



Glue-less Laminate Installation Instructions

Typical Tools Required

Pull Bar, Tapping Block, 1/4" Wall Spacers, Tape Measure, Utility Knife, Broom, Electric Saw (carbide blade), 6 foot straight edge, Hammer, Pencil, Eye and Ear Protection.

1. PREPARATION

- Glue-less Laminate can be installed directly over most existing floor coverings, except for carpet. Wood flooring glued to concrete must be removed before installation.
- Cartons of flooring must lay flat, unopened, in the room being installed for a minimum of 48 hours before installation. Conditions of 65° F to 85° F and 45% to 65% Relative Humidity should be maintained during the acclimation and installation periods. Cartons should be stacked no more than 3 high with 4" of airflow around them and away from any heating/cooling ducts or direct sunlight.
- Fill any low spots in the subfloor greater than 1/8" in 6 feet with a Portland cement leveling compound. Check this by using a 6' straight edge. Remove any high spots by sanding or grinding.
- Remove any existing floor molding (if any) except for the wall baseboards. (Unless you plan to replace with a new wall base.)
- Undercut doorframes. Lay a loose plank upside down on top of the underlayment against the frame. This will be your guide for proper height to allow installed planks to float under it. Saw the bottom of the doorjamb case molding back to the wall studs, so that 1/4" expansion gap is maintained while laminate is fitted under doorjamb case molding.
- Sweep the subfloor clean.
- Before installing over concrete, concrete covered with existing ceramic, marble, stone, vinyl tile, or linoleum - Test floor for excessive moisture. To do so, cut 3' x 3' squares of polyethylene plastic (one for every 200 sq. ft. of floor space). Spread around different areas of the subfloor for a more accurate evaluation.

Tape all edges down firmly sealing them directly to the existing subfloor. Leave down for 24 to 48 hours; if moisture forms under the plastic or if the cement

darkens, perform a Calcium Chloride Moisture Emissions test. The maximum allowable reading is 5 lbs./1000 square feet/24 hours.

INSTALLING UNDERLAYMENTS

- Note: When installing products with pre-attached acoustical underlayment on a concrete subfloor, use minimum 6-mil polyethylene (plastic) sheeting as a vapor barrier.

Roll out the plastic, overlapping the seam area 6 to 8 inches, and tape the seams with a clear plastic sealing tape. When installing products with pre-attached acoustical underlayment over a wood subfloor, no additional plastic vapor barrier should be installed.

- On Wood Floors — Use any GTP Approved underlayments. DO NOT tape seams together when going over wood or organic subfloor.
- On Concrete Floors — Use 2-in-1 or SilentStep™ 3-in-1 underlayments. 2-in-1 should be rolled out overlapping the poly flap only, SilentStep 3-in-1 should be rolled out with the seams pulled together; both should go up the wall at least 2" when used over concrete. Tape underlayment seams using a 2" clear packaging sealing tape. If wood flooring is adhered over concrete, IT MUST BE REMOVED before installing Laminate Flooring.
- Unroll one width of underlayment along the longest wall. All work is done from left to right. Planks should run lengthwise against the longest wall, and if possible, parallel to incoming sunlight.
- Rooms larger than 26 x 40 feet (1,040 sq. ft) require T-molding for expansion. Floor spans should not exceed 35' in any direction.

2. START OF INSTALLATION

- The width of the first row of planks should be approximately the same width as the last row. This may require cutting the first row plank to a smaller width. Measure across the room (inches) and divide by the width of a plank to see how many full width planks will be used and what size width will be needed for the last row. The last row should never be less than 2" in width.
- Use 1/4" spacers to maintain the proper expansion gap around the entire perimeter of the floor. Quarter Round molding will cover this expansion gap. IMPORTANT: this 1/4" gap must be maintained around cabinets, pipes, toilet flanges and any other obstacle in floor.
- INSPECT EACH BOARD CAREFULLY FOR DAMAGE PRIOR TO INSTALLING IT. FAILURE TO DO SO MAY VOID YOUR WARRANTY.

- Do not install a damaged plank. If you have any concern about the product fit or finish, call GTP International, Ltd. at 1-800-230-1000 for information.
- Check groove on plank to make sure it is clean or free of debris.
- To lock planks together, insert tongue into the groove at a slight angle, when top edges meet, rotate downward. Planks will click together for a tight fit. If there are any gaps, reconnect the planks. Connect end edges first, then the longer side edges of the planks.
- Start by building a 2-row rack. To do this, start with 4 planks. Plank 1 should be full length, plank 2 should be cut to 1/3 its original length (approximately 16"). This will give the proper amount of stagger to the end joints and thereby make your floor more secure. This 2 row rack can be built either directly against the start wall and the spacers, or away from the wall so that you can kneel on one row and pull the second row toward you.
- Connect plank 2 to plank 1 by inserting edge tongue into edge groove at a slight angle. When top laminate surfaces touch, rotate downward.
- Connect plank 3 to plank 1 by inserting end tongue into end groove, keeping the edges perfectly aligned. When the top laminate surfaces touch, rotate downward.
- Connect plank 4 to planks 2 and 3 by first joining the ends of 4 to 2. To do this, leave a gap where the tongue and groove of planks 3 and 4 are. Once the ends are connected, place a hand under the locked ends, raise the planks slightly upwards (1"-2"). This angle will now allow you to slide the tongue of plank 4 into the groove of plank 3 (the end joint will slide down into place without releasing) when top laminate edges meet, rotate both planks (4 and 2) downward. Use this method throughout the remainder of the floor.
- Continue to build these 2 rows until you reach the adjoining wall, leaving your 1/4" expansion space. When door molding or other obstruction won't allow the needed space to rotate the plank downward, align tongue to groove and use pull bar to tap the tongue into the groove until top laminate edges meet.
- If you built these rows away from the starting wall, go ahead and push them into position now. Be sure to place 1/4" spacers at both ends of each row, and 2' intervals along the start wall.
- If the starting wall is uneven, you can scribe the contour of the wall onto the first row of planks. Use a 2" square block and a pencil and follow the contour. Disassemble, cut at line and reassemble. To disassemble, kneel on row 1 and carefully raise the edge of row 2 rotating upwards and removing planks in the opposite direction from which you installed them.

