, and is suitable for both residential and light commercial interior applications. For technical information or questions, you can email: customersupport@wellmadefloors.com, or call 866.582.0848 (US only); outside the US, call 503.582.084.

General Information

1. Flooring should be transported and stored in a neatly stacked fashion on a smooth flat surface. Be sure to inspect the run numbers/production dates on the boxes as different runs may be slightly different, once installed it becomes the installers responsibility.
2. Maintain a constant temperature between 60° and 85°F (18.33° and 29.44°C) before, during, and after installation.
3. Acclimation is ideal, but not required; flooring should be stored in the areas that it is going to be installed in for a minimal 24 hours to assure equilibrium.
4. HDPC 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 installation.
5. No additional padding is required as there is an attached padding to the back of the planks.
6. Inspect flooring for damage, defects, or shading issues before installation; claims for visual defects will not be accepted after cutting and/or installed.
7. Mix and install planks from several different cartons during installation to ensure a random appearance.
8. Leave 1/4 inch gap for expansion around the **entire** perimeter of the flooring.
9. T moldings are recommended at all doorways to prevent separation or buckling issues due to adjoining rooms.
10. Flooring should be protected from direct exposure to UV light by using shades or blinds when necessary.
11. All flooring will scratch, please be cautious when moving or transporting items across your floor as scratches are not a warranted issue.

Pre-Installation

Subfloors:

Planks can be installed over a variety of subfloor surfaces including concrete on all grade levels, wood and many other 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" in a 10 foot radius should be leveled with a Portland cement based patching compound. Wellmade Vinyl Plank is impervious 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; a moisture barrier is required, and should consist of at least a 6 mil polyethylene film with the sheets overlapping 6" and taped to prevent moisture migrating to the flooring. 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 85% 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" in a 10 foot 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 a smooth substrate and that any moisture or alkalinity issues are resolved **prior** to installing the floor. Once installed, it becomes the installer's responsibility.

NOTE: Excessive moisture may cause the growth of unhealthy mold or mildew and/or cause staining of the flooring which 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 wood underlayment's recommended by the manufacturer for use with a floating plank floor. Subfloor should be flat within 3/16" in a 10 foot 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 moisture barrier.

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:

HDPC 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:

HDPC 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 plastic more than 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 directly on top of the subfloor surface are not recommended.

Important Notes:

Before removing any existing resilient flooring or tiles, please consult with a 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 floating floor, you may want to consider having it done by a professional installer. Planks have an attached padding, so no additional padding is required or recommended. Do not install a secondary cushion/underlayment pad. Installations over a concrete slab; a moisture barrier is required and should consist of at least a 6 mil polyethylene film with the sheets overlapping 6" and taped to prevent moisture migrating to the flooring.

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 be accepted for flooring which is visibly wrong if such flooring is installed. **Installed flooring is deemed to be visibly acceptable.**

General Tips

- **Do not secure individual planks to the subfloor as it is designed to be a floating floor.**
- **Do not install cabinets on top of Vinyl Plank flooring.**
- **It is recommended to separate all rooms using T molding, for separations in larger rooms call for recommendations.**
- **Not recommended to install outdoors, in sunrooms, or in travel trailers/motorhomes.**

- **Avoid heavy rolling loads or wheelchairs with thin tires as they can damage the locking system.**

Installation

1. Remove wall base and undercut door jambs, this can be accomplished by turning a scrap piece of flooring upside down and using a “jamb saw” or equivalent to cut the jambs.
2. Level the substrate by sanding high spots or using a concrete based leveling agent to reduce any other floor deviations.
3. Sweep or vacuum the substrate to remove any debris that may transfer through the flooring after time.
4. 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.
5. 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.
6. Start with a whole plank in the left hand corner of the room with the tongue side and tongue 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 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 (Vinyl Composition Tile) cutter for end cuts only; a table saw or saber saw also works well for both end and length cuts.
7. Align and attach the end joints of the planks in the first row by laying the tongue onto the groove and tap down using your tapping block and soft hammer. Use spacers between the long edge and end of the planks next to the wall to maintain the expansion space.

