

Laminate Flooring Installation Guidelines

**ATTENTION! READ BEFORE INSTALLING.
FAILURE TO FOLLOW GUIDELINES WILL RESULT IN
PRODUCT DAMAGE AND/OR VOID ALL WARRANTIES.**

**MODERN HOME CONCEPTS, INC. ALSO HONORS THE
INSTALLATION GUIDELINES SET FORTH BY THE NFWA.
THESE ARE INDUSTRY STANDARDS AND ARE
AVAILABLE BY CALLING 1-800-422-4556.**

INSPECT FLOORING MATERIALS PRIOR TO INSTALLATION

This guide is organized into three sections: Preparation, Installation and Cleaning instructions. Before installation any concerns about the milling or grading of this product must be directed to and resolved with the manufacturer. After the product is installed, the customer assumes all responsibility. The manufacturer will not be liable for any costs of product or replacement if issues are not resolved prior to installation.

Be sure you have received the flooring that you ordered before starting the installation. It is always a good idea to store one end label together with your receipt.

More information about Modern Home Concepts Laminate Flooring can be found on our website at www.ModernHomeConcepts.com.

Preparation

- 1. Acclimation:** After receiving the flooring it should be acclimated, unopened, prior to installation. We recommend storing it at normal room temperature (minimum 58°F) and a relative humidity of 30% – 75% for a **minimum of 48 hours** prior to installation.
2. Our laminate flooring must be installed on a solid, self-supporting subfloor, wood flooring, concrete flooring.
3. The entire subfloor must be carefully checked for any unevenness. Using a 1 meter straight edge, make sure that there are no low spots deeper than 1/4 inch. Also make sure that there are no "steps" or "peaks" higher than 1/8 inch within a 12 foot radius. Sand or grind peaks, and use a self-leveling compound as needed to achieve the correct flatness. Ask your dealer for advice.
4. Carefully vacuum the entire surface. To avoid the risk of squeaking, secure any loose particleboard, OSB, fiberboard, timber planks, etc. with screws.
5. Always cover the subfloor with 2 mm – 3 mm PE-foam before installing the laminate flooring.
6. Do not install the floor in a typical wet room or in rooms with a floor drain such as bathrooms or laundry rooms.
7. Our laminate flooring is designed to be installed as a floating floor to allow natural expansion and contraction with changes in temperature and humidity. Therefore, it must **never be fastened to the subfloor** in a way that prevents movement, e.g. by using nails or screws, or by gluing.
8. Very heavy loads may prevent the installed floor from moving as temperature and humidity change. Heavy equipment such as a kitchen island with a ceramic or marble worktop, heavy storage shelves, etc. should not be placed directly on the floor.
9. A vapor barrier must be used when installing our laminate flooring on mineral subfloors such as concrete, leveling compound, etc. Always use a 6 mm PE-film as a minimum for all mineral subfloors, regardless of the story you are installing on or the age of the building.
10. Our laminate flooring is not suitable for use together with underfloor heating systems. This will cause damage to the floor that will not be covered by Modern Home Concepts' warranty.
11. Because our flooring is made from organic materials, your floor will naturally expand and contract as the temperature and relative humidity change. The ideal indoor environment is 40% – 60% RH, which results in almost no movement whatsoever. Our laminate flooring is known to work very well in the range of 30% – 75% RH provided some important rules are followed during installation. When installing in a dry climate, leave an expansion gap of

3/16 inch between the edge of the floor and any walls, thresholds, pipes or fixed objects. When installing in a humid climate or area, leave a gap of at least 3/8 inch. The gap is to ensure that the floor may move as expected from season to season, and is not to be filled with any sealant, silicon or other adhesive. Never fasten the floor with screws, nails, glue or in any other way.

12. Due to its organic content, our laminate flooring will naturally expand and contract. The amount of movement for an installed floor will be about the same in **both directions**. The recommended maximum floor size is 30 ft. x 30 ft. in a rectangular room before you will need to install transition molding.
13. If the area to be covered is larger than the recommended 30 ft. x 30 ft., or if the room has angles or similar features, transition molding will be required. When using transition molding, it is important to leave an expansion gap between the metal track and the edge of the floor planks. A 3/16 inch gap on each side of the track is recommended for a dry climate, and 3/8 inch for a humid climate. Never glue the molding to the flooring.

Installation

Modern Home Concepts Laminate Flooring is easy to install and requires no expensive specialty tools. In addition to a few common DIY tools (folding rule, pencil, hammer, handsaw or jigsaw, square and possibly a power drill), you only need a tapping block, pull bar and spacers.

Our laminate flooring has a very durable and hard-wearing surface that can cause considerable wear on cutting tools. To avoid chipping, turn each plank's decorative surface face up when using a hand saw, and face down when using a jigsaw.

1. Sometimes, planks can get damaged during transportation or when boxes are opened. To avoid installing a plank with a damaged surface, edge or click joint, carefully inspect each plank before beginning installation.
2. Carefully measure the length and the width of the room so that you can plan the precise layout for achieving a balanced appearance. This is to ensure that you won't end up with the last row being too narrow. Plan to start at the wall with the most doors or openings, as it is always easier

to end at a wall with no doors.

