

Installation Guidance Note: Surestep Fast Fit

General Advice

Surestep Fast Fit is a loose lay PVC sheet floor covering that does not require an adhesive. A double sided plasticiser resistant contact adhesive 85mm minimum wide tape should be used to support all seams/joints between sheets, and cross joints (see general installation guidance below).

As with any floor covering, 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.

Subfloor preparation should be carried out in accordance with AS1884-2021 "Floorcoverings - Resilient sheet and tiles - installation practices". Areas to receive flooring should be clean, free from other trades, fully enclosed and weather tight. Subfloors should be clean, smooth and sound, further information on acceptable substrate below.

Notes:

- The maximum tolerance in terms of flatness and evenness of the substrate is a 4 mm deviation under a 2m straight edge (measured by moving the straight edge in all directions across the substrate) Abrupt deviations shall be no more than 0.5 mm under a 150 mm straight edge.
- Any nibs, abrupt ridges, or changes of level in the subfloor should be removed by sanding or grinding, or by localised application of a smoothing or leveling compound.

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.

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.

Note: Where the floor coverings have been stored or transported immediately prior to delivery in temperatures below 10°C the acclimatisation period should be extended to 48 hours.

Ensure that all recommendations for substrate and site conditions are met, prior to beginning the installation.

Note: Starting the installation is an implied acceptance of site conditions by the parties involved and liability for any failure directly related to inadequate site conditions may become the responsibility of the installation company.

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.

Acceptable substrates

Surestep Fast Fit may be installed on the following substrates:

- new or existing concrete or cement screed substrate
- new or existing wood panel or particle board substrates
- Existing damp subfloors without an effective DPM and with a residual moisture content up to 97%RH (a ventilated skirting should be used in these circumstances, see installation guide for ventilated skirtings.) (Not suitable for subfloors subject to lying water or hydrostatic pressure)
- Old ceramics tiles
- Old in-situ floor finishes (resin) at least 2mm thick
- Old floor paint
- Old compact resilient floor coverings (semi-flexible tiles, vinyl asbestos tiles, sheet vinyl flooring and linoleum).
- Existing wood block floors (on upper floors only).
- Raised Access floors (subject to the conditions below).

For any subfloor not listed above or if any doubt exists, contact Forbo Flooring Technical Services.

Note: Where previously installed floor coverings have been stripped from an existing substrate, the substrate must be prepared to receive new Surestep Fast Fit in accordance with AS1884-2021.

Concrete slabs or cementitious screeds: New and existing ground floor slabs must be cast on a damp-proof membrane in accordance with the requirements of AS 1884-2021. If an effective damp proof membrane is not present or any doubt exists, a surface damp proof membrane should be applied.

- *The maximum tolerance in terms of flatness and evenness of the substrate is a 4 mm deviation under a 2m straight edge (measured by moving the straight edge in all directions across the substrate) Abrupt deviations shall be not more than 0.5 mm under a 150 mm straight edge.*

Surestep Fast Fit can be laid on substrates with cracks less than 1mm wide, provided that the difference in level is not more than 1 mm. For cracks that do not meet these criteria contact Forbo flooring for further guidance.

Structural movement joints should not be bridged, and suitable proprietary movement joint covers should be used.

Where required, smoothing and levelling compounds rated for heavy traffic areas (if necessary) should be applied to the slab. Smoothing compounds are not required for clean, sound, and smooth concrete surfaces, provided that they satisfy flatness tolerances stated above.

If a smoothing compound is not being applied, the surface of the slab should be primed with a suitable primer to keep the subfloor dust free.

Wood panel substrates (tongue-and-groove boards) – plywood or particle board floors should be prepared in accordance with AS1884-2021.

Old ceramics tiles: laid on a concrete or cement screed substrate in sound condition, soundly adhered to the bedding screed (sealed ceramics tiles) or substrate (adhesive-bonded ceramics tiles) require no further treatment where differences in level are less than 1mm and/or grout width is less than 4 mm.

Small localised differences in level between 1 mm and 2 mm between tiles may be repaired with a suitable smoothing/levelling compound.

Where there is a difference in level greater than 1 mm or where grouting is wider than 4mm, a general heavy duty-rated self-smooth/levelling compound suitable for the room's intended purpose should be applied across the entire surface area.

Existing in-situ resin floor finish: the old finish must be sound and fully bonded and at least 2 mm thick. If flatness, cleanliness, and bond requirements are not satisfied, the old in-situ floor finish must be removed, and the subfloor prepared in accordance with AS 1884-2021.

Floor paint: The substrate should be clean and sound. Sanding is not necessary if the paint is sound.

