

SCRATCHMASTER™ GLUE DOWN INSTALLATION GUIDE

General Information

- Flooring should be transported and stored in a neatly stacked fashion on a smooth, flat surface. Protect the corners of the cartons from damage.
- ScratchMaster™ is not recommended for installs that experience temperature extremes beyond -40°F (-40°C) or greater than 150°F (65°C).
- Next Floor recommends using Next Floor 1200 adhesive when installing this flooring product, following the label instructions provided on the container (open time and working time will vary depending upon temperature and humidity). Issues associated with the use of non-recommended adhesives (including but not limited to peaking, gapping, adhesion, bubbling, discoloration, etc.) are excluded from warranty coverage. See www.nextfloor.net for complete warranty details.
- The flooring, rooms to be installed and the adhesive must all be acclimated between 65°F and 85°F (18.33° and 29.44°C) and between 30% and 65% relative humidity for 72 hours before, during and after installation.
- ScratchMaster™ should only be installed after other trades have finished and the jobsite has been cleaned and cleared of debris that could potentially damage a finished plank installation.
- Mix and install planks from several different cartons during installation to achieve desirable plank variation. Only use one run-number (production lot) on a particular job.
- Leave 1/4 inch (6.35mm) for expansion around the entire perimeter of the flooring as well as around all vertical obstructions.
- Flooring should be protected from prolonged direct exposure to sunlight.
- Underfloor heating is possible with warm water heating systems. The temperature of the floor surface must not exceed 85°F at any point in time. The underfloor heating must be turned off for 24 hours before, during and after installation. When turning the underfloor heating back on, raise the temperature incrementally, not exceeding a change of more than 5°F per 24 hours
- It is the duty of the person installing the floor to inspect all flooring before installation. If during inspection the installer or buyer feels the floor is the wrong color, improperly manufactured, is off-grade, or is the wrong gloss level, he/she should NOT install the flooring. Please immediately contact the retailer from which the flooring was purchased. No claims will be accepted for flooring which is visibly wrong if such flooring is installed. Installed flooring is deemed to be visibly acceptable.
- This product is not suitable for outdoor use or in rooms that may be exposed to flooding.

Tools and Materials Needed:

- Utility Knife
- Measuring Tape
- 1/4" spacers
- Chalk line
- 2" hand seam roller
- 100 lb three-section roller
- Transition moldings and baseboards

Hints for Measuring

Measure the length and width to determine the square footage of the room. Alcoves or offsets should be measured separately. Next Floor recommends purchasing at least 10% extra to cover waste, trimming, and for future replacement needs.

Subfloor General

Planks can be installed over a variety of subfloor surfaces including concrete on all grade levels, wood, and many existing hard surface floors. The subfloors must be clean, smooth, flat, solid (no movement), structurally sound, dry, and free from all existing adhesive residues and other foreign material that might prevent adhesive bond. Residual adhesives should be mechanically removed. Do not use chemical adhesive removers or solvents. Do not install planks over floors that are sloped for drainage, or over expansion joints or other moving joints in the substrate. Any uneven areas greater than 3/16" (4.76mm) in a 10-foot (3.05m) radius [1/8" (3.17mm) in a 6-foot (1.83m) radius] must be leveled with a Portland cement based patching compound. An uneven subfloor can contribute to multiple problems, including assembly of planks and post installation gapping of planks. Vinyl planks are resistant to water damage, but they do not prevent the transmission of moisture. Care should be taken to keep moisture from collecting on either side of the vinyl floor to prevent the growth of unhealthy mold and mildew.

Concrete Subfloors

Concrete subfloors must be dry, smooth, structurally sound, and free from dust, solvent, paint, wax, grease, oil, asphalt sealing compounds, adhesive residues and all other extraneous materials that may prevent proper adhesion. The surface must be hard and dense, and free from powder or flaking. Any uneven areas greater than 3/16" (4.76mm) in a 10-foot (3.05m) radius [1/8" (3.17mm) in a 6-foot (1.83m) radius] must be leveled with a Portland cement based patching compound. Newly poured concrete floors must cure for a minimum of 90 days and completely cured. Curing agents, surface hardeners and other additives may cause adhesive bonding failure. These should be removed by sanding or grinding. An intact moisture vapor retarder must be present below on-grade and below grade concrete substrates. All concrete slabs must be checked for moisture before installing material. Moisture emission from the subfloor cannot exceed 3 lbs. per 1,000 sq. ft. per 24 hours as measured with the calcium chloride test. Alternatively, relative humidity of the slab can be tested according to ASTM F2170. A result of up to 85% is acceptable per ASTM F2170. Next Floor will not assume responsibility for floorcovering failure due to hydrostatic pressure or moisture vapor emission greater than the numbers above. Holes, grooves, and other irregularities must be filled and troweled smooth and feathered even with the surrounding surface. The final responsibility for determining if the concrete is dry and level enough for installation of the flooring lies with the floor covering installer.

