

# INSTALLATION

**THESE INSTALLATION INSTRUCTIONS ARE FOR THE UNIPUSH LOCKING SYSTEM ONLY AND PERTAINS TO THE FOLLOWING COLORS: BISON BEIGE, KILN DRIED, MESA TAN, NATURAL CHAMOIS, PURE EARTH, SONORA SHADE, SUNBAKED ADOBE, TRAIL DUST, WILD MUSTANG.**



## **ATTENTION! READ BEFORE INSTALLING!** **INSTALLER - HOMEOWNER RESPONSIBILITY**

This product may have very high color/character variation. Work out of several cartons simultaneously during installation. When finished moldings are required for the project, pre-select the plank(s) that best coordinates with the color of the adjacent molding piece(s).

## **FOR BEST VISUAL REPRESENTATION OF YOUR FLOOR**

This flooring replicates the look of a natural product which has natural variations in color and texture. For best visual effect, shuffle planks from several cartons and do not install similar boards next to one another.

### **SUBFLOOR PREPARATION**

Subfloor should be dry and level to 3/16" per 10 ft. radius for best installation results. Vinyl flooring should only be used indoors.

### **ENGAGING END JOINT**

When engaging end joints a tapping clock is required please refer to the instructions on page 4 and 5.

## **FLOORING MATERIAL SHOULD BE INSPECTED PRIOR TO INSTALLATION**

Responsibility for the suitability of Manufacturer flooring and accompanying products for each individual installation cannot be assumed by Manufacturer, since Manufacturer has no control over the installer's proper application. Sample Boards may not always match the flooring due to light conditions therefore, the homeowner should always be present when the installation takes place. Should an individual plank or tile be doubtful as to appearance or dimension the installer should not use this piece. Once a plank is installed it is deemed acceptable by a Homeowner/ Installer. Always inspect material from different angles, any visual imperfection is part of the realistic wood look decor style.

NOTE: Manufacturer flooring with attached underlayment CANNOT be installed with a glue-down method.

## **READ BEFORE INSTALLING**

While flooring is waterproof, it's not a moisture barrier. Concrete should always be cured and tested for moisture and a moisture barrier should always be installed in the crawl space and even under the floor over a concrete sub-floor. Please refer below for further guidance. Please check for defects, squeaky noises, sub-floor issue or finish issues by installing 100 sq. ft. of flooring. Because houses and buildings, as well as adjacent hardwood or laminate floors, expand and contract, Manufacturer recommends leaving a 1/4" expansion gap between the perimeter walls and any adjacent hardwood floor. Do not install floors where it will be exposed to temperatures greater than 140° F. Use good common-sense installation practices, and you'll have a successful installation that results in a beautiful floor. Check that all ITEM NUMBERS are the same and that you have purchased sufficient packs to complete the job.

## **KEYS TO SUCCESSFUL LOCKING INSTALLATION**

All planks should be checked before and during installation for faults which are clearly visible; this will reduce problems when assembling and identify any color differences. The inspection should be performed in daylight, or under good artificial lighting, in the room in which the products are to be installed. If flooring is not acceptable, contact your supplier immediately and arrange for replacement. Manufacturer cannot accept responsibility for flooring installed with visible defects. Prior to installation of any flooring, the installer must ensure that the job-site and sub-floor meet the requirements of these instructions. Manufacturer is not responsible for flooring failure resulting from unsatisfactory job-site and/or sub-floor conditions. Flooring should be one of the last items installed in any new construction or remodel project.

## **CRAWL SPACES**

Crawl spaces must be a minimum of 18" (46 cm) from the ground to the underside of the joists. A ground cover of 6–20 mil black polyethylene film is required as a vapor barrier with joints lapped 6" (15 cm) and sealed with moisture resistant tape. The crawl space should have perimeter venting equal to a minimum of 1.5% of the crawl space square footage. These vents should be properly located to foster cross ventilation. Local regulations prevail where necessary.

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## WASTE

Most installations will need approximately a 10% cutting and waste allowance added to the square footage of the room.