- Begin the third row with a plank cut to 2/3 its original length (approximately 32"). This could be from one of the cut planks from row 1 or 2.

3. REMAINDER OF FLOOR

- Repeat the process of using random length start planks (minimum of 16") to ensure a more natural look.
- Randomly pull planks from 3 cartons at a time to ensure random appearance. Use cut pieces from the end of each row as starting planks. Always stagger end joints a minimum of 12"; make random so as not to show a repeating pattern.
- All joints should be a tight fit with no gaps. Stop and reconnect if a joint is not tight or if all edges are not even with adjacent planks. These planks can be engaged and disengaged several times if needed to help make a correct installation. Use a tap block if necessary.
- When cutting the last row, place a full row of planks directly on top of the last row installed planks (keeping the tongue in the same direction as the installed planks). Use the full width of scrap pieces of plank, insert a 1/4" spacer between wall and scrap piece of plank. Place a pencil next to the edge and trace a line down the planks following the contour of the wall. Cut planks on the pencil line and connect last row. If space won't allow the downward rotation, lay the plank flat to underlayment and use pull bar and hammer to tap into place, leaving no gaps.

4. MOLDING AND TRANSITIONS INSTALLATION

- A complete line of trims and transition pieces are offered to finish your floor, including T-Molding, Reducers, End Molding/Carpet Transitions, Wallbase, Quarter Round and Stairnosing.
- The transition pieces, (excluding Quarter Round and Wallbase) can be easily secured in place with screws, nails or glued with silicon adhesive directly to the subfloor.
- T-Molding is used when two level flooring surfaces meet, like in a doorway or a narrow archway. In a doorway, center the T-Molding under the space that the closed door occupies. Likewise, in an archway, the T-Molding should be centered. Install the T-Molding by gluing, screwing or nailing it 1/4" from the edge of each adjoining flooring surface (equals about 11/8").
- When laminate flooring meets a flooring surface that is lower, use a Reducer Strip. Leave 1/2" space between the finished floor and the front edge of the reducer. Install it by gluing, screwing or nailing it 1/4" from the edge of the flooring.

- The End Molding/Carpet Transition works great when finishing the floor in areas that meet vertical objects and is also ideal for transitioning between your laminate flooring and carpet. To finish the flooring in areas that meet vertical objects like exterior doors, sliding glass doors, tubs or shower basins, raised hearths or low sills, leave a 1" space between the floor and the vertical object. Install it by gluing, screwing or nailing it 1/4" from the flooring
- When transitioning from laminate flooring to carpet, leave a 1" space between the finished floor and the front edge of the carpet. Install it by gluing or nailing it 1/4" from the edge of the flooring. Finish the carpet by tucking it between the molding and the tack strip.
- Note: In heavy traffic areas, use screw-type fasteners or nails to permanently secure the molding.
- The Stairnosing is used to finish stair treads and risers, which have been fully adhered to the floor using a GTP approved multipurpose flooring adhesive. Stop the flooring about 1 1/2" from the steps edge. Install it by gluing, screwing or nailing it 3/4" from the edge of the stair tread. Apply construction grade adhesive to the Stairnosing where the molding makes contact with the stair tread. You must use either screw-type fasteners or nails through the face of the Stairnose to permanently secure it. Place screws/nails into the Stairnose 2" from the end and 6" to 8" apart. (Note: riser piece should be in place under Stairnosing before screws or nails are used).
- To finish the perimeter of the room where the expansion space was left for the seasonal expansion and contraction of the flooring, remove spacers and install Wallbase and/or Quarter Round. Both of these molding are installed by nailing them directly into the wall. Never allow nails or screws in the Wallbase or Quarter Round to enter into the laminate flooring or the expansion zone around the flooring perimeter, as it will prevent proper expansion and contraction of the flooring. You must pre-drill nail holes in both types of wall moldings before nailing, to eliminate any splitting. Be sure to nail the Quarter Round into the wall or Wallbase and not into the flooring as it will prevent expansion and contraction of the flooring. Use Color Coordinated putty to fill the countersunk nail heads.
- Silicone sealant should be used in expansion zones in bathrooms, near kitchen sinks, dishwashers and refrigerators with icemakers.