



# FreeFit Installation / Maintenance Manual

## What makes FreeFit so unique & revolutionary?

No adhesives or glue is necessary. **FreeFit MUST be installed tight against the perimeter walls.** If this cannot be accomplished, GECKO Tape (or other suitable DS / PS Tape) or a suitable high quality LVT Adhesive must be used to lock the perimeter planks / tiles into place. Because of FreeFit's flexibility the planks or tiles can be installed over existing floors such as natural wood, concrete, vinyl, linoleum, and even ceramic. FreeFit looks and feels like wood, yet it is water resistant so it can be installed in moisture prone areas that traditionally have been "off limits" for traditional wood flooring and laminate products, like basements and bathrooms. Must refer to "Subfloor Preparation" on the following page for specific instructions.

Each FreeFit plank secures itself directly to your sub-floor, using the revolutionary, patent pending, FreeFit design. It's free floating. To cut a plank, simply score, snap and back cut.

No underlayment is necessary and FreeFit is quiet and warm under foot. FreeFit is guaranteed not to delaminate.

FreeFit flooring is produced to meet precise manufacturing standards, enabling FreeFit to offer a Lifetime Residential and 15 Year Commercial Warranty. Under normal circumstances, FreeFit's patented backing technology allows FreeFit to be installed without mechanical locking mechanisms or glue. As outlined in our FreeFit Instruction / Maintenance Manual and FreeFit Warranty, equip swivel type office chairs and other rolling furniture with broad surface non-staining casters at least 2" in diameter.

Applications where FreeFit will be in contact with abnormal loads, including without limitation heavy loads, i.e. pianos, Hill Rom Beds, etc, or where the caster wheels are less than 2" in diameter, or where the casters are not able to properly disperse the dynamic load sufficiently, the use of an approved adhesive may be required to allow FreeFit to meet these unique circumstances. Suitable adhesive can be Double Sided / Pressure Sensitive Tape such as Gecko Tape, a quality PSA (Pressure Sensitive Adhesive) specifically formulated for use with LVT, or Spray Adhesives designed for use with LVT flooring. When in doubt test the wheels on the FreeFit floor, or to ensure there will be no issues, utilize one of the approved adhesive applications noted above.

## **FreeFit Plank Installation Instructions:**

1. Tools needed: Utility knife & straight edge

2. Material Needed: Measure the length & width of your room. If the room has alcoves or offsets, measure these separately. This will give you the square footage of the room. Have a minimum of 10% extra to cover mistakes, trimming and for future needs and or replacement.

Most installations require about 10% overage. However this can vary depending upon the room size and layout.

Condition FreeFit Prior to installation: FreeFit must be stored at room temperature of at least 65 degrees Fahrenheit for 24 to 48 hours before installation. Don't remove planks from carton but for best results when possible cut the top of the carton and remove Top, leave the Tile or plank in place in the box.

3. In order to prevent indentations and scratches, provide glass, plastic or other non-staining cups, with smooth flat under surfaces not less than 2" in width for the legs of heavy furniture or appliances. Equip swiveled-type office chairs and other rolling furniture with broad surface non-staining castors at least 2" in diameter. Remove small diameter buttons from the legs of straight chairs and replace with smooth metal glides or felt pads that have bearing surfaces not less than 1" in diameter. Castors less than 2" in diameter are not suitable for use with heavy rolling loads. The proper displacement of weight is essential in eliminating the potential of the FreeFit Floor to buckle under the weight of a rolling load. The warmer the temperature, the more flexible the flooring will become. A heavy weight rolled across a warm floor will react differently than a heavy weight rolled across a cool floor. While a 1.75" diameter castor is only slightly smaller in diameter than a 2" caster, this .25" difference equates to 12.5%. A larger wheel has a larger 'footprint' on the floor. The difference between a castor with a footprint measuring 1/16" wide and one measuring 3/32" wide is only 1/32", however this slightly larger wheel reduces the static load on the floor by 33.3%. The taller and / or wider a castor wheel is, the greater the dispersion of weight will be on the floor.

**When installing tiles and planks you should work out of a minimum of 3 boxes and mix planks or tiles when installing.**

### **Subfloor Preparation:**

Virtually no surface preparation is needed. FreeFit can be installed over most existing floors including wood, vinyl, linoleum, concrete and even ceramic tile. Remove any dirt and grit by sweeping or vacuum. If the subfloor allows damp mopping, it is recommended to do that as well.

**WHILE FreeFit IS SUITABLE FOR SITUATIONS WHERE MANY OTHER TYPES OF FLOORING SHOULD NOT BE USED, CERTAIN PRECAUTIONS SHOULD BE OBSERVED FOR EVEN THIS VERY FORGIVING FLOORING PRODUCT.**

## **All subfloors must be sound, solid and have little flexibility**

### **Approved subfloors**

**Concrete:** Any large cracks or voids must be filled with a cementitious patching compound. Concrete should be level within 1/8" in 10 FT.

