

Installation Guidance Note: Westbond Carpet Tile Installation

The following information is provided to highlight important product and installation characteristics for Westbond fusion bonded carpet tiles. The luxury aesthetic and long term performance of Westbond carpet tiles are dependent on correct installation.

Subfloor preparation

The quality of the finished installation will depend on the quality of the subfloor. Irregularities in the subfloor will be apparent in the finished flooring.

All subfloors should be smooth, sound clean and permanently dry in accordance with BS5325:2001. Particular attention should be paid to the following:

- i) All cementitious floors must have a residual moisture content of less than 75%, when measured according to Annex A of BS5325.
- ii) Problems associated with plasticizer migration from PVC flooring can lead to dimensional instability in carpet tiles. All subfloors of this type must be removed before installation.
- iii) 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 or an asphalt screed applied before installation of carpet tiles.
- iv) Raised access flooring panels have a tendency to settle shortly after installation and this should be taken into account when assessing the appearance of a carpet tile installation fitted onto

such flooring systems. Adhesive manufacturers' instructions must be followed.

Underfloor Heating

Westbond carpet tiles are excellent thermal insulators (Tog value typically 0.7 – 2.0) and this should be taken into account when using with underfloor heating systems. A separate guidance note **"Installation of Forbo Floor Coverings on Underfloor Heating Systems"** provides more information on the conditions for installation in such circumstances.

Installation - general

Floor protection

Tiles should be protected from dirt and dust before, during and after installation. Failure to do so may affect the performance warranty. When using protective sheeting ensure that all edges are sealed to prevent building debris and dust settling on the carpet tiles. Ensure that any adhesive tape residues on the carpet tile pile surface are removed before use.

Batch Matching

As with any floor covering, the use of different production batches will always result in visible shade differences. It is essential that different batches are not mixed in the same area. When ordering tiles, each floor area (plus spares) must be specified from the same batch.

The batch number is clearly marked on the reverse of each carpet tile and must be checked before commencement of installation.

Westbond carpet tiles are identified as either 'T' or 'B' on both the tile

backing and boxes as they are manufactured with a top ('T') and back ('B') before splitting into two separate tiles. The mixing of T and B tiles in the same area of installation is not recommended and should not be carried out unless absolutely unavoidable.

Where both 'T' and 'B' tiles are supplied they should be segregated and used in separate installation areas.

If this is not possible, lay the 'B' or 'T' tiles only in the first half of the installation and then the remaining tiles to the other half. Ideally if there is a natural break or feature centrally in the room use this to work off.

Please note that Westbond cut pile tiles, particularly plain colours, may exhibit accentuated joins when first installed due to loose fibre from manufacture— this is a characteristic of cut pile carpet tiles and will even out over time through normal wear and maintenance.

Inspection

- i). Boxes should be checked to ensure that the correct tile type, colour, batch number and quantity have been received and that the tiles are in good condition. No claim will be accepted for incorrect colour, pattern or obvious damage if the tiles have been fitted.
- ii). Any carpet tile can be susceptible to a certain amount of pile distortion when they are taken out of their boxes. This may result in visual differences in appearance between tiles, during, and immediately following, installation. Tile edges may also be more evident immediately after installation.

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Note: these are not manufacturing defects, and after fitting and assuming normal prevailing conditions (under dynamic foot movement) this visual differential will diminish as the pile recovers to its natural position. Recovery will normally take place soon after installation. However, in some cases it can take up to six weeks for the pile to fully condition and develop a uniform visual appearance.

iii). As with any cut pile carpet, cut pile carpet tiles may be subject to some pile shedding following installation. This is not a product fault and if any pile shedding does occur, it will effectively cease after several cycles of vacuum cleaning and normal use.

Conditioning

Prior to installation, the carpet tiles must be allowed to acclimatise in opened boxes for at least 24 hours in the atmospheric conditions which will prevail during use. This is particularly important if the tiles have been stored or delivered in conditions of extreme temperature and/or humidity.

