

# SolutionCore Waterproof Flooring Installation Guide

## ATTENTION – PLEASE READ BEFORE INSTALLING

**Important:** Carefully inspect all boards for any defects. *Planks installed with visible defects are not covered under warranty.*

It's the responsibility of the installer/owner for the suitability of SolutionCore flooring and accompanying products. Please do not install any plank or tile that is considered questionable in appearance or dimensions.

## FOR BEST VISUAL REPRESENTATION OF YOUR FLOOR

This flooring replicates the look of a natural product which has natural variations in color, texture, and sheen/gloss. For best visual effect, work from 3-4 boxes and shuffle planks or tiles. Avoid installing similar planks or tiles next to one another.

## SUBFLOOR PREPARATION & MOISTURE

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

While this product is waterproof, it's not a moisture barrier. Moisture won't damage this product, but it can get in the walls and structure of the home. It's still a good idea to make sure your concrete is cured and tested for moisture, and that a moisture barrier is installed in the crawl space and even under a SolutionCore floor over a concrete subfloor.

Because houses and buildings, as well as adjacent hardwood or laminate floors, expand and contract, it is recommended to leave a ¼" expansion gap between the perimeter walls and any adjacent hardwood floor.

## ACCLIMATION

Even though this product is waterproof and does not require acclimation, it is still recommended to store and install material in an environment that has been acclimated to acceptable living conditions.

## PRE-INSTALLATION JOBSITE REQUIREMENTS

We cannot be held responsible for any failures or deficiencies related to site conditions. It is the installer/ owners' responsibility to ensure that the jobsite conditions and jobsite subfloor are environmentally and structurally acceptable prior to the installation of any SolutionCore flooring. All substrates must be clean, flat, dry, and structurally sound.

Carefully examine the flooring prior to installation for color, finish, sheen, and quality. Ensure adequate lighting for proper inspection. If flooring is not acceptable, contact your supplier immediately and arrange for replacement. We cannot accept responsibility for flooring installed with visible defects.

Flooring should be one of the last items installed in any new construction or remodel project.

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 essential 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. Where necessary, local regulations prevail.

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. After installation, a room temperature range between 60° and 107° Fahrenheit and a humidity range of 30-50% is recommended.

## PRE-INSTALLATION SUBFLOOR REQUIREMENTS

All Subfloors must be:

- Dry
- Structurally sound

- Clean: Thoroughly swept and free of all debris
- Level: Flat to 3/16" per 10-foot radius

Wood subfloors 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 subfloors must be fully cured, at least 60 days old, and should have minimum 6-mil polyfilm between concrete and ground. Subfloor 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 subfloor, in good condition, clean and level. Do not sand existing vinyl floors, as they may contain asbestos.

## INSTALLATION TOOLS

### For all installation methods:

- Tape measure
- Pencil
- Chalk line
- Crosscut power saw
- 3M Scotch-Blue™ 2080 Tape
- Rubber mallet
- ¼" spacers

### Acceptable subfloor types:

- CDX Underlayment Grade Plywood (at least ½" thick)
- Underlayment grade particleboard
- OSB (at least ¾" thick)
- Concrete slab
- Existing wood or laminate floor
- Ceramic tile
- Resilient tile & sheet vinyl

## STARTING YOUR INSTALLATION

Work from several multiple (3-4) boxes. This will allow you to select the varying textures, colors, and sheens. Remember, it is the installers' responsibility to determine the expectations of what the finished floor will look like with the end user.

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 or tile. You may need to scribe cut the first row of planks or tiles 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 6" (15 cm) for planks, and equal to a half piece for tiles. For plank installations, 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 less than 6", discard it and instead cut a new plank at a random length (at least 6" in length) and use it to start the next row. For tile installations, always begin a row with either a full tile or a half tile so that the joints are consistently staggered in a "brick work" type pattern. Always begin each row from the same side of the room.

## INSTALLATION INSTRUCTIONS

**Inspection:** Prior to installation, inspect material in daylight for visible issues. Check if subfloor and site conditions comply with the specifications described in these instructions. If you are not satisfied, contact your supplier immediately and do not install.

**Before laying:** Measure the room at right angle to the direction of the flooring. For best visual effect, planks or tiles in the final row should be at least at least 1/3 the width of the plank or tile. For this purpose, planks or tiles in the first row can be cut to smaller size. Purposely mix and arrange boards in a pleasant blend of shades. Lay boards, preferably following the direction of the main source of light. We recommend laying on wooden floors crossways to the existing floorboards.

#### **INSTALLING THE FIRST ROW:**

1. Starting from the left with the tongue-side facing the wall, carefully place the first board in place, using spacers to leave a ¼" expansion gap between wall and edges of the plank or tile.
2. The end joints of this product features an integrated Valinge 5G-i locking system with pushdown technology for an easy and speedy installation. Align the tongue and groove on the end joint of the next piece and press down. As the panel reaches its final position, the tongue flexes back and into the wedge groove on the folded panel, locking it in the vertical position. An integrated locking tongue is pushed inward when the next panel is folded down. Tap with your hand or a rubber mallet in a downward striking angle to ensure successful and secure engagement. Continue in this manner until reaching the final board in the first row.
3. Cut the final board piece to length.