**Lightweight concretes** are approved

**Please Note:** As we state in all our sales literature, FreeFit is Water Resistant and will withstand standing water. However this does not mean that FreeFit is designed to be exposed to water, or be underwater, for extended periods of time. Moisture intrusion is a totally different situation that can arise with new or old concrete that exhibits very high levels of hydrostatic pressure in combination with very high levels of alkalinity. This combination provides a substance that is highly corrosive. No floor covering, including FreeFit, can withstand the long-term corrosive nature of this chemical. If testing determines that the level of Hydrostatic pressure exceeds 8 pounds using the Calcium chloride test and / or a P.H. test indicates alkalinity levels in excess of 9, steps must be taken to separate FreeFit from the source of the corrosive effect of this chemical. Under these circumstances, there are products on the market that can be use to seal the concrete. This sealer must guarantee to keep the concrete slab under 8 lbs of moisture pressure.

**Wood subfloors** must be sturdy, flat, and have little flexibility.

**OSB is approved.** It must be sturdy, flat, and have little flexibility

**All other subfloors**, i.e. particleboard, chipboard, wafer board, etc. must be sturdy, flat, and have little flexibility.

**Quarry tile, terrazzo, and ceramic tile:** Use caution with highly embossed tile. This type of tile plus grout joints should be filled with a high quality cementitious patching product. FreeFit is water / moisture resistant, and does not support mold or mildew. However, excessive moisture in the subfloor can cause mold, mildew, and other moisture related issues like the trapping of moisture emissions under FreeFit. This will cause an adverse affect on existing glue down substrates causing it to release. Example: Parquet and Strip Wood Flooring which can also swell and buckle.

**Radiant Heat:** Subfloors should be operating for at least 3 weeks prior to installation to drive out moisture and calibrate temperature settings. All radiant heat floors should be turned off 3 days prior to installation. Maximum operating temperature should never exceed 85°F. Radiant heat components must be a minimum of 1/2" separated from FreeFit. This is the only type of radiant heat that is approved.

**Temperature:** The room temperature and the sub floor temperature must be between 65° and 85 ° Fahrenheit. Maintain proper temperature for 48 hours before and after installation. The building's heating and air-conditioning system should be turned on at least one week before installation. Failure to follow these guidelines may result in an installation failure. FreeFit is an interior product only, and must be installed in a temperature controlled environment, maintained between 65 and 85 degrees F. Please keep in mind a concrete floor

can be up to ten degrees colder than the actual room temperature.

### **Existing Resilient Floors:**

Existing resilient tile and sheet vinyl floors must be in good condition and thoroughly bonded to the structural floor. The exception is that any tile or sheet that is of a soft cushion construction must be removed.

*Note: A layer of resilient or soft underlayment like lauan may compromise the inherent strength of FreeFit.* Do not install over more than one layer of existing flooring, to prevent possible indentation.

If laying FreeFit over existing ceramic tile, you must skim coat the grout lines with a floor leveler. If you install FreeFit over an existing floor that has an embossing or grout line on it, we recommend you skim coat with a floor leveler. Check for any dips or humps in the subfloor that can create a void or peak underneath the floor, maintaining the acceptable 1/8" in 10' tolerance. If found, please fill in and level the subfloor with embossing leveler. For high spots, grind down the peak or simply knock them off with a hammer and chisel and fill in the holes.

FreeFit is water resistant so it can be installed directly over concrete floors in the basement. If you have asbestos tiles and don't want to pay for an expensive asbestos abatement job, FreeFit is the perfect answer. Any loose or damaged tiles should be patched prior to installing FreeFit over the asbestos floor. Never sand asbestos floors from any floor manufacturer, if you think the floor may have asbestos.

We recommend the following actions in the room you are installing FreeFit in: Beware of any sheet rock taping and sanding, painting, wall prep, finishes, and other activities that produce lots of dust. Cover FreeFit with a drop cloth should any of the above procedures take place after installation.

### **Installing:**

Before laying out the floor, check the wall you are starting from and make sure it is square to the opposite wall. Simply measure the room from opposite ends of the wall to the far wall. If the measurements are different you can make adjustments on the first row of FreeFit by scribing the plank on the edge.

1. Lay a row of planks first to determine if you need to adjust the length of the first plank to avoid a small piece of less than 12" on the opposite wall from where you started.

2. Installation should start in a corner and proceed from the wall. **FreeFit MUST be installed tight against the perimeter walls.** If this cannot be accomplished, GECKO Tape (or other suitable DS / PS Tape) or a suitable high quality LVT Adhesive must be used to lock the perimeter planks / tiles into place.