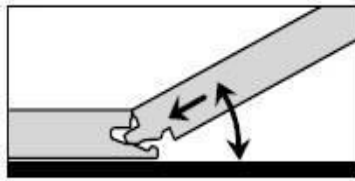


Diagram 1a

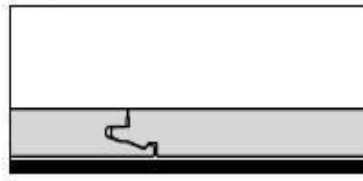


Diagram 1b

8. Start the second row using 1/3rd of a plank allowing 1/4 inch (6.35mm) expansion space at the start of the row. 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 (**diagram 1a**) and (**diagram 1b**). A tapping block may be needed for additional force. Complete the second row by inserting the length joints first, and overlapping the end joints. Tap the length joint together using light taps to fully engage the joint when flat, and tap the end joint down firmly as explained in segment 7.
9. 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.
10. To cut the last row, lay your planks on top of the existing row and use a small scrap the width of the plank and score or mark the material to show where to cut, make sure to add the additional 1/4" for expansion space. Insert normally.
11. HDPC Vinyl planks are unique in that they can also be installed using 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 or hammer is used directly against them.
12. 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 onto the groove or the groove under 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.

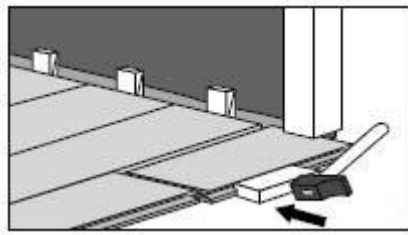


Diagram 2a

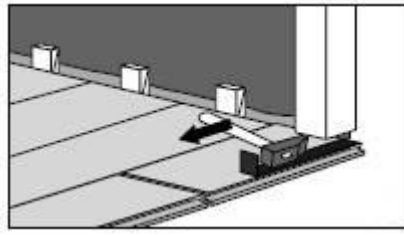


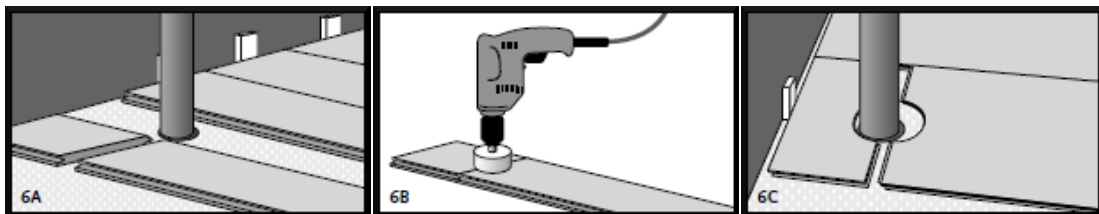
Diagram 2b

Removing planks:

When removing planks after being installed, please do not lift the ends of the planks, this will damage the locking system. The rows will need to be removed first, then the end joints will slide out of the locking system; sometimes it may need a slight tap to start sliding out of the Unipush locking system.

Bathrooms: When Wellmade Vinyl planks are installed in a bathroom 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 toilet, tub, shower, and all wet areas to help prevent surface water seepage under the floor. You can install the toilet directly on top of the vinyl planks if there are no other cabinets or fixtures installed on top of the flooring, additionally the room would need to be separated from adjoining rooms using a T molding or transition.

Pipes: In rows where there is a pipe or other vertical object through the subfloor, make sure the object lines up exactly where two boards will meet on the short ends. Take care to measure carefully before cutting so the two boards end at the middle of the object. Use a drill or hole bit that is the diameter of the pipe or object, plus 1/2 inch for expansion/contraction. Place the two short sides of the boards together, then drill the hole centered on the joint between the boards as shown. Now you can separate the two boards and install as normal. See Diagrams 6A – 6C.



Transitions, moldings, and wall base

All transition pieces should be attached to the subfloor using the track supplied with the molding, or glue down using a high grade contractor adhesive, dependent on the transition purchased. If adhered directly, be sure the transition sits firmly in the adhesive and take care not to get any adhesive on the flooring. Remove any adhesive from the surface immediately with mineral spirits and buff off any residue with a dry soft cloth. It may be necessary to place heavy weights on the transition until the adhesive dries to ensure it will lay flat. Never attach the transitions directly to the flooring.

Finishing The Job:

Inspect your work, as it will cost you more if you have to come back to do a repair later. Replace original baseboards, or install matching hardwood baseboard. Install matching transitions as needed or recommended by your dealer or installer. It is not recommended or necessary to seal this floor after installation. Protect your floor from scratches by using felt pads on chair legs or furniture feet. Plastic rollers/castors can damage your flooring; if necessary try to replace with softer rubber wheels/castors. When moving heavy items like refrigerators, use at least two sheets of 1/4" Masonite or plywood while moving (sliding the appliance from one sheet to the next) to protect the flooring against scratching and gouging.

Congratulations!

You have just installed a beautiful, and elegant vinyl Floor!