THANK YOU FOR CHOOSING AHF PRODUCTS FLOORING. It is not necessary to acclimate laminate flooring; it is best to store it in the environment in which it will be installed. Failure to follow these installation instructions may result in damage to the floor and void the floor’s warranty.

• For complete warranty information call 1-866-243-2726 or go to www.ahfproducts.com.
• For technical or installation questions, or to request a Safety Data Sheet, please call 1-866-243-2726 or visit www.hardwoodexpert.com our technical website.
• For general questions or comments, please visit us at www.ahfproducts.com or call 1-866-243-2726.

WARNING: EXISTING IN-PLACE RESILIENT FLOOR COVERING AND ASPHALTIC ADHESIVES. DO NOT SAND, DRY SWEEP, DRY SCRAPER, GRIT, SAW, BDEBLAST, OR MECHANICALLY CHIP OR PULVERIZE EXISTING RESILIENT FLOORING, BACKING, LINING FELT, ASPHALTIC “CUTBACK” ADHESIVE, OR OTHER ADHESIVE.

These existing in-place 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 existing in-place 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 and may govern removal and disposal of material. Visit rfc.org to see the current edition of the Resilient Floor Covering Institute (RFCI) publication Recommended Work Practices for Removal of Resilient Floor Coverings for instructions on removing all resilient floor covering structures or contact your retailer.

AHF floor coverings and adhesives do NOT contain asbestos.

IMPORTANT HEALTH NOTICE FOR MINNESOTA RESIDENTS ONLY:

These building materials emit formaldehyde, a gas, which can cause cancer and threaten the health of children. Minnesotans have developed a variety of asthma-like symptoms, including shortness of breath, that have been reported as a result of formaldehyde exposure. Elderly persons and young children, as well as anyone with a history of asthma or lung problems, may be at greater risk.

Research is continuing on the possible long-term effects of exposure to formaldehyde. Reduced ventilation may allow formaldehyde and other contaminants to accumulate in the indoor air. High indoor temperatures and humidity raise formaldehyde levels. When a home is located in areas subject to extreme summer temperatures, an air-conditioning system can be used to control indoor temperature levels. Other means of controlled mechanical ventilation can be used to reduce levels of formaldehyde and other indoor air contaminants. If you have any questions regarding the health effects of formaldehyde, consult your doctor or local health department.

Installation:

Location: All grade levels

Methods:

Premium underlayment for floating floors. 6 mil polyethylene vapor barrier (concrete installations). If underlayment does not act as a moisture barrier, Tapping Block, Pull Bar, Rubber Mallet, Utility Knife, Saw, Multi floor cutter, Spacers, Bruce® Everseal (when joint gluing is required). 100% Silicone Caulk (Bathroom installations).

Optional - (Add for Glue-Down Installations):

• Recommended adhesive and glue remover
• 3/16” x 1/4” x 1/4” (6 mm x 13 mm x 8 mm)
• V-notch trowel (Figure 1)
• 1/2” x 15/32” V-notch or 1/4” x 1/4” for Moisture barrier and sound control or other adhesive manufacturer’s trowel
• Scotch® Delicate Surface Painter’s Tape 2080

General Information:

The locking installation system allows the planks to be installed without using adhesive. It is a floating floor installation. The planks should be installed 1/8” away from all vertical objects such as walls, cabinets, pipes, etc. When installed in bathrooms, the gap should be filled and sealed with a good quality siliconized or acrylic caulk. The gap can then be covered with molding or wall base. Base cabinets should not be installed on top of the planks. A 3/32” bead of Bruce® Everseal should be applied on top of the tongue as well.

(OPTIONAL) Adhesives:

If a full spread glue down installation is desired with the laminate flooring, use Bruce Procon Plus, Bruce Equalizer Pro or Bruce Summit Select adhesive with the recommended trowel found on the pail. Follow the manufacturer’s instructions for the adhesive application.

Keys to Successful Locking Installation:

• Most installations will need approximately a 10% cutting allowance added to the square footage of the room.
• 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 damage. Store cartons flat, never on edge.
• Ensure that the flooring planks are level during installation.
• Installations of carpet, metal strips and other transition moldings should not pinch the flooring against the subfloor, and should allow for some slight movement wherever practical.
• Protect the floor from heavy-rolling loads, other trades, and movement of appliances by using sheets of plywood or similar.