#### **CONTINUING THE INSTALLATION:**

1. For tile installations, begin the second row with a half tile. For plank installations, if the cut plank is at least 6" in length, use it to begin the second row. If the cut plank is shorter than 6" do not use it. Instead, begin with a new board that is at least 6" in length and allows 6" between the end joints on the adjacent planks. End joint spacing for tiles should always be equal to a half tile.
2. Position the first board in place by angling it up slightly, pushing forward and interlocking the side tongue. The long side of the plank or tile **MUST BE SNUG** against the adjoining plank or tile with **NO GAPPING**. If everything is aligned correctly, there will be a slight click from the end joint as the panel is successfully engaged and reaches its final position after being lowered into place.
3. Lower the board and slide it to the left to within approximately 1 mm of the end joint of the adjoining plank or tile.
4. Tap the joint with the rubber mallet using a downward angle striking motion towards the adjoining end joint until the tongue and groove lock together on the side and ends.
5. Carefully inspect the long edge and short ends of the plank or tile for any gapping before moving on to the next tile. If you notice a gap, **STOP**, and reinstall the board to ensure a snug fit.
6. Install the remaining boards and rows in the same manner. A transition moldings should be used every 55' in any direction.
7. Cut the last board to size.
8. Whenever practical, use cut pieces from previous rows as the starter board to reduce waste.
9. Maintain proper spacing (at least 6" for planks, and equal to half its length for tiles) between end joints for best appearance.

#### **INSTALLING FINAL ROW:**

1. The last row may need to be cut lengthwise (ripped).
2. Place the last row of boards to be fit on top of the last row of installed boards. Use a piece of plank or tile as a scribe to trace the contour of the wall.
3. Mark where the board will be cut. If the fit of the wall is simple and straight, simply measure for the correct fit and cut.
4. After boards are cut, position boards and tap all joints (long AND short ends) with the rubber mallet.

#### **INSTALLING UNDER A DOOR JAMB:**

1. Installation under moldings (such as door jambs) may require that the top lip of the groove on the end be reduced in size.

2. Using a small knife, carefully shave off the ledge of the groove.
3. After the groove ledge has been trimmed, place the board in place and tighten with a pull bar. The installer must be sure that the required expansion gap has been maintained and the flooring is not pinched
4. If fit is not correct, re-trim as necessary.
5. Place a bead of wood glue on the bottom lip of the groove.
6. Insert the tongue into the groove and engage with a pull bar. Hold the board in place with painter's tape (3M Scotch-Blue™ 2080 Tape) until the glue is dry. Do not use masking tape or duct tape as they may damage the floors finish.

### **In-floor Radiant Heat:**

SolutionCore Floors can be installed using the floating or glue down method. A floating method should be used if a pad is already attached. If there is no pad is attached, a glue down method can be used only over manufacture's recommended substrate.

- Turn the heat off for 24 hours before, during and 24 hours after installation when installing over radiant heated subfloors
- Floor temperature must not exceed 85°F (30°C).

Warning: Failure to follow adhesive manufacture's guidelines and temperature limitations will result in failure and void warranty. Electric heating mats that are not embedded into the subfloor are not recommended for use underneath ACE floors.

### **AFTER INSTALLATION**

- Flooring should be one of the last items installed in a project. In order to protect the floors while other trades are finishing their work prior to final cleanup and turnover to the owner, use rosin paper and only use 3M Scotch-Blue™ 2080 Tape to hold the rosin paper to the floor (other blue tapes may damage the finish). Clean the floor thoroughly before laying the rosin paper to ensure that no debris is trapped underneath. DO NOT USE plastic film or other non-breathing coverings as this can cause the floor to become damaged from humidity buildups.
- Dust mop or vacuum your floor to remove any dirt or debris.
- It is suggested that you clean the floor using a recommended ph neutral cleaner.
- Install any transition pieces that may be needed (reducers, T-moldings, etc.).

### **Protection and Maintenance of Your Floor**

Lasting beauty can be achieved through purchasing a quality floor covering and providing proper on-going maintenance.

- Furniture should be moved onto the newly installed floor using an appliance hand truck over hardboard runways.
- Avoid exposure to long periods of direct sunlight. Close blinds or drapes during peak sunlight hours. Floor covering subjected to excessive heat and light is subject to thermal degradation. Use appropriate precautions to minimize potential effects.
- Oil or petroleum-based products can result in surface staining. Do not track asphalt-driveway sealer or automobile-oil drips onto the vinyl floor covering.
- Use non-staining mats. Rubber may discolor the floor.
- Frequently moved furniture should be equipped with felt pads to avoid scratching the floor. Heavy furniture and appliances should be equipped with non-staining large surface floor protectors. Furniture with castors or wheels must be easy swiveling, large surface non-staining and suitable for resilient floors. Do NOT use ball type castors as they can damage the floor.
- Use floor protectors under furniture.
- Use walk off mats at entrances to prevent dirt and grit from being tracked on to the floor.
- Sweep or vacuum the floor regularly to remove loose dirt. Do NOT use vacuums that use a beater bar or turn beater bar off.
- Do NOT use electric brooms with hard plastic bottoms with no padding.
- Clean up spills immediately.
- Damp mop as needed using clean water and a diluted floor cleaner. Do NOT use harsh cleaners or chemicals on the floor. Do NOT use abrasive scrubbing tools. Do NOT use detergents, abrasive cleaners or "mop and shine" products.