Old flexible floor coverings: semi-flexible asbestos free or compact vinyl tiles or compact linoleum. Before installation check the condition of the existing floor covering to ensure that it is well bonded to the base. Ensure that any loose or damaged sections of the floor coverings are removed and repaired. If an underfloor heating system has been installed, old flexible floor coverings must always be removed.



Semi-flexible tiles containing asbestos: before installation, check the condition of the existing floor covering to ensure that it is well bonded to the base and any loose or damaged sections of the floor coverings are removed and repaired. If any tiles are removed this should be carried out in accordance with HSE regulations and guidance and any waste materials disposed of in accordance with current applicable legislation.

As a precautionary measure, care must be taken not to cut, sand or drill into the old asbestos products (floor or wall) when cutting and trimming the new floor covering. Best practice is therefore to make all cuts with a hooked blade.

Note: Surestep Fast Fit can only be laid on a substrate that has previously received only a single layer of floor covering. The rating of the old floor covering must satisfy the new rating required, particularly if the room is to be used for a different purpose i.e. does the existing floorcovering meet the current fire ratings, can the existing asbestos flooring be encapsulated by a new floorcovering.

Existing wood block floors: Surestep Fast Fit may be installed on existing wood block floors except for wood blocks laid at ground floor level. Blocks should be securely bonded to the base, smooth, even and free of any oil or wax based finishes. If necessary, the blocks should be sanded to remove any contaminants and/or unevenness between the blocks. If any doubt exists, contact Forbo Flooring Technical Services for advice.

Raised access floors: Floor panels must be securely fixed with a maximum height difference between adjacent panels of 1mm. Gaps between panel edges should not exceed 3mm.

Underfloor heating

Surestep Fast Fit can be used in conjunction with under-floor heating systems. It is imperative that the underfloor heating systems have been 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 remains off for at least 48 hours after the installation is complete.

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

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

Direction of laying

The following installation advice should be followed in relation to direction of sheet laying;



All over/Uni designs:

Reverse installation of alternate sheet lengths is required.



Directional designs:

Sheet lengths should be installed in the same direction.

The recommended installation direction for each design is also confirmed in the product brochures and packaging and printed on the underside of each roll.

General installation guidance

Surestep Fast Fit is installed loose laid using standard installation techniques. Seams are supported with a double sided plasticiser resistance contact adhesive 85mm minimum wide tape for welding.

Always check the recommended direction of laying before cutting sheet length (see above).

Cut the sheet material to the required lengths allowing an overlap of 1-2 cm for cutting of seams.

It is recommended that the roll lengths are rolled out and laid out flat in the installation area the day before installation to allow the product to settle.

There is no maximum limit for the floor area that can be laid but structural movement (expansion) joints should not be covered with any part of the Surestep Fast Fit system and a proprietary movement joint cover should be used.

Cross seams should be formed and cut in the same manner as for side seams.

A suitable cover strip should be used at door thresholds.



Cutting and fitting

Each sheet should be 'scribed to fit' and the factory edge removed before cutting the seam. Seams should be overlapped and cut or under-scribed or cut with a seam cutter to form a close butt joint.

Note: do not cut the sheet too tightly to the walls. The sheet should be cut leaving a gap of 1mm at the perimeter of the room or any items of fixed furniture.

Scribe the long side of the sheet to the wall first. Place the sheet back against the wall. With the sheet fitted correctly in position along the length, and the ends riding up the end walls, trim the factory edge on the opposite side of the sheet (1 to 2 cm) using a seam cutter or by striking a chalk line and cutting through the sheet following this line with a straight edge and utility knife. Scribe the sheet end to the walls.

Lay a strip of a double sided plasticiser resistant contact adhesive 85mm minimum wide tape facing the subfloor so that it lies equally either side of the seam (see fig.1).

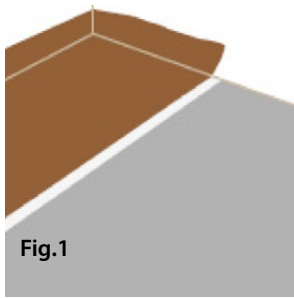


Fig.1

Lay the next sheet alongside the first fitted sheet with the sheet ends lapping up the wall and the edge of the sheet overlapping the previously fitted sheet by approximately 1 - 2cm. Trim the factory edge of the opposite side of this sheet as above and apply a strip of a double-sided plasticiser resistant contact adhesive 85mm minimum wide tape under the line of the seam.

Scribe and cut each end of this length as for the first sheet.

Cut the seam to form a close butted seam.

Note: use a hook blade when making the final cut for seams to avoid damaging the adhesive tape, or when making any cut over vinyl asbestos tiles.

Repeat this process for each subsequent sheet length. The final length which abuts the opposite wall should be cut and fitted using the method described for the first length.