## TEMPERATURE & HUMIDITY

Room temperature and humidity of installation area should be consistent with normal, year-round living conditions for at least one week before installation of flooring. Maintaining an optimum room temperature of 70° F and a humidity range of 40-55% is recommended throughout the space.

## STORING

Proper conditioning of the job site is necessary. Flooring planks should not be exposed to sudden changes in temperature. Store, transport and handle the flooring planks in a manner to prevent any distortions. Distortions will not disappear over time. Store cartons flat, never on edge. Insure that the flooring planks are lying flat at time of installation.

## TRANSITIONS

When installing next to other types of flooring use a transitions strip/molding. Installations of carpet, tiles, metal strips and other transition moldings should not push fully into the flooring and should allow for some slight movement wherever practical.

## ROOMS LONGER THAN 50'

For rooms, wider or longer than 50', the use of T-moldings is required to account for the normal movement or seasonal expansion/contraction of the floor. If the homeowner does experience gapping then we would suggest the contractor tap the planks back together since they may come apart for longer run lengths. Protect the floor from heavy-rolling loads, other trades, and movement of appliances by using sheets of plywood or similar.

## SUITABLE SUBSTRATES

All substrates listed below must be properly prepared and meet certain requirements. There may be other exceptions and special conditions (as noted below) for these substrates to be suitable for the locking installation system.

- Concrete – dry and smooth on all grade levels and must remain dry year-round.
- Suspended wood sub-floors with approved wood underlayments – must have minimum of 18" well-ventilated crawl space underneath
- Suspended hardwood flooring that is fully adhered, smooth and square edge without texture
- Single-layer, fully-adhered, existing resilient floors – must not be foam-backed or cushion backed
- Ceramic tile, Terrazzo, Marble
- Polymeric Poured (seamless) Floors
- Use Ply-Wood/OSB - 3/4 "
- Particleboard 40lb. density or wafer board

## DO NOT INSTALL OVER

- Existing resilient tile floors that are below grade
- Existing cushion-backed vinyl flooring
- Carpet
- Hardwood flooring that has been installed directly over concrete
- On stairs or in rooms with sloping floors or floor drains

## SUCCESSFUL WAYS TO AVOID MOVEMENT OR NOISE

Squeaking and clicking noises can be a result of many causes putting stress on the locking system;

- Locking system not engaged completely on both short and long joints. To avoid this make sure to use a rubber mallet to engage each plank together and test each row. Please note not to use excessive force or the profile will break.
- Do NOT use improper underlayment. (Please contact manufacturer to confirm underlayment).
- Joist/sub-floors moving which cause squeaky noises.
- Do NOT use any end joint that are broken (during transit or installation).
- Provide a minimum .25" on each wall space for expansion. (Lack of proper expansion space can cause peaking/tenting on the end joints).

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- Confirming that floor is flat before installation. (Sub-floor deflection is not within manufacturer tolerance and the floor is not flat).
- Do NOT install floors in an extreme environment.

In order to minimize squeaking or noise complaints please make sure all points above are met during installation.

## PRE-INSTALLATION SUBFLOOR REQUIREMENTS

All Sub-floors must be:

- Dry The subfloor must be FLAT, SECURE, and DRY. We recommend the use of a moisture barrier vapor protection against future water from floods and ground swell. 6 mil polyfilm is a suitable moisture barrier which should be overlapped six inches and taped at the seams. Sounds produced between the subfloor and moisture barrier are considered a subfloor issue and are not covered under the product warranty. Subfloors with high moisture trapped underneath the flooring can create pressure at the seams resulting in cupping. It can take several months for the cupping to become apparent after high moisture in the subfloor exists or flooding occurs, and such conditions are NOT covered under this products warranty.
- Structurally sound
- Clean: Thoroughly swept and free of all debris
- Level: Flat to 4.7mm (3/16") per 3.3 meters (10-foot) radius

## WOOD SUB-FLOOR

Wood sub-floors must be dry and well secured. Nail or screw every 6" along joists to avoid squeaking. If not level, sand down high spots and fill low spots with a Portland Based leveling patch.

## CONCRETE SUB-FLOOR

Concrete sub-floors must be fully cured, at least 60 days old, and should have minimum 6-mil poly-film between concrete and ground. Sub-floor should be flat and level within 3/16" per 10' radius. If necessary grind high spots down and level low spots with a Portland leveling compound.

Ceramic Tile, resilient tile and sheet vinyl must be well-bonded to sub-floor, in good condition, clean and level. Do not sand existing vinyl floors, as they may contain asbestos. Resilient flooring should only be installed in temperature-controlled environments. It is necessary to maintain a constant temperature before, during and after the installation. Therefore, the permanent or temporary HVAC system must be in operation before the installation of resilient flooring. Portable heaters are not recommended as they may not heat the room and sub-floor sufficiently. Kerosene heaters should never be used. All substrates must be structurally sound, dry, clean, flat, and smooth with minimal deflection. Substrates must be free from excessive moisture or alkali. Remove dirt, paint, varnish, wax, oils, solvents, other foreign matter and contaminates.

High spots on the substrate should be leveled and low areas filled with appropriate underlayments. Do not use products containing petroleum, solvents or citrus oils to prepare substrates as they can cause staining and expansion of the new flooring.

## RENOVATIONS OR REMODEL WORK

For renovation or remodel work, remove any existing adhesive residue so that 100% of the overall area of the original substrate is exposed. Embossed existing resilient floors, ceramic tile floors, ceramic and marble grout joints, and irregularities in concrete should be filled. Maintain temperatures between 55°F (13°C) and 85°F (29°C). For concrete substrates, conduct moisture testing (moisture vapor emission rate {MVER}) not to exceed 5lbs and/or percent relative humidity 85% (in-situ probe). Bond tests must also be conducted for compatibility with the substrate.

## PLEASE REFER TO SUB-FLOORS AND UNDERLAYMENTS

- Radiant heated substrates must not exceed a maximum surface temperature of 81°F (27 °C).
- The sub-floor panels must have a smooth, sanded face and show no swelling of edges or surface due to exposure to weather conditions or construction traffic.
- There are numerous products available for use as floor fills, patches, self-leveling underlayments, and trowelable underlayments. They include proprietary blends of compounds such as Portland cement, calcium aluminates, and gypsum based products. These are recommended for smoothing rough or uneven sub-floors, enhancing acoustical and fire characteristics of structures or as substrates to receive floor covering for otherwise unsuitable sub-floor conditions.

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## INSTALLATION TOOLS

For all installation methods:

- Tape measure
- Tapping block (Required)
- Pencil
- Leveler
- Rubber Mallet
- 1/4" Spacers
- Pry bar or pull bar
- Chalk line
- Crosscut power saw

Acceptable sub-floor types:

- CDX Underlayment Grade Plywood (at least 1/2" thick)
- Underlayment grade particleboard OSB (at least 3/4" thick)
- Concrete slab
- Existing wood floor
- Ceramic tile, Resilient tile & sheet vinyl
- 3M Scotch-Blue™ 2080 Tape

## STARTING YOUR INSTALLATION

Work from several open boxes of flooring and “dry lay” the floor before permanently laying the floor. This will allow you to select the varying grains & colors and to arrange them in a harmonious pattern. Remember, it is the installer’s responsibility to determine the expectations of what the finished floor will look like with the end user first and then to cull out pieces that do not meet those expectations.

Begin installation next to an outside wall. This is usually the straightest and best reference for establishing a straight working line. Establish this line by measuring an equal distance from the wall at both ends and snapping a chalk line. The distance you measure from the wall should be the width of a plank. You may need to scribe cut the first row of planks to match the wall in order to make a straight working line if the wall is out of straight.

You may want to position a few rows before starting installation to confirm your layout decision and working line. When laying flooring, stagger end joints from row to row by at least 8". When cutting the last plank in a row to fit, you can use the cut-off end to begin the next row. If cut-off end is 8" in length or less, discard it and instead cut a new plank at a random length and use it to start the next row. Always begin each row from the same side of the room. When near a wall, you can use a pry bar to pry close the side and end joints.

## INSTALLATION METHOD LVT/SPC/WPC

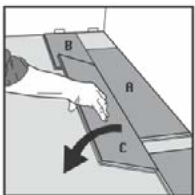


Fig 1.

First row. Place a panel (A) as support for long side alignment of panel (B) and (C) while you install panel (B) and panel (C). Place a 10mm spacer between panel (B) and the wall. After that the complete first row is installed, remove panel (A) and slide the first row up against the wall with 10mm spacers placed between the panels and the wall. Later, after 3 rows, you can easily position the flooring against the front wall with predicted spacers.

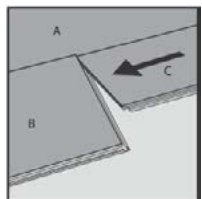


Fig 2.

Second plank, first row.

Place this plank (C) gently close to the short end of the first one (B).

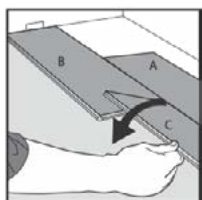
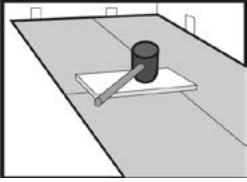


Fig 3.

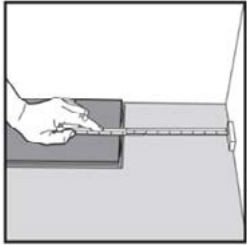
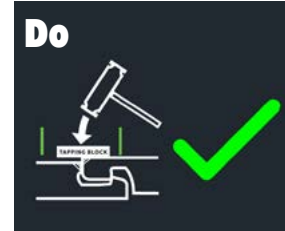
Fold it down with a single action movement.

During the fold down, make sure the panels are close to each other.

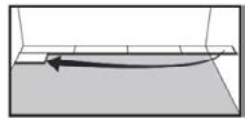
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**Fig 4.**  
Afterwards use a tapping block and rubber mallet along both short ends to engage the planks. Place the tapping block over both short end and tap it with the mallet till the ends are engaged. Please be careful not to damage the profile or edges while engaging the planks. Test each plank before proceeding to the next row to make sure they are fully engaged.



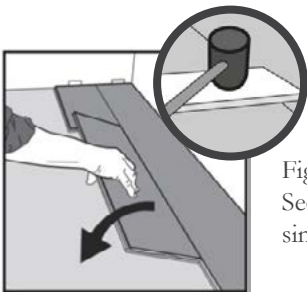
**Fig 5.**  
At the end of the first row, put a spacer to the wall and measure the length of the last plank to fit. Cut the extra material and complete the row.



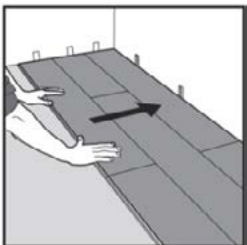
**Fig 6.**  
Second row. First plank min length 500 mm. Put a 10mm spacer against the left wall.



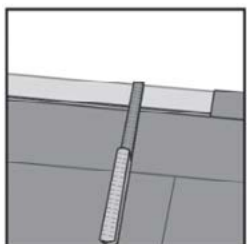
**Fig 7.**  
Staggered joint distance i.e. minimum distance between short ends of planks in parallel rows should NOT be less than the given width of the plank.



**Fig 8.**  
Second plank second row. Place the panel gently and close to the short end of the previous panel and fold it down in a single action movement reinforced with a rubber mallet and tapping block as in step 4.

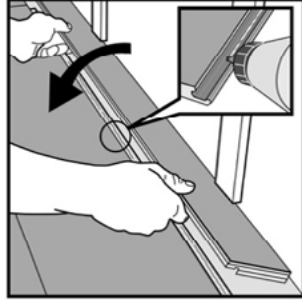


**Fig 9.**  
After 2-3 rows.  
Adjust the distance to the front wall by placing 10mm spacers.



**Fig 10.**  
Last row (and perhaps also first row). Minimum width 50 mm. Place a spacer to the wall before measuring. Cut the panels lengthwise.