Although it is not necessary to acclimate laminate flooring it is best to store it in the environment in which it is expected to perform prior to installation. Check adhesive label for adhesive storage limitations.
Safety and Clean Up:

Wet adhesive should be cleaned up immediately with soap and water on a clean cloth. Dried adhesive may require the use of a solvent-based adhesive cleaner.

Installation Preparation: Before You Start

- Before installing the planks, central heat or air conditioning should be operating for 14 days.
- Install only at room temperature above 60°F (16°C) and 30-50% humidity conditions.
- In rooms with under-floor (radiant) heating, the surface temperature of the subfloor may not, under any circumstances, exceed 80°F (27°C). This will assure that the subfloor is properly engineered or controlled for the flooring being installed. Subflooring designed for materials with higher resistance to heat transfer, such as carpet, will damage the flooring. Installations that include multiple floor covering products on a single heating circuit must be adjusted for the flooring product with the highest heat transfer or lowest temperature requirement.
- When possible, preset and set aside boards that blend best with all horizontally mounted moldings (reducer/stair nose etc.) This will assure a uniform final appearance. Install these boards adjoining the moldings.
- Floor should be installed from several cartons at the same time to ensure good color and shade mixture.
- Be attentive to staggering the ends of the boards at least 12˝ (30.48 cm) when possible, in adjacent rows. This will help ensure a more favorable overall appearance of the floor.

STEP 1: Doorway and Wall Preparation (Floating Installations)

- Undercut door casings and jambs. Remove any existing base, shoe mold or doorway thresholds. These items can be replaced after installation. When undercutting door casings the installer should confirm there is the recommended expansion space. The floor must have 1/4” clearance under the door casing to be able to float freely without vertical restriction.

STEP 2: Plan Your Layout Using the Following Steps (Floating Installations)

- Decide the direction of the floor installation in the room. Planks installed parallel to windows accent the floor better. The first floors should be installed perpendicular to the joists. Stiffen subfloors as necessary to prevent vertical movement.
- Plan your installation so each plank is at least 12˝ (30.48 cm) long and that the first and last row are at least 2.5” (6.35 cm) wide.
- Note: If your room exceeds a maximum room width of 40’ (12.19 m) or maximum room length of 40’ (12.19 m)

STEP 3: Laying the Underlayment (Floating Installations)

- Install the underlayment in the same direction that the laminate flooring is to be installed.
- Extend the underlayment a few inches up the wall.
- Trim excess prior to installing trim or moldings.
- Install second and subsequent full pieces in the first row by aligning short ends of boards and locking into place (Fig. 4).
- Use spacers along all sides that butt against walls to maintain a 1/2˝ (12.7 mm) expansion zone (Figs. 4 & 5).
- Continue laying boards in the first row until you need to cut the last piece.
- Measure the distance between the wall and the face surface of the last board. Subtract 1/2˝ (6.35 mm) and cut the board. (See cutting instructions above.)
- If this distance is less than 12˝ (30.48 cm) go back to the first full plank and cut approximately 12˝ (30.48 cm) from the end closest to the starting wall. This will leave a longer piece at the end of the first row.

Installing Remaining Rows

- Begin the second row of planks with the piece cut from the last piece in the first row. If the piece is shorter than 12˝ (30.48 cm), cut a new plank in half and use the second row.
- Whenever practical, use the piece cut from the preceding row to start the next row. End joints of all boards should be staggered a minimum of 1/2˝ (12.7 mm) or more.
- Install the long end of the first board and lock in place, keep this board at its natural angle slightly raised off the subfloor. Use a scrap piece of laminate to support the row if needed.
- For the second board of the second row, engage the edge of the tongue into the groove of the first row. Use a 4” to 6” scrap piece of wood (or at an angle to hold the tongue and groove on the same plane. This will limit end-joint damage and ensure planks engage squarely.
- Tape the end joint of the second board until it is fully engaged and locked with the end of the first board of the second row.
- Continue installing full boards in the second row in the same direction to lock into the previous row (Fig. 7). Position the board so that the long side of the board is close to boards in the previous row and overlapping the groove of the boards in the previous row. Angle up and push forward until the boards lock together (Fig. 8).
- Continue installing full boards in the second and subsequent rows until you reach the wall on your right.
- Mark the last piece, cut and install. After all boards in the row are installed, press or walk all boards flat to the subfloor to begin the next row (Fig. 9).
- Use a slight tap when necessary to ensure joints are tight (Fig. 10).