Note: it is best practice that factory edges are always be trimmed to form a true edge for seaming.

Once all the sheets have been cut ready for welding, lift the sheet ends at each seam to reveal the adhesive tape. Peel away the protective film, keeping the protective tape as close to the floor as possible (see fig. 2 and 3). Allow the floor covering to fall back into place along the seams and smooth out by hand along the seam as the protective tape is removed. Once completed press the sheet into the adhesive tape with a rubbing board to ensure optimum adherence of the floor covering to the tape.

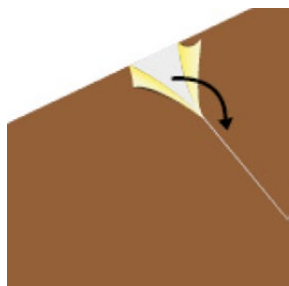


Fig.2

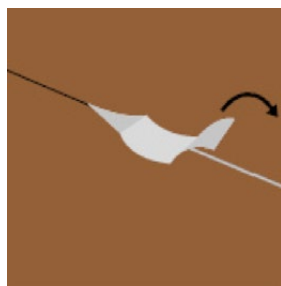
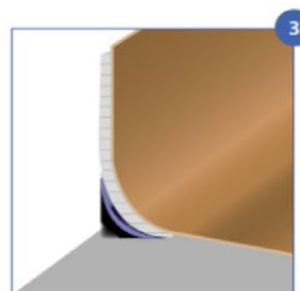
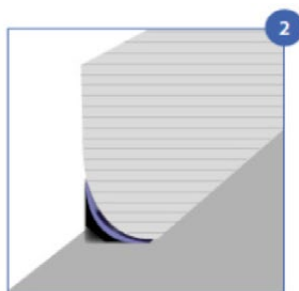
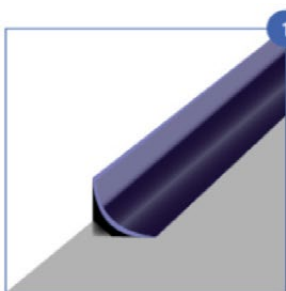


Fig.3

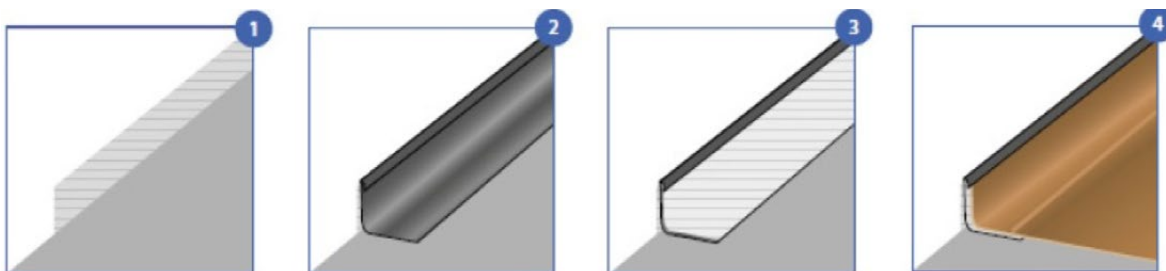
Coved Skirting

Surestep Fast Fit can be used in conjunction site formed coved using standard techniques with a 35 mm radius cove former (see below)



The cove former should be adhered using a suitable plasticiser resistant double-sided tape system. The Surestep Fast Fit sheet should be adhered to the wall and the cover former using the same double-sided tape system.

As an alternative to the above cap and cove skirting may be used. This system is particularly recommended where Surestep Fast Fit is being installed over vinyl asbestos tiles (see below).