Generally, you should measure the width of the room and divide that by the width of the exposed face of the plank. If the last row will be less than 40 mm wide, installation will be easier if you cut the width of the first row of planks instead.

Likewise, divide the length of the room by the length of the exposed face of the plank. If the last plank will end up being very short, we recommend cutting several inches off the first plank to simplify installation. You should also stagger the end joints by 1/2 or 1/3 the plank length, or at least 12 inches.

3. If the project requires any sound-blocking underlayment and/or moisture protection, now is the time to install it. When that is done, begin installing your laminate flooring by starting at first row planks to follow the contour of the wall, or to avoid the last row from being too narrow, make sure that the part of the plank you remove is along the side with the tongue. When cutting, avoid chipping by turning the decorative surface face up when using a handsaw, and face down when using a jigsaw.
4. **It is imperative the first few rows be straight.** After preparing the first plank, place it on the floor with the cut edge facing the starting wall, and the groove facing into the room. Use spacers along both the short and long sides to create the recommended expansion gap between the walls and the plank. Connect the next plank by pushing it down at the end joint. Make sure the planks are perfectly aligned and insert the necessary spacers between the plank and wall before continuing with the next plank.
5. Continue installing and aligning all the planks in the first row. You will need to cut the last plank to the required length, leaving the recommended space for expansion at the end. Save the leftover section of plank for possibly starting the second row. Remember to insert spacers between the walls and planks.
6. Begin the second row with a shortened plank to stagger the end joints by at least 8 inches. We recommend staggering by either 1/3 or 1/2 plank length depending on the format. Usually you can use the cut piece left over from the first row. If this provides too short an overlap, you can cut it to the appropriate length, or save it to start another row, and cut a new plank instead.

7. **To disassemble an end joint, never lift it up.** Lifting will damage the click mechanism. The only safe way to disassemble planks at the end joint is to slide them apart horizontally. Never hit the laminate board directly. Instead, use a tapping block & rubber mallet.

8. The easiest way to connect planks at the long side joint is simply to place the connecting plank flat on the floor and slide it toward the installed row until the tongue meets the groove.

Then lift the plank up to an angle of about 30 degrees and push the tongue into the groove. Wiggle the plank up and down a bit while pushing it into the groove and down towards the subfloor. You will hear a slight click. Carefully check the tightness of the joint. If necessary, secure the joint by **gently** tapping it with the tapping block.

9. **To disassemble a plank, never lift at the end joint, as this will destroy the joint.** First lift and disconnect the entire row (as one piece) from the previous row at the long side joint. Then slide each plank apart at the end joint horizontally.

10. To connect the end joint, place the connecting plank flat on the floor, slide the long joint (tongue) towards the groove of the installed row, and lift so that the tongue enters the groove. Hold the plank at an angle of about 30 degrees from the floor and gently slide it to the left until it meets the end of the previous plank.

Then lightly wiggle the plank up and down while gently pushing it into the groove of the installed row and down towards the subfloor. You must always check the tightness and evenness from plank to plank. Just press your thumb on the end of the most recently installed plank and push down to secure a perfect connection.

11. For a nice finish where the new flooring meets a threshold, we recommend undercutting the door frame & simply sliding the plank under the frame when installing the floor.

Normally planks are installed parallel to the room's longest walls. If one of these has doorways, starting from this wall will make installation easier.

12. For the final row, cut the planks to the proper width. Remember to leave the recommended expansion space and making any necessary adjustments to follow the contour of the wall. If there is a doorway in this wall, slide the plank underneath the undercut door frame first, then

slide it towards the previously installed plank. Push down on the end joint to lock the ends of the planks together.

To lock the long side of the plank to the previous row, use a pull bar. Position the bar between the wall and the plank, and then carefully tap the bar as shown while moving it sideways along the length of the plank.

13. To install flooring around pipes, carefully measure and mark the plank with the exact center point for each pipe. Drill a hole at each of the marked points that is equivalent to the diameter of the pipe + 1/4 inch.

- **If located on the long side of the plank**, make a 45 degree cut from each hole to the edge of the plank and then cut between the holes as shown.
- **If located at the end of the plank**, make a straight cut across the plank intersecting the centre of the holes.

Install the plank. Then, using regular glue along the cut edges of the piece you cut out, glue the piece to the plank where it belongs. Make sure no glue comes between the cut piece and the subfloor. The gaps around the pipes are to ensure that the floor may move as expected from season to season, and should not be filled with any sealant, silicon or other adhesive.

14. Inspect the surface of the installed floor, remove all spacers and install wall baseboards (or base shoe) to cover the gap between the floor & wall.

If laminate flooring is installed on a stairway, urethane-base wood floor adhesive should be used. Follow the adhesive manufacturer's instructions.

Cleaning

Vacuum clean (without the rotating brush betting bar), dry mop, or sweep the floor to remove dirt and dust. Occasionally wipe the floor with microfiber mop cloth moistened with an appropriate cleaning solution. Do NOT use water to clean laminate floor. ("BONA" hard surface cleaner is recommended.)

We also recommend using protective felt pads under furniture legs to avoid scratching the surface.