Installing the Last Row

- The last row in the installation may need to be cut lengthwise.
- Place the row of planks to be cut on top of the last row of installed planks. Use a divider or a piece of the plank as a scribe to trace the contour of the wall (Fig. 11).
- Be sure to place a spacer between the marking pen and “scribe” piece of board. This adds the 1/4” (6.35 mm).

Installing Under a Door Jamb (All Installations)

- Installations of locking laminate floors under moldings, such as a door jamb, may require that the top lip of the groove on the end be reduced in size.
- Using a small plane or knife plane, shave off the edge of the groove.
- After the groove edge has been trimmed, place the board into place and tighten with a pull bar to test for fit. The installer must be certain that the proper expansion space is maintained and the flooring is not pinching.
- If fit is incorrect, trim as necessary. Remove any wax from the end joint so you will get good adhesion.
- Place a bead of recommended wood glue on the bottom lip of the groove.
- Reinset the tongue into the groove and tighten the board with a pull bar. Hold the board in place with painter’s tape (Scotch® Deluxe Surface Painter’s Tape 2380) until the glue is dry. Do not use masking tape or duct tape, as they may be damaged.

Installing in Kitchens or Bathrooms

- Prolonged exposure (greater than 24 hours) to water could damage laminate flooring. Installation and maintenance recommendations should be closely followed to prevent water from contacting the core material of the flooring.
- Full bathroom installations require folding the underlayment up the wall 2” (5 cm). Cut the underlayment even with the top of flooring after installation.
- Joint integrity is integral to moisture resistance. Avoid excessive joint flexing during installation.
- All perimeter expansion zones must be completely filled with 100% silicone caulk following the manufacturer’s recommendations.
- When applying caulk, it is helpful to first apply a strip of painter’s tape (Scotch® Deluxe Surface Painter’s Tape 2380) parallel to and approximately 1/32” (0.79 mm) from the edge of the laminate (Fig. 12). Then fill the expansion zone with caulk, remove the excess with a plastic scraper or putty knife and remove the tape.
- Molding may be used along a straight tub or shower base (Fig. 13). The expansion zone should be filled with 100% silicone caulk and the molding seated in the caulk while it is still wet. The joint between the molding and the tub or shower base should also be caulked.
- If molding is not an option, a normal 1/4” (6.35 mm) expansion zone may be used at the tub and then completely filled with 100% silicone caulk.
- The toilet should be removed before installing the flooring. Allow a 1/2” (6.35 mm) expansion zone between the flooring edge and the floor flange. Completely seal the zone with 100% silicone caulk.

Completing the Installation (All Installations)

- Remove all wedges and tape if used.
- Clean floor with the recommended flooring cleaner.
- If drywall dust is present, thoroughly vacuum prior to using the recommended cleaner.
- Trim all underlayment and install, or re-install, all base and/or quarter round moldings. Nail moldings into the wall, not the floor. Inspect the floor, filling all minor gaps with the appropriate blended filler.
- If the floor is to be covered, use a breathable material such as carpet. Do not cover with plastic.
- Leave warranty and floor care information with the owner. Advise them of the product name and code number of the flooring they purchased.
- To prevent surface damage, avoid rolling heavy furniture and appliances on the floor. Use plywood, hardboard or appliance lifts if necessary. Use protective casters/caster cups or felt pads on the legs of furniture to prevent damage to the flooring.

OPTIONAL - Glue Down Installation:

General Information for Glue-Down Applications

NOTE: DO NOT INSTALL FLOORING USING RUBBER MALLETS.

STRIKING THE SURFACE WITH A RUBBER MALLET MAY “BURN” THE FINISH CAUSING IRREVERSIBLE DAMAGE.

- Maximum adhesive working times: 50-60 minutes - When not in use, keep the adhesive container tightly closed to prevent thickening. Thickening will cause difficulty in spreading the adhesive. Bruce® Summit Select – 50 minutes
- Open times and curing times of ALL adhesives vary dependent upon floor temperature, humidity and room temperature. Urethane adhesive has a shortened working time in high humidity environments. In areas of low humidity, open time will be longer with urethane adhesives and shorter with some adhesives. Adjust the amount of adhesive spread on the subfloor accordingly. The adhesive should not be applied if subfloor or room temperature is below 60°F (16°C). WORKING TIME WILL VARY DEPENDING ON JOB SITE CONDITIONS.
- Hold a level at a minimum 45° angle (Figure 14) firmly against the subfloor to obtain a 50-60 ft. (4.5-5.5 m) per gallon spread rate. The trowel will leave ridges of adhesive and very little adhesive between the ridges. This method will allow you to still see the chalk lines between the ridges and provide the recommended spread rate.
- Follow all additional application instructions, follow the recommendations on the adhesive container.
- Proper ventilation within the room to mitigate fumes. An electric fan is helpful. Position the fan so it does not blow directly on the adhesive.

STEP 3: Spread the Adhesive (Glue-Down Installations)

- Spread sufficient amounts of the recommended adhesive with the recommended trowel (Figure 1) in an area that can be covered in 60 minutes (see adhesive information).

NOTE: Avoid installing on the surface of the flooring. If necessary, distribute weight using a kneeler board.

STEP 4: Installing the Floor (Glue-Down Installations)

(The first row of planks should be installed with the edge of the groove lined up on the chalk line. The tongue should be facing the starting wall. The first row must be aligned and seated in the adhesive, as all additional rows will be pushed back to this original row. Remove tongue to allow for expansion space, if necessary. On the row adjoining the wall. When installing pieces, engage the end-joint first, as close to the side (long) tongue and groove as possible, then slide together tightly to engage the side (long) joint tongue and groove. To avoid adhesive bleed-through and memory pull-back, avoid sliding pieces through the adhesive as much as possible when placing them in position.)
During the installation occasionally remove a piece of flooring from the subfloor and inspect the back for proper adhesive transfer. Adequate adhesive transfer is necessary to ensure sufficient holding strength.

- If the adhesive skins over and fails to transfer, remove and spread new adhesive to achieve proper bonding.

NOTE: Clean adhesive from the surface of the floor frequently, using the recommended adhesive cleaner. Urethane adhesives become extremely difficult to remove when cured. Do not use Scotch® Delicate Surface Painter’s Tape 2080 before adhesive is removed from the surface. Use clean towels, changed frequently, to prevent haze and adhesive residue.

- Check for a tight fit between all edges and ends of each plank. End-joints of adjacent rows should be staggered a minimum of 12˝ (30.48 cm) when possible, to ensure a more favorable overall appearance (Figure 18).

- It may be necessary to align the product with a cut-off piece of scrap as shown (Figure 18 - Keep scrap angle low to avoid edge damage). To eliminate minor shifting or gapping of product during installation, use Scotch® Delicate Surface Painter’s Tape 2080 to hold the planks together. After installation is complete, remove all of the Scotch® Delicate Surface Painter’s Tape 2080 from the surface of the newly installed flooring. Do not let the tape remain on the flooring longer than 24 hours. Avoid the use of masking or duct tape, which leaves an adhesive residue and may damage the finish.

- Roll and cross roll the floor with a 75-100 lb. roller within one hour of the installation and again two hours to ensure proper transfer of the adhesive.

- Be sure not to spread adhesive too far ahead of your work area (Figure 19).

- Complete the installation using this same technique for the remainder of the floor.

- Avoid heavy foot traffic on the floor for a period of 6-12 hours. Lift the furniture or fixtures back into place after 24 hours.

Proactive Protection for Your Floor:

- When moving appliances or heavy furniture it is always wise to lay a plywood panel, or similar, on your floor and “walk” the item across it. This protects your floor from scuffing, gouging and tears.

- Use floor protectors under furniture to reduce indentation. As a general rule of thumb, the heavier the item, the wider the floor protector needed.

- Place a walk-off mat at outside entrances to reduce the amount of dirt brought into your home. We strongly recommend mats without a latex or rubber backing since these backings can cause permanent discoloration.

Caring for Your Floor:

- Sweep or vacuum regularly, to remove loose dirt which can scratch your floor. Note: We do not recommend vacuums that have a beater bar since it can visibly damage your flooring surface. Additionally, we do not recommend electric brooms with hard plastic bottoms with no padding as use may result in discoloration and deglossing.

- Wipe up spills as soon as possible. Never use highly abrasive scrubbing tools on any laminate floor.

- Clean your floor routinely using Bruce® Hardwood and Laminate Floor Cleaner.

- Do NOT use detergents, abrasive cleaners, or “mop and shine” products. These products may leave a dull film on your floor.

- Laminate flooring, like other types of smooth floors, can become slippery when wet. Allow time for floor to dry after washing. Immedately wipe up wet areas from spills, foreign substance, or wet feet.

Repair Procedure:

For detailed repairs, please log on to AHF Products www.hardwoodexpert.com.