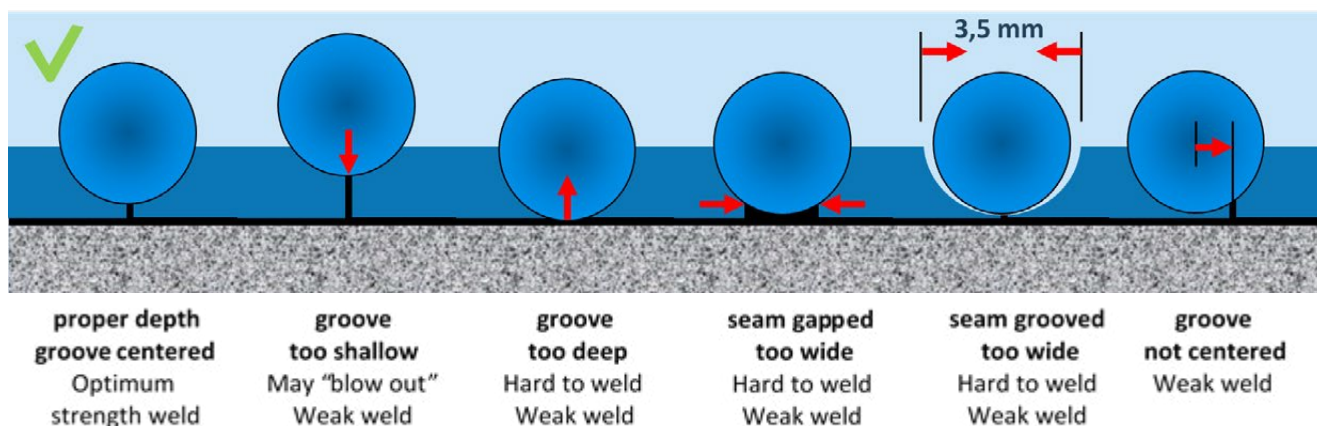


The Surestep Fast Fit complete skirting should be adhered to the wall and the cove former using the same double sided tape system (see below).

Note: If site formed coving is being used with Wood designs, the optimum visual effect will be achieved by laying with a border cove either in the same design with the plank lengths running parallel to the wall around the perimeter of the room or using a contrasting uni colour/all over design.

Seam forming and grooving

Seams should be grooved to a depth of approximately 2/3rd of the material thickness. A 'P' Type groover is recommended for manual grooving of seams, however, automatic or power groover may be more productive on larger installation.



Welding

Switch on the hot air gun and allow 5-7 minutes for it to reach the selected temperature. Surestep Fast Fit should be welded at a temperature of approximately 450°C. (see weld gun manual for setting details). Fit the welding nozzle before switching on the hot air gun.

If the gun is resting on the floor, ensure that the nozzle is not directed at the floor or anywhere dangerous.

Weld guns will vary, so it is always advisable to practice weld techniques first on a piece of waste material to match the correct air gun temperature with welding speed. Surestep Fast Fit should be welded with a 5 mm Speedweld nozzle.

Make sure the groove is thoroughly cleaned before beginning to heat weld. Make sure that all electrical cables are laid out without tangles and that there are no obstructions along the seam to be welded.

Cut the welding cable to a consistent and generous length or unwind sufficient weld rod from the reel and put the reel in a position where you are working towards it. Have the power cable ahead of you if possible.

Start at a wall. Thread the cable through and weld moving backwards, away from the wall, maintaining a slight downward pressure so that the weld nozzle will force the weld cable into the groove. Do not let the cable melt in the nozzle.

A good weld is obtained by the correct combination of temperature, speed and downward pressure. The weld cable should be allowed to melt enough so that the melted rod reaches the bottom of the groove.

Trimming

A Mozart knife is recommended to trim weld rods as the most effective option to provide a neat finish.

While the cable is still warm trim off most of the top half of the cable down to approximately 0.5mm using a Mozart knife which fits over the cable (alternatively careful use of a sharp spatula and slide). This enables the cable to cool more quickly and enables a quick first cut to be made without risk of gouging the material.

The welding cable will dish slightly (concave downwards) as it cools. Wait until the material is completely cool before trimming flush with the surface of the sheet with a Mozart knife (or careful use of a sharp spatula angled slightly across the line of cut).



Note: Making the final trim while the welding rod and material is still warm can result in the weld cable dishing of the weld cable. This may result in subsequent seam soiling problems or cause permanent damage to the surface of the flooring.

Joining up a weld

To join a weld in the middle of a seam trim off the loose ends and chamfer down the section to be overlapped with a hand groover. Ensure hot air gets into the groove and heats the cable. As the gun travels over the un-welded section apply pressure and carry the weld on over the section to be joined. Allow to cool and trim as normal.



Perimeter sealing

In areas subject to wet spillages or cleaning methods the following advice should be followed:

Where the floor covering is flat laid without covered skirtings the perimeter edges should be sealed with a suitable waterproof, mould resistant, flexible, and non-staining sealant. This should also be applied at abutments such as architraves together with any areas where pipes, etc. come up through the floor covering.

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 any traces of adhesive residues removed from the floor and skirtings.

Surestep Fast Fit is occupancy ready immediately after installation.

If the floor covering is to be protected from other trades or site 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.

In many cases it is customary for the initial floor preparation to be left, or subcontracted, to a professional cleaning and maintenance contractor who will have the staff and equipment to do the job thoroughly.

The use of the wrong type of cleaning products and/or abrasive cleaning pads can damage the flooring. If the optimum performance of any new floor covering is to be achieved, it is important that the correct cleaning and maintenance products and procedures are used from day one. Floorcare guides for all Forbo Flooring sheet vinyl products are available for download at:

www.forbo-flooring.com.au/downloads

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

If in any doubt contact us:

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