

Installation Guidance Note: Flotex Sheet

General Advice

The appearance, performance and durability of the installed floor covering will be determined to a large extent by the quality of the prepared subfloor and the conditions in which they are laid. As with any resilient floor covering irregularities in the subfloor will be apparent in the finished flooring.

It is important to ensure that all recommendations for substrate and site conditions are met prior to beginning the installation.

Beginning the installation is an implied acceptance of site conditions by the parties involved and liability for any failure directly related to inadequate site conditions becomes the responsibility of the installer and/or flooring contractor.

Subfloor preparation should be carried out in accordance with BS8203:2017 Code of practice for the installation of resilient floor coverings. Areas to receive flooring should be clean, free from other trades, fully enclosed and weather tight. Subfloors should be clean and free of contaminants, smooth, sound and permanently dry.

Always conduct moisture tests on **all** substrates. All ground-based level floors should have an effective moisture barrier.

Areas to receive flooring shall be adequately lit to allow for proper inspection of the substrate, installation and for final inspection.

Surface regularity should be within the SR1 surface regularity standard – less than 3mm under a 2m straightedge (BS8203:2017 section 6.2.3 and Annex C). Any nibs, abrupt ridges or changes of level in the subfloor should be removed by sanding or grinding, or by localised application of a levelling compound.

Contaminants can affect the adhesion of the new floor covering and/or cause migrating stains. It is therefore important that contaminants such as cleaning chemical residues, old adhesive residues and remains of old floor coverings such as residues of carpet tile backings are removed or, where permissible, isolated with an appropriate subfloor treatment.

Areas to receive flooring shall be adequately lit to allow for proper inspection of the substrate, installation and for final inspection.

It is essential that the laying area is at a steady temperature of 18 to 27°C for 48 hours prior to, during, and for 24 hours after installation. The material and adhesive should be conditioned in the same environment for at least 24 hours prior to the installation. Where the floorcoverings have been stored or transported immediately prior to delivery in temperatures below 10°C the acclimatisation period should be extended to 48 hours.

Prior to installation rolls should be checked to ensure that the correct colour, batch number and quantity have been received and that the material is in good condition. No claim will be accepted for incorrect colour, pattern or obvious damage if the material has been fitted.

Use material from the same batch/dye lot and install in roll number sequence. The use of different production batches will always result in visible shade differences. The batch number is clearly marked on the material packaging and must be checked before commencement of installation.

Note: For areas requiring a sustainable slip resistance product please visit our wetroom range – **Wetroom Solutions**.



Existing floors and substrates

Concrete and screeds bases:

It is important that the base is clean, dry, smooth, even and free from loose gritty particles. It is recommended to apply a 3mm application of smoothing compound.

All ground-based level floors should have an effective damp proof membrane.

If any doubt exists a proprietary surface applied damp proof membrane (DPM) or other appropriate moisture protection system should be used (CFA Guide to Contract Flooring).

Note: *Floor slabs circa 1965 or earlier are unlikely to contain an effective integral damp-proof membrane. Old floor slabs without a DPM may provide a moisture reading below 75% if they have previously been covered with a permeable floor covering such as vinyl composition tile or carpet. Potential ground water problems may not, therefore, come to light until the base is covered with an impermeable floor covering.*

Asphalt floors:

Should be clean, sound and free from any cracks. The base should be primed (if required by the smoothing compound manufacturer) and covered with a minimum 3mm thickness of smoothing compound suitable for this type of base.

Quarry tiles or ceramic tiles:

Should be checked to ensure that there are no loose or cracked tiles, thoroughly cleaned and degreased, primed and levelled with a 3mm thickness of a suitable smoothing compound.

Note: *Old quarry tiles were often laid on subfloors without a suitable Damp-proof membrane. This should be checked prior to installation of the floor. If there is no integral DPM, or if any doubt exists, then a surface DPM must be installed.*

Expansion joints:

Floor coverings should never bridge these joints, the joints need to be brought through to the final floor finish, floor coverings should stop either side of the expansion joint.

If required a suitable expansion joint cover strip can be used to cover the joint (see expansion joint cover strips).

Existing vinyl and cork flooring:

Should be taken up and any remaining adhesive cleaned off the floor. If the old adhesive residues cannot be completely removed or if the floor covering is to be fully adhered a minimum 3mm thickness of a suitable smoothing compound should be applied in accordance with the manufacturer's recommendations.

In older properties some tiles (and adhesives) may contain asbestos. Where it is difficult to establish whether or not these materials contain asbestos, specialist advice should be sought before attempting to remove.