Installation - fitting

The following instructions are intended to draw the fitter's attention to current "Best Practice", and must be followed for the relevant product guarantees to be valid.

Installation must be carried out in accordance with the requirements of BS 5325:2001 or any subsequent revision, and the guidelines contained in the Contract Flooring Association "Guide to Contract Flooring".

Setting Out

The location of the starting point of an installation is usually determined by the fitter to maximize the yield. This may be anywhere in the room,

but would normally be located as near to the true centre as possible. Small cuts in either the field or perimeter should be avoided.

Having established the starting point for the installation, making some check measurements or dry laying a few rows of tiles will help to identify any potential problems or necessary adjustments to avoid small perimeter cuts.

Pile Direction

The arrow marks on the reverse of every tile indicate the direction of pile lay. The preference of the specifier as to "broadloom", "tessellated" or other visual effects must be confirmed before tiles are installed.

Note: the term 'broadloom' refers to the installation direction of the carpet ties and does not mean that the installation will be viewed as seamless. Whilst the quality of Westbond carpet tiles pile will help to reduce tile edges over time, these may remain visible during the life of the product in non or low trafficked areas.

Note: options for the direction of tile installation will vary between product ranges. It is advisable to check with Forbo Flooring prior to installation.

Pile trapping

When fitting Westbond tiles they should be placed against the adjacent tiles do not slide Westbond tiles into place.

Ensure that each tile butts up to its neighbour as tightly as possible without placing the tile under sideways pressure which may cause peaking. It is essential that no pile material becomes trapped between tiles (this is particularly important when fitting plain colour cut pile products such as Westbond).

Any trapped pile will distort the overall tile adhesion bond which may affect the long term tile bonding as well as negatively affecting the tile edge aesthetic. See pictures below



Trapped Pile



Poor tile edges resulting from trapped pile

Tile Fixing

Carpet tiles must be adhered using a high grab, all-over tackifier adhesive system; Forbo Eurocol 542 Eurofix Tack Plus is recommended.

The tackifier adhesive must be spread evenly over the entire floor area with particular attention to edges – this will ensure any perimeter tile cuts are fully bonded. Failure to fully bond all full tiles and tile cuts may result in individual tiles shifting and lifting

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Where periphery tiles are not constrained by fixtures e.g. walls, edge strips etc., it is recommended that such tiles are adhered using a permanent adhesive; Forbo Eurocol 540 Eurosafe Special is recommended.

Adhesives must be applied according to the manufacturer's instructions and it is essential that tackifier adhesives are allowed to dry to a clear, tacky finish before laying the carpet tile. Failure to do so could result in a permanent non-release bond.

Note: adhesive coverage rates will be reduced on very porous subfloors such as plywood or sand cement screeds.

Tiles with Resilient Backings e.g. Softbac®

These should be installed according to the general instructions outlined above, but special note must be taken of the following:

i) Prior to installation, carpet tiles with resilient backings (e.g. Softbac®) should be removed from their boxes as part of the conditioning process and stacked not more than 12 tiles high. The stacked tiles must be allowed to acclimatise for at least 24 hours in the atmospheric conditions which will prevail during use. This is particularly important if the tiles have been stored or delivered in conditions of extreme temperature and/or humidity.

ii) Because of the potential "spring-back" effect which can lead to gapping, it is essential that resilient-backed tiles are tightly fitted. It is essential that no pile material becomes entrapped between tiles.

Note: Softbac® tiles should be firmly placed against adjacent tiles. Do not slide Softbac® tiles into place.

Maintenance – initial site cleaning

Appropriate care and maintenance is essential to longevity and appearance retention and is necessary to maintain product warranties. Refer to the cleaning and maintenance guidelines available from Forbo Flooring Systems.

Note: Upright vacuum cleaners with a mechanically powered brush should be used on all carpet tile.

Performance and Construction

These details vary according to carpet selection. Refer to Forbo Flooring Product Literature for Further information.

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Additional Reference documents/Information

BS5325:2001

The CFA Guide to Contract Flooring (Tel: 01159 411126)