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Wood Subfloors

Panels intended to be used as underlayment should be specifically designed for this purpose. These panels should have a minimum thickness of 1/4". Any panels selected as an underlayment must meet the following criteria:

- Be dimensionally stable.
- Have a smooth, fully sanded face so the graining or texturing will not show through.
- Be resistant to both static and impact indentation.
- Be free of any surface components that may prevent proper adhesion or cause staining such as plastic fillers, marking inks, sealers, etc.
- Be of uniform density, porosity, and thickness.
- Have a written warranty for suitability and performance from the panel manufacturer or have a history of proven performance.

Underlayment panels are intended to provide a smooth surface on which to adhere the finished floor covering. It must be understood that underlayment panels cannot correct structural deficiencies. Particleboard, chipboard, construction-grade plywood, any hardboard and flakeboard are not recommended as underlayment. All have inadequate uniformity, poor dimensional stability, and variable surface porosity. Next Floor will not accept responsibility for adhered installation over these subfloors. Many times, wood panel subfloors are damaged during the construction process or are not of underlayment grade. These panels must be covered with an approved underlayment. Wood subfloors must be covered with a minimum 1/4" or heavier underlayment rated panel to assure successful finished flooring installation. Wood subfloors directly on concrete or installed over sleeper construction are not satisfactory. All wood floors must be suspended at least 18" above the ground. Adequate cross-ventilation must be provided, and the ground surface of a crawl space must be covered with a suitable vapor barrier. The subfloor must be flat to within 3/16" (4.76mm) in a 10-foot (3.05m) radius [1/8" (3.17mm) in a 6-foot (1.83m) radius]. In all cases, the underlayment manufacturer or underlayment installer is responsible for all underlayment warranties.

Note

Avoid subfloors with excessive vertical movement or deflection because subfloor movement will telegraph through to the finished installation. Our warranties DO NOT cover any problems caused by inadequate substructures or improper installation of substructures.

Existing Flooring

ScratchMaster™ floor planks can be installed over a variety of finished floors including single layer resilient sheet flooring/tile, ceramic, marble and terrazzo. The surface must be in good condition, free from all surface contaminants (wax, finish etc.) and show no signs of excessive moisture conditions, and the existing flooring must be well bonded to the substrate below. Large grout joints should be leveled so they are flush with the flooring surface. Heavily cushioned vinyl floors, or vinyl floors consisting of multiple layers are NOT a suitable subfloor for installation.

Underpad / Cushion

DO NOT install this product over a foam underpad or any free-floating underlayment. Doing so will void the product's warranties.

Recommended Work Practices for Removal of Resilient Floor Coverings.

WARNING: Do not sand, dry scrape, bead blast or mechanically chip or pulverize existing resilient flooring, backing, lining felt, asphaltic "cutback" adhesive or other adhesive. These products may contain asbestos fibers and/or crystalline silica. Avoid creating dust. Inhalation of such dust is a cancer and respiratory tract hazard. Smoking by individuals exposed to asbestos fibers greatly increases the risk of serious bodily harm. Unless positively certain that the product is a non-asbestos-containing material, you must presume it contains asbestos. Regulations may require that the material be tested to determine asbestos content. RFCI's Recommended Work Practices for Removal of Resilient Floor Coverings are a defined set of instructions addressed to the task of removing all resilient floor covering structures.

Planning The Job

- Remove all existing transitions, quarter round baseboard molding or cover base, and undercut all door jambs/moldings the thickness of the flooring prior to beginning installation.
- The room must be accurately measured to square off the area and to determine the center point. First find the center of one end of the main rectangle. Locate the same point at the other end wall. Snap a chalk line between these points. Measure this center line to find the middle of the room and mark. A right angle must be established off this center mark. Careful and precise measurements must be taken during this process.
- Determine how you want the flooring to run. Typically for plank products, the flooring runs the length of the room. There may be exceptions since it is a matter of preference.
- To avoid narrow plank widths or short plank lengths near the walls/doors, it is important to do some pre-planning. Using the width of the room, calculate how many full boards will fit into the area and how much space remains that will need to be covered by partial planks. The width of the border planks at the walls should be a minimum ½ plank in width. Snap a new chalk line at the first row of full-sized planks near the wall. Once installation begins it will be critical that the first row of planks is installed perfectly on this guideline. The first and last planks in the rows should not be less than 12".
- You need to keep the ScratchMaster™ floor a minimum of ¼ inch away from the walls and all vertical obstructions including cabinetry, stone fireplaces, doorways, etc.
- Do not install cabinets on top of ScratchMaster™ floor.
- Transition moldings and baseboards cannot be tight to the floor.
- Do not nail, screw, or glue transitions or baseboards through or flooring.