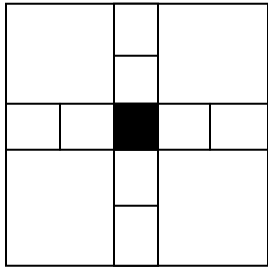
3. One of the great attributes of FreeFit, it's forgiving. If your seam appears not to be tight, you can pull up the planks and reposition them.

4. When installing the plank, it is strongly recommended to stagger the rows so that the short edge (6") seams are not in a straight uniform line. We recommend the staggered random method. However you may want to try other "patterns" of planks to suit your taste.
5. Start the second row with the plank cut at about 2/3 length (2 feet). Simply measure and mark the plank, then using a straight edge and utility knife, simply score the plank, snap and back cut. FreeFit also recommends the use of Guillotine, Bullet Tool and VCT cutters.
6. Again, get one corner of the plank started tightly against the other.
7. Start the third row with the plank cut at 1/3 of a length (1 foot). Again the remaining piece can be used at the opposite end of the row, if the layout of the room permits
8. Continue this pattern for the remainder of the rows to be installed. Always place the cut end of the first plank against the wall.
9. Fitting around irregular objects, no problem. Simply make a pattern out of heavy paper to fit around pipes or irregular objects. Place the pattern upon the plank and trace. Cut along trace lines using a utility knife or heavy duty scissors, and lay plank.

**FreeFit Tile Installation Instructions:** Divide the room into equal quadrants using chalk lines. Lay a row of tiles and from the center line to the side wall determine the space left for the borders tiles adjust the chalk lines to achieve a balance layout with equal size borders all around. (This can readily be figured out from the room dimensions without putting down the tiles if desired.) Once the Border tiles are determined cut tile down to size. Start in corner of room with border tiles and lay down a row to end of wall. Then lay adjoining row creating a 90 degree angle. Make sure by using a plum line or laser gun that both rows are completely straight and square. Use GECKO Tape (or other suitable DS / PS Tape) or a suitable high quality LVT Adhesive to keep both rows in place **if a tight fit can not be achieved**. If the wall is uneven, adjustments can be made by scribing the boarder tiles. Then proceed in laying tiles in a staircase fashion. See the figure below (B-Border Tiles, Numbers is sequence to lay tile.)

B	B	B	B	B
B	1	3	6	10
B	2	5	9	13
B	4	8	12	15
B	7	11	14	16

FreeFit Tile installation can also begin in the center of the room. Start in the middle of the room & divide the room into 4 quadrants. Secure the starter row with **GECKO Tape (or other suitable DS / PS Tape) or a suitable high quality LVT Adhesive** and proceed as with normal installation.



## **Replacement of Plank or Tile**

Be sure to keep some spare **FreeFit** planks or tiles in case there is an unforeseen need for replacement. If you need to replace a plank of **FreeFit** **just pull up the damaged plank or tile and put a new one in it's place!**

Please follow same acclimation and subfloor conditions, and information listed for FreeFit Plank for the Tile.

## **GENERAL MAINTENANCE**

Although FreeFit floors are durable, all floor coverings require some care to look their best and many problems can be prevented before they occur. The type and frequency of traffic on your floor will determine the frequency of maintenance needed. The type of floor and even the color will also have some bearing on how much care may be necessary. For example, solid color floors will visually show scuffs, scratches, dirt and general wear to a greater degree than multi-colors of chips or patterns. Of course, white or light colors will visually show staining to a greater degree than darker colors. For this reason, solid color and white floors should receive special attention in regard to preventative maintenance and amount of care provided. Good judgment when choosing the type and style of floor will help prevent maintenance problems before the floor is even installed! Here are the proper steps for maintaining your FreeFit floor:

1. In order to prevent indentations and scratches, provide glass, plastic or other non-staining cups, with smooth flat under surfaces not less than 2" in width for the legs of heavy furniture or appliances. Equip swiveled-type office chairs and other rolling furniture with broad surface non-staining castors at least 2" in diameter. Remove small diameter buttons from the legs of straight chairs and replace with smooth metal glides or felt pads that have bearing surfaces not less than 1" in diameter. Castors less than 2" in diameter are not suitable for use with heavy rolling loads. The proper displacement of weight is essential in eliminating the potential of the FreeFit Floor to buckle under the weight of a rolling load. The warmer the temperature, the more flexible the flooring will become. A heavy weight rolled across a warm floor will react differently than a heavy weight rolled across a cool floor. While a 1.75" diameter castor is only slightly smaller in diameter than a 2" castor, this .25" difference equates to 12.5%. A larger wheel has a larger 'footprint' on the floor. The difference between a castor measuring 1/16" wide and one measuring 3/32" wide is only 1/32", however this slightly larger wheel reduces the static load on the floor by 33.3%. The taller and / or wider a castor wheel is, the

greater the dispersion of weight will be on the floor.