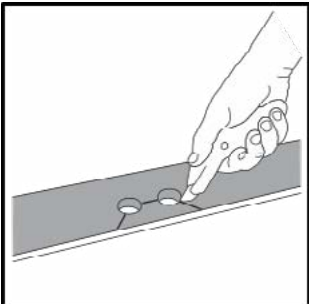
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## HORIZONTAL INSTALLATION

Fig 11 and fig 12.

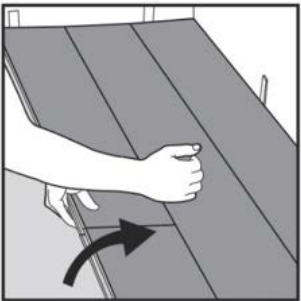
Cut off the vertical locking part of the strip with a chisel, put applicable glue on the strip and push the planks horizontally together. If necessary place some spacers between last board and the wall during the hardening.



## RADIATOR PIPES

Fig 13 and 14.

Installation at radiators. Drill the holes 2 x spacer thickness larger, than the diameter of the pipes.



## DISASSEMBLING PANELS NEAR WALL

Separate the whole row by carefully lifting up and release the whole row. Fold up the row and release the whole long side.

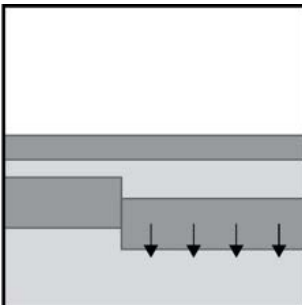
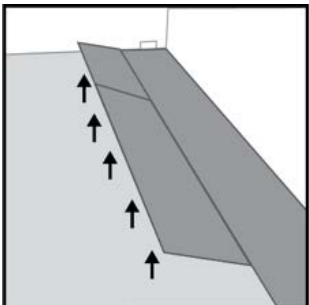
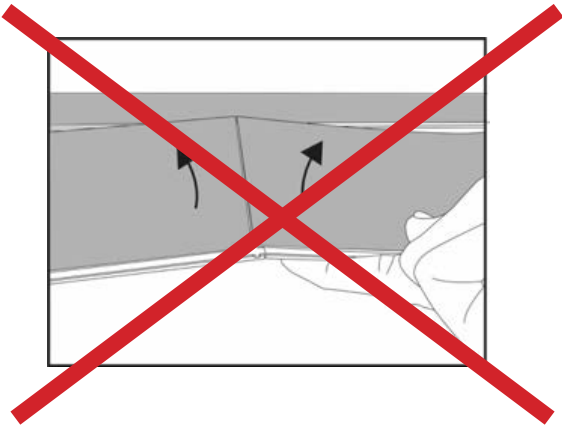


Fig 16 & Fig 17

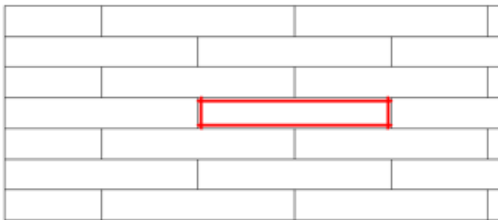
Disassemble the panels by lifting the short ends upward and then slide. Do never fold up a panel, as this damage the profile.

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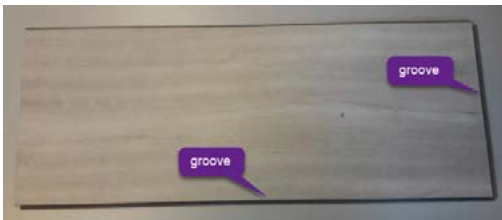
## HOW NOT TO DISASSEMBLE PANELS



## REPLACEMENT OF A PANEL IN THE MIDDLE OF THE ROOM



Please cut the panel along the red lines as indicated below.



Remove the groove on both sides as indicated in the below pictures.



Put the panel back in by gluing it down on existing underfloor.

For post installation care of your floor, please read the Care and Maintenance instructions.