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Adhesive Application

Follow all of the application instructions on the label of the adhesive container (trowel notch, spread rate, open time, working time, etc.). Open time and working time will vary depending upon temperature, relative humidity, and porosity of the substrate. Be sure not to spread the adhesive over an area of the floor that can be covered with flooring within the working time.

Installing Planks

After allowing the appropriate open time, begin laying the planks along the guideline near the starting wall, taking into consideration the length of the first and last planks in the row as noted above, as well as the ¼" expansion space required around the perimeter and all vertical obstructions. Lay the first row of planks perfectly on the guideline snapped at the wall, with the groove side along the guideline. It is critical that the first row of planks be installed perfectly on the guideline as this will affect the squareness of the entire installation. The tongue side of the first row should be facing the remainder of the room while the groove side will be facing the nearest long wall. After the first row of planks is set into place, use a 2" hand seam roller to roll the leading edge of the plank. Install the second row by slightly lifting the plank and lowering it over the tongue while pressing downward towards the adhesive. Sliding the plank to the left while lowering assists the process of connecting the groove to the tongue. Continue this technique for all planks, appropriately staggering the end joints of the planks in adjoining rows. Sliding to the left may not be possible for cut pieces (between the previous plank and the wall or cabinet) at the end of each row but the tongue and groove can still be connected by lowering the groove over the tongue. Make sure each plank is net-fit to the adjacent plank. Roll each installed section of flooring with a 100 lb. three section roller.

Installing Border Planks

Using a tape measure, measure the distance between the wall and the last full plank installed. Measure from the factory edge of the plank and transfer the measurement to the plank using a pencil, remembering to subtract 1/4" for expansion space. Using a straight edge, score the surface with a sharp utility knife, then snap off the section along the score line. Place the plank firmly into the adhesive as described above. Border planks may also be fit by placing a loose plank over the last full plank in the row. Place another full plank over the loose plank and butt it 1/4" from the wall (use 1/4" spacers to assist). Use this plank as a marking plank and score or mark the bottom plank. Cut along the mark. Place the plank firmly into the adhesive as described above.

Finishing

- Sweep up scrap material and any loose debris.
- Clean any wet adhesive from the surface of the flooring material with a clean white cloth dampened with water. Dried adhesive may require the use of denatured alcohol and a clean white rag. Follow manufactures label precautions when using denatured alcohol.
- Roll the entire flooring again in both directions using a 75-100 lb. sectional roller.
- Replace/install all moldings, baseboards etc. ensuring that they are not pinched tight to the flooring.
- Install appropriate transition moldings at the doorways, allowing ¼" expansion space.
- Keep heavy traffic off the floor for a minimum of 24 hours and keep heavy rolling loads off the floor for a minimum of 48 hours.
- Furniture should be moved onto the newly installed floor using an appliance hand truck over hardboard runways.
- Do not place heavy items on newly installed floor covering for at least 48 hours after completion of the installation. Heavy furniture should be equipped with suitable non-staining, furniture casters. Non-staining felt protectors are recommended for table and chair legs to help protect the flooring.

Plank Replacement

Should an accident occur that damages the surface of the product, use the following process to replace individual planks. The key to this process is having ample material available to replace the damaged area(s). This should be considered when placing the original order. Extra tiles and planks should be wrapped in their packaging and stored in an interior, climate-controlled location.

- Using a straight edge and sharp utility knife cut the center of the damaged plank approximately one inch from each edge of the adjoining planks.
- Remove the rectangular shape center of the damaged plank.
- Make a cut from each corner back to the inside edge.
- Carefully remove the edges of the cut plank including the tongue. It may be necessary to use a painter's tool to remove any existing tongue from the groove of the adjacent plank. Do not damage adjoining planks.
- If the adhesive is damaged or removed during this process scrape all the residual adhesive from the substrate and apply new adhesive to the substrate following the installation instruction on the label of the adhesive container. If the existing adhesive is not damaged and is tacky it may be acceptable to reuse the existing adhesive.
- Prepare the replacement plank by removing the bottom lip of the groove on the long side.
- Apply a bead of standard PVA glue to the tongue of the existing plank.
- Position the replacement plank by inserting the tongue of the replacement plank into the groove of the existing plank.
- Rotate the plank downward into position.
- Clean any wet adhesive from the surface of the flooring material with a clean white cloth dampened with water. Dried adhesive may require the use of denatured alcohol and a clean white rag. Follow manufactures label precautions when using denatured alcohol.
- Roll seam edges with a hand roller to ensure proper contact with the adhesive.