



# INSTALLATION GUIDELINES

## CLICK VINYL FLOORING

Maintenance Instructions and Limited Warranty Included

---

### IMPORTANT NOTICE

Buyers and owners are responsible for thoroughly reading all materials provided by the retailer at time of purchase prior to the installation of flooring, including the installation guidelines, maintenance instructions, and the product warranty information. The following instructions apply only to Empire’s click vinyl floors, included within the click Collection. This product is installed through a side click installation method.

Empire is not responsible for the installer’s application of the product and requires the product to be inspected prior to installation. The installer should contact the supplier immediately for replacement if the product (whether an individual plank or more) appears doubtful in appearance, such as color, finish or quality. The supplier is responsible for replacing flooring planks if the product is determined to be defective. However, Empire is *not* responsible for flooring that has been previously installed or damaged on the surface (or tongue) of the plank by the installer. For flooring that is determined to be defective post-installation, Empire will reimburse the buyer for the flooring planks only. Labor costs or any other related expenses will not be reimbursed.

---

### TABLE OF CONTENTS

General Information.....	1
Materials & Tools.....	2
subfloor Preparation.....	2
A. General Subfloor Preparation & Precautions.....	2
B. Concrete.....	2
C. Wood.....	2
D. Existing Floor Covering.....	3
E. Radiant Heat.....	3
Room Preparation.....	3
A. Wall Base Trim.....	3
B. Door Jambs.....	3
C. Wall Irregularities.....	3
Acclimation.....	4
Installation.....	4
A. Basic Procedures.....	4
B. Install the Floor.....	4
C. Precautions.....	5
Maintenance Instructions.....	6
Warranty.....	7

---

## GENERAL INFORMATION

- Laying the floor should be the last step of your project.
  - Click vinyl floors can be installed at grade level, above grade level, or below grade level.
  - The click vinyl flooring must be placed in the job site for a minimum of 48 hours prior to installation. Be sure the room temperature is between 18-23° C (65-75° F) before, during, and after the installation. *Do not remove planks from the carton during this acclimation period.*
  - The floor floats and is installed without glue. It is safe to walk on the floor during and immediately after installation.
  - **The installation of Empire click vinyl flooring is not guaranteed for radiant heated floors.**
  - It is recommended to install flooring parallel to the longest wall in the room or parallel to the main window in the room.
  - To calculate the flooring material requirements, measure the length and width of the room where you will be installing the click vinyl floor and multiply them together to determine its area. Add 10% to the room's area to determine square footage of click vinyl flooring that you will require. We recommend you purchase a few extra cartons of flooring to be used in case you have some damaged pieces, miscalculate the size of the room or miss cut some pieces.
  - *Document Each Test:* To ensure that the flooring product is being installed according to the outlined guidelines, Empire requires for the buyer or installer to document each step of the preparation process prior to installing the flooring. This involves taking a photograph of the test reader that displays, the temperature of the job site, the subfloor, etc., along with the date and time that the photograph was taken. This can be completed quickly using a basic camera on your cell phone and helps protect the buyer or installer in the case that a claim needs to be filed.
  - *CAUTION:* Do not install click vinyl flooring over carpet or any foam or underlayment. This product is not suitable for any outside use, sunrooms/solariums, saunas or rooms/homes that are not temperature controlled. Exposure to long-term direct sunlight can cause damage to your floor.
  - When installing in areas greater than 27' feet in any direction, such as one large room, two or more adjoining rooms, archways greater than 4 feet and large rooms with a connected hallway, a T-molding break must be installed across the room, at the archway or at the beginning of the hallway to allow extra expansion space. **Not following this instruction will void your warranty.**
-

## MATERIALS & TOOLS

### **Materials**

- Click vinyl flooring
- Transitional moldings (if needed)

### **Tools**

- Utility knife
  - Measuring Tape
  - Shears for cutting around irregular shaped objects
  - 3/8" Spacers
- 

## SUBFLOOR PREPARATION

### **A. General Subfloor Preparation & Precautions**

- Subfloors must be clean and free of dirt and debris prior to installation.
- Subfloors must be structurally sound and flat prior to installation.
- Carpet is not a suitable underlayment for click vinyl floors. All carpet, carpet pad and carpet tack should be removed prior to installation.
- Variations in the subfloor flatness should not exceed 1/16" per 3 ft. (2 mm/m). Floors must be leveled to meet this specification prior to installation. Level by filling depressed areas with floor leveling compounds and sanding or grinding down any raised areas. Subfloor thickness must be a minimum of 15 mm (5/8").
- Click vinyl flooring is waterproof. It is *not* a waterproofer, any moisture problem need to be addressed prior to installation.