Note: *Attention is drawn to Asbestos and man-made mineral fibres in buildings: practical guidance, published by DETR [7], which gives advice on the precautions to be taken when removing existing flooring containing asbestos." (BS8203:2017).*

Wooden floors

Existing Floorboards:

Loose or uneven floorboards should be secured, all protruding nail heads should be hammered flush and damaged boards replaced. Where required high spots should be sanded flush and uneven or hollow areas levelled with an appropriate smoothing compound prior to covering with plywood.

Chipboard, hardboard, Particle Board:

Forbo Flotex should not be directly adhered to the above substrates. Particle board subfloors and all wood panel based floating subfloors should be overlaid with plywood. (Refer to BS5325:2021 for Plywood performance specifications and installation requirements).



FLOORING SYSTEMS

Wood Blocks:

It is impossible to ensure that wood block floors are not loose or contain latent defects through aging. It is therefore strongly recommended that these are removed and that the subfloor is correctly prepared and, if necessary, a surface damp proof membrane applied.

Underfloor heating

Forbo flooring products may be installed over underfloor heated floors providing the maximum surface temperature of the substrate does not exceed 27°C under any condition of use.

It is imperative that the underfloor heating systems have been fully commissioned and found to be functioning correctly prior to the floor finish being installed. Ensure that the underfloor heating system is switched off 48 hours prior to the floor covering installation commencing and not turned on for at least 48 hours after the installation.

When raising the floor temperature after installation, do so gradually so the substrate and flooring material can adapt to the temperature change together. Peak temperatures should be avoided for at least seven days.

During the period of decommissioning of the underfloor heating system, an alternative heating source should be provided, if required, to ensure that the area of installation is kept at a steady temperature between 18°C – 27°C.

Where electric underfloor heating systems are being used their compatibility should be checked with the supplier before installing Flotex. Mesh or wired systems should be embedded with a layer of smoothing/levelling compound. The manufacturer of the smoothing compound should be consulted for advice on suitable products and recommendations for the minimum application thickness.

Note: *These systems should never be placed directly under the finished floor covering.*

If necessary, an alternate heating source should be used to maintain the room temperature at a minimum of 18°C prior to, during, and for 72 hours after installation.

The temperature of the underfloor heating system can be increased 72 hours following the installation. When raising the floor temperature, do so gradually so the substrate and flooring material can adapt to the temperature change together.

Note: *Care should be taken when placing rugs or items of furniture (that do not allow hot air circulation) onto underfloor heated floors. Placing these item types onto the underfloor heated floor can create hot spots and thermal blocks, resulting in damage to your Flotex flooring.*

Adhesive recommendations and application

The recommend adhesive is Eurocol 640 Eurostar Special a low VOC EC1 solvent-free, plasticizer-resistant acrylic dispersion adhesive. Use a 1.5mm x 5mm V notched trowel to apply the adhesive.

Note: *Trowels will wear during use, check the trowel both before and during use to ensure that the proper, specified trowel notch is used and maintained.*

The open time of the adhesive will depend on site conditions and porosity of the base. It is best practice to conduct an adhesive bond test before starting the installation. Bond testing will assist in identifying both the working characteristics of the adhesive (waiting and working time) for the site conditions, and also any potential bonding problems.

Note: *The adhesive must be spread evenly over the entire floor area with particular attention to edges – this will ensure that the sheet is fully bonded at the perimeters.*

If alternative supplier adhesives and primers are to be used consult with the supplier for usage information, guidance and warranty.



Installation

Direction of laying

Always pay particular attention to the direction and planning of the sheets to avoid cross seams that coincide with areas of heavy use or doorways.

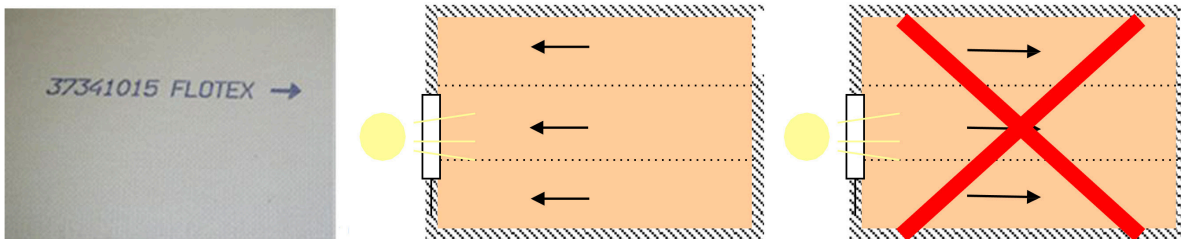
Install sheets in the same direction for seaming. Install with arrows all pointing in the same direction, the arrows on the back of the sheet indicate the pile direction.

As with all newly installed floor coverings Flotex sheet should be protected from heavy traffic, particularly high point load wheeled traffic, for 24 hours and must not be washed for 48 hours after installation.

Pile Direction

To prevent potential problems of deviation of wheeled traffic travelling across the dense pile of Flotex; it is strongly recommended that Flotex sheet is laid with the pile running lengthways in the main direction of traffic.

The arrows on the back of the sheet indicate the pile direction. Lay the sheets edge to edge, following the direction of the arrows, which should point towards the main light source, NEVER AWAY.

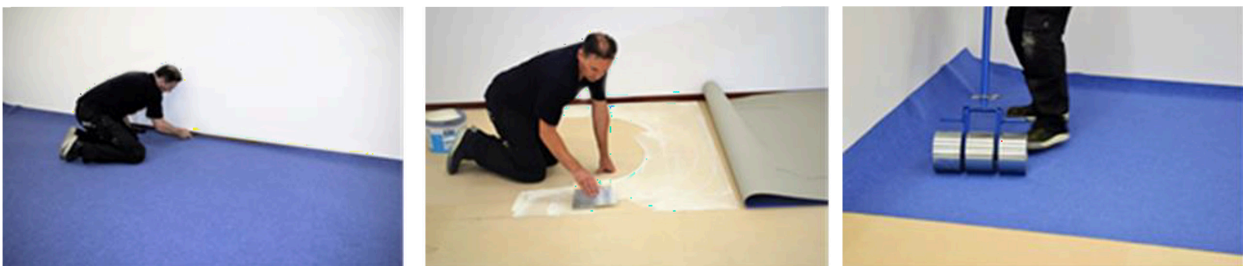


Measure the area to be installed and determine the direction in which the material will be installed and seam placement. Seams must be a minimum of 15cm away from any subfloor joints such as day joints, saw cuts, etc.

Cut the rolls to the required lengths, remembering to allow for the pattern repeat.

Dry lay the pieces, butting the factory edges for seaming. Make sure that the seam edges come together with a net fit with no fullness or gaps and check the pattern match.

Trim off surplus. Roll the sheets back onto themselves to approximately half their length. Take care that the sheets do not shift during handling. Mark the position of the outside edge of the first sheet in pencil on the floor. Apply the adhesive to the line marking the edge of the first sheet. Feed the first sheet into the wet adhesive (after the appropriate waiting time specified by the adhesive manufacture if applicable) following the pencil mark on the floor.



Using a 68 kg roller, press the Flotex firmly into the adhesive from the center, towards the edges, to eliminate air bubbles and ensure good adhesion to the sub-floor. Areas that cannot be rolled with the large roller e.g. abutments such as door frames or skirting boards should be rolled with a hand roller or pressed into the adhesive with a rubbing board. Trim off excess floor covering along the walls and skirting boards. If necessary, roll or press the flooring into the adhesive after trimming.



Remove fresh adhesive residue immediately with a clean white damp cloth.

Follow the above procedure to lay the opposite half of the first sheet and continue to lay the remaining sheets in the same way, edge to edge with close joints. Finish off with a rubbing board or glider over the entire floor.

Laying Flotex to a Staircase

Flotex sheet is suitable for use on stairs, following these guidelines:

Nosing should always be used.

A separate piece of Flotex must be used for each tread and riser.

Use contact adhesive only for the risers.

On the tread, the pile should lay (arrows) towards the nose of the step.

For the riser, the pile should lay (arrows) downwards towards the tread.

On completion of the installation

First impressions may have more impact on the client than hours of skilled fitting.

The completed installation should be cleared of scrap material and debris, the floor swept or vacuumed, and if fully adhered, any traces of adhesive residues removed from the floor and skirtings.

If the floor covering is to be protected from other trades or traffic prior to project completion, a protection product should be chosen that is appropriate for the type and level of traffic likely to be experienced and the potential for impact, scratching or indentation damage.

Gliders suitable for hard floors should be fitted to moveable furniture. Office chairs and other items of rolling furniture should be fitted with Type W castors.

If the optimum performance of any new floor covering is to be achieved, it is important that the correct cleaning and maintenance procedures are used from day one. Cleaning and maintenance guides for all Forbo Flooring products are available for download.

www.forbo-flooring.co.uk/downloads

Cleaning and maintenance guides should be passed onto the client or end user as appropriate on completion of the installation, and before any hand over clean is started.



If in any doubt contact us:

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Additional Reference documents and information:

- Forbo Floor Coverings Installation Guide: www.forbo-flooring.co.uk
- BS8203:2017
- The CFA Guide to Contract Flooring www.cfa.org.uk