2. Applications where FreeFit will be in contact with abnormal loads, including without limitation heavy loads, i.e. pianos, Hill Rom Beds, etc, or where the caster wheels are less than 2" in diameter, or where the casters are not able to properly disperse the dynamic load sufficiently, the use of an approved adhesive may be required to allow FreeFit to meet these unique circumstances. Suitable adhesive can be Double Sided / Pressure Sensitive Tape such as Gecko Tape, a quality PSA (Pressure Sensitive Adhesive) specifically formulated for use with LVT, or Spray Adhesives designed for use with LVT flooring. When in doubt test the wheels on the FreeFit floor, or to ensure there will be no issues, utilize one of the approved adhesive applications noted above.

3. Protect your floor against burns. Burns from the glowing end of a cigarette, matches, or other extremely hot items can damage FreeFit floors.

4. Do not flood floor or subject to frequent standing water. Problems associated with excessive moisture can affect the job site and should be addressed. FreeFit plank should not be used as a Moisture Reduction System.

5. Protect your floor from tracked-in-dirt and grit particles by using mats at all outside entrances. Take time to remove any embedded grit particles from shoe soles before entering the room. Avoid the use of rubber-backed mats, as certain rubber compounds can permanently stain vinyl. Avoid tracking in tar or asphalt from driveways, as this can also discolor vinyl. Avoid high heels on your floor. They can cause permanent damage. Do not use vinegar, one-step cleaner/polishes or oil soaps on FreeFit products.

6. All FreeFit floors have a good resistance to stains. They are not affected by most common household spills, however, any spill should be cleaned up immediately. The longer the spilled materials are left on the floor, the greater the risk of permanently staining the floor.

7. Avoid exposure to direct sunlight for prolonged periods. During peak sunlight hours, the use of the drapes or blinds is recommended. Prolonged direct sunlight can result in discoloration, and excessive temperatures might cause tile expansion.

8. Do not use vinegar as a cleaning agent on FreeFit vinyl Products.

## **MAINTENANCE FOR FreeFit COMMERCIAL FLOORS**

- The type frequency of traffic on your FreeFit floor will determine the frequency of maintenance needed.
- The type of floor, and even the color, will have some bearing on how much care may be necessary.
- Regular adherence to an effective maintenance program should include thorough dirt and grit regulation and prompt removal of spills and stains protection of the floor surface

The most effective part of any floor maintenance program is the simplest: sweep, dust mop or vacuum FreeFit flooring DAILY, or more frequently if needed.

### **Initial Maintenance Upon Completion of the Installation:**

1. Sweep or vacuum thoroughly and remove any adhesive residue from surface. Mineral Spirits is fine for this.
2. Do not wash the floor for at least 24 hours after installation. Lightly damp mop. Remove any scuffs and excessive soil by careful scrubbing. Certain types of rubber heel marks may be removed by rubbing with a cloth dampened in mineral spirits.

### **Routine Commercial Maintenance:**

1. FreeFit solid vinyl plank has excellent durability and a history of performing well in heavy commercial installations as long as a sound maintenance program is followed. Light daily sweeping, dust mopping or vacuuming will prevent dirt and grit particles from being ground into the surface of the tile. Non-rubber, walk off mats should be used to control the amount of dirt and grit reaching the floor. The mats should be as wide as the doorway and thick enough to trap dirt. Frequent light mopping will prevent the floor from becoming heavily soiled and will remove most spills and stains. The amount and type of traffic will dictate the frequency of washing. Wash the floor by damp mopping or use an Auto-Scrubbing machine.
2. If the floor receives hard use and becomes extremely dirty, as in heavily used commercial installations, Floor scrubbing with a 175-300 RPM floor Buffer will be necessary with a red scrubbing-type (polyester or nylon) pad. Mop the floor with vinyl flooring cleaner and work the solution over the floor using the buffer and the scrubbing pad. After this has been done, remove the dirty residue by damp mopping with a clean bucket of vinyl flooring cleaner following instructions on bottle. Let floor dry, you will then see a light film residue, take low speed buffer and a White polishing pad and buff until the film is removed. Please Note: Do not use a buffer that is more than 300 RPM under any circumstances.

### **Stain Removal:**

To remove stubborn spots or stains from FreeFit Luxury Vinyl floors, always begin with mild cleaners such as vinyl flooring cleaner. If this fails to remove stain, use mineral spirits. Do not use harsh solvents such as acetone or lacquer thinner, as these can permanently soften the vinyl surface. For extreme staining (paints, permanent markers, dyes) try applying fingernail polish remover containing acetone (not straight acetone) applied to a soft cloth and rubbing. Any damage resulting from use of pure solvents IS NOT covered by warranty. Always test stronger cleaning agents on sample pieces or in unnoticeable areas first.