### **B. Concrete**

- Concrete subfloors must be properly cured and allowed to dry for at least 60 days prior to installation. Test concrete subfloor for moisture prior to installation.
  - If condensation appears on the film after 24 hours or concrete appears dark, in color, moisture is likely present and a Calcium Chloride test must be performed.
  - The maximum allowable moisture emission is 5 lbs./1000 ft.<sup>2</sup> per 24 hours (2.26 kg/101.6 m<sup>2</sup> per 24 hours).

### **C. Wood**

- Wood subfloors must be structurally sound and screwed or nailed to supporting beams.

### **D. Existing Floor Covering**

- Click vinyl flooring can be installed over most existing hard surface floor covering provided that the existing surface can be made smooth.
- When the removal of the existing flooring is not an option, the existing flooring should be covered with an embossing leveler. Existing sheet vinyl should not be overly cushioned and should only consist of one layer.
- Ceramic tile should be made smooth by applying a patching or leveling compound made specifically to smooth out ceramic joints.

### **E. Radiant heat**

**IMPORTANT:** Due to the speed of sudden temperature changes, which has the potential to negatively affect click vinyl flooring construction, it is not recommended to install over any **radiant heating system**. Installation over radiant heating systems will not be covered by the

manufacturer's warranty.

Owner and installer are solely and jointly responsible for checking that pre-installation conditions and/or specifications listed in this guide have been thoroughly met prior to installation of the floor.

---

## ROOM PREPARATION

### A. Wall Base/Trim

- Removal of existing wall base/trim is optional.
- Wall base or trim will need to be installed once the flooring installation is complete to cover the expansion space around the perimeter of the room.
- Always nail/adhere wall base and trim to the wall. Never nail/adhere it to the click vinyl flooring.

### B. Doors/Door Jambs

Click vinyl floors should be installed under door jambs so your door jambs will need to be undercut accordingly. To do so:

- Use click vinyl flooring off-cut and a small piece of underlayment to support your saw blade at the correct height for undercutting.
- Check door clearances and make any necessary height adjustments before installing click vinyl floors.
- Make sure to leave the correct expansion spacing.

### C. Wall Irregularities

Walls are not always perfectly straight. Empire click vinyl floors will need to be cut so as to fit within irregularities of your walls. To do so:

1. Install a complete, first row of the click vinyl floor and ensure that all long edges of the flooring are aligned flush with one other.
  2. Slide the whole row against the wall; you will now notice any of these irregularities (i.e. areas where the wall is not straight.)
  3. Trace the contour of the wall onto the row of click vinyl flooring with a pencil or marker.
  4. Once traced, uninstall the planks carefully so as to not damage the locking system and cut along the traced line.
  5. Re-install the planks leaving the necessary 3/8" (10 mm) expansion space.
- 

## ACCLIMATION

**IMPORTANT:** Do not open boxes until ready to begin installation.

Click vinyl floors must be acclimated to the conditions of your home before they are installed. To do so, cross-stack unopened cartons in the area where they will be installed and away from outside walls, heat and air conditioning vents. Allow 48 hours for your floors to acclimate to the conditions of the installation area before opening the cartons. Installation temperature should be at a minimum of 65° F (18° C).

---

## INSTALLATION

### A. Basic Procedures

- Inspect every plank for damage before installing it.
- Click vinyl flooring is designed to be a floating floor, so do not secure the planks to the subfloor.
- The first and last row of the installation should be wider than 3.5" (9 cm). To ensure this will be the case, prior to installation:
  1. Measure the width of the room and divide it by the width of the planks you are installing.
  2. If the remainder is less than 3.5" (9 cm) cut 3.5" (9 cm) from the width of the first row. If this is not possible, simply ensure that both edge planks are as even in width as possible.
- Prepare the subfloor and room as per the corresponding instructions found in this guideline.
- Use spacers around the perimeter to maintain the necessary 3/8" (10 mm) expansion space.
- Select a starting corner of the room and work from right to left.

