

# WHISPER STEP<sup>®</sup>

## Acoustical Underlayment Questions & Answers

### What flooring products can be installed over Whisper Step?

- Luxury Vinyl Tile/Rigid Core
- Luxury Vinyl Tile/Rigid Core with attached back
- Engineered & Solid hardwood
- Laminate
- Sheet vinyl

### Why should an acoustical underlayment be used?

To help reduce in-room and between floor noise transmission. Even though hard surface flooring is very popular, most consumers find that it makes the home very noisy. Whisper Step has shown to reduce up to 10 dB of in room noise and a 25% improvement to noise reduction between floors.

### Will Whisper Step retain its thickness and support over the life of the floor?

Absolutely. This product is made from dense synthetic rubber which is the same material used in high impact applications such as car tires, dock bumpers, etc. The Shore A Hardness, which measures hardness of the material using a very small indentation device, is 70. The next highest product is crumb rubber at 40 (foam, styrene's, etc are 20 and less). To measure the pressure required to compress a quarter of its thickness is known as Indention Forced Deflection or IFD. Typical IFD's at 25% (thickness compression) are 15-32 pounds vs 677 pounds of force to compress Whisper Step. At 65% IFD, other products require up to 200 pounds, but Whisper Step requires a whopping 5,000 pounds plus. You can even park a loaded forklift on top of this product for a weekend.

### Does the product feature a moisture barrier?

Yes. It Includes Block-Out<sup>®</sup> Moisture Guard which prevents spills from getting into the subfloor and allows moisture vapor to escape from beneath.

### What are the moisture resistance limitations for Calcium Chloride and RH Probe readings for Whisper Step?

The relative humidity (ASTM2170) and calcium chloride (ASTM1869) tests are substrate tests which have no effect or limitations with regards to Whisper Step. Whisper Step excels at keeping liquids from getting into the subfloor and acts as a vapor retarder, which helps to reduce the rate of water vapor emission up to the flooring.

Adhesives (with 99.9% RH), like our product, can handle high water vapor emission with no effect. The weakest link in the system would be the flooring, if installing laminate or hardwood. Although vinyl is waterproof / resistant any known issue should be addressed before installing a system that will encapsulate the substrate.

### Can the product be double glued?

Yes. See the flooring manufacturer's recommendations and instructions as well as the installation instructions for Whisper Step.

### What type of substrates can Whisper Step be installed over?

All structurally sound, flat smooth plywood, OSB, wood composition panels as well as concrete and light weight concrete / gypsum and most existing hard surface floor coverings. It also provides a clean smooth surface to adhere flooring to when the bond compatibility of the substrate is in question.

### Can I install over old flooring?

Yes. Old hard surface flooring must be structurally sound, flat, smooth and secured.

### Which side is installed up?

It doesn't matter, just open and unroll the product.

### What adhesive do I use?

Whisper Step is compatible with all types of adhesives and recognized by all manufacturers. We recommend using the same adhesive to install Whisper Step as you would use with the specific flooring type.

### Is it okay to install cabinets or islands on top of the LVT underlayment system?

- Floating – NO
- Double Glue – YES

### Can Whisper Step be used under heavy appliances or other heavy items with small feet/wheels?

Yes. Indentations may occur in certain flooring if the heavy items are left in place for extended periods of time without point load protection. This is not caused by the underlayment, but rather the type of floor it's placed on.

### What about in floor radiant heat?

Has the lowest R-value in the industry and is recommended by the Radiant Professionals Alliance or RPA.

### Can Whisper Step be used in commercial applications?

Yes. We recommend double glue installation. For heavy rolling wheel and foot traffic, double glue is recommended.

### Will the flooring warranty be void if Whisper Step is used beneath LVT/Rigid Core with an attached back underlayment?

• A manufacture cannot simply state a product cannot be used in conjunction with their product without first demonstrating a negative effort or adverse performance. The Magnuson-Moss Act of 1975 was enacted to protect consumers and to allow for them to benefit from new product innovation.

• Whisper Step exceeds the flooring manufacturer's criteria for weight, density and thickness so it cannot void a warranty by its design or construction, but rather by flooring manufacturers marketing strategies.