### B. Install the Floor

- 1.) Accurately measure the room to determine the center line, adjust the established line to accommodate a balanced layout and then transpose this line to a comfortable width away from the starting wall (approximately 2' to 3' wide). Determine if the starter row will need to be cut. If the first row of planks does not need to be trimmed in width, it will be necessary to cut off the unsupported tongue so that a clean solid edge is towards the wall.
- 2.) Position the first plank so that both the head and the side seam groove is exposed. This requires installing the product from right to left in the room. When laying the first row in a straight line, interlock the short ends by inserting the tongue into the grooves at an angle of about 15 – 20 degrees. Install per sequential plank on the short end and be sure to line them up evenly. Make sure to keep the seams between planks tight. You will feel and hear the click when locking the planks together to create a tight seam. There should be no gap visible between planks. If your seam appears loose, pull the planks apart and retry.
- 3.) Install the second plank in the row by angling the end tongue into the end groove of the first plank. Be careful not to bend the corner of the plank. Maintain an expansion gap of approximately 5/16" from the wall. Then cut a plank to length to start the second row, stagger the end seam at least 6" from the first plank.
- 4.) Install the first plank in the second row by sliding the long side tongue into the long side groove of the plank in the first row. This is done through inserting the plank at a low angle. The plank will click into place when lowered.
- 5.) Install the second plank in the second row on the long side. Tilt and push the planks into place, lining up the edges. Lower the plank to the floor, and tap the long side into place with a tapping block and rubber mallet. Next, lightly tap the top of the end joints with a rubber mallet to lock them into place. Continue installing the remaining planks in this manner.
- 6.) To install the final row, lay a row of planks on top of the previous row with its tongue to the wall. Lay a ruler across the planks so that it is lined up with the ends of the planks from the previous row and draw a line across it with a pencil. Cut the plank with a utility knife, and lock into position. **DO NOT FORGET TO LEAVE ROOM FOR SPACERS.**
- 7.) Door frames and heating vents also require expansion room. First, cut the plank to the correct length, then place the cut plank next to its actual position and use a ruler to measure the areas to be cut out and then mark them. Cut out the marked areas and allow the correct amount of space

for expansion distance on each side.

8.) You can trim door frames by turning the plank upside down and using a handsaw to cut away the necessary height so that the planks can easily slide under the frames.

Remove all spacers once the floor is completely installed.

Be sure to cover all exposed edges using baseboards, moldings and expansion moldings.

--

### **C. Precautions**

- Protect furniture and chair legs with proper felt or rubber caps.
- Avoid bringing dirt, water and sand indoors by providing a suitable solid backed floor mat at the door.
- Furniture on casters/wheels must use soft, rubber wheels that are suitable for a click vinyl floor and/or use a suitable protective mat.

---

## **MAINTENANCE INSTRUCTIONS**

Empire click vinyl floors are among the highest performing floors available, but they are not indestructible and minor cosmetic scuffing is normal wear for any click vinyl floor. To ensure your floors perform as well in the future as they do the day after you install them:

### **DO**

- Wipe up spills as soon as possible.
- Wash your floor occasionally.
- Use cleaner approved for vinyl floors to return your floor's original shine if it begins to dull over time.

### **DON'T**

- Use detergents, vinegar, abrasive cleaners or "mop and shine" products - they may leave a dull film on your floor.
- Use paste wax or solvent-based polishes.
- Use a beater bar when vacuuming because it can visibly damage the floor surface.
- Use highly abrasive scrubbing tools.

### **IMMEDIATELY AFTER INSTALLATION**

- Maintain room temperature at 65 degrees Fahrenheit for 48 hours after installation is completed.

### **PROACTIVE PROTECTION FOR YOUR FLOOR**

- When moving appliances or heavy furniture, lay a plywood panel on your floor and "walk" the item across it. This protects your floor from scuffing and tears.
- Be careful with rolling casters. They can damage the floor. Therefore, we do not recommend them. If you choose to use them, the double wheel type are the best option.
- Place a walk-off mat at outside entrances to reduce the amount of dirt brought into your home. We do not recommend the use of rubber- or latex-backed mats because the chemical (antioxidant) used to keep the backing from becoming brittle can permanently stain your floor. We suggest a non-staining vinyl-backed mat or a woven rug that is colorfast. Most of these products are identified "colorfast" by the manufacturer.

---

## IMPORTANT NOTICE

Buyers and owners are responsible for thoroughly reading all materials provided by the retailer at time of purchase prior to the installation of flooring, including the installation guidelines, maintenance instructions, and the product warranty information.

Some jurisdictions do not allow exclusion or limitation of incidental or consequential damages so that the above limitation and exclusion may not apply. Your warranty gives you specific legal rights and you may also have other rights, which vary from jurisdiction to jurisdiction.

This warranty only applies to the original end user and is not transferable. Empire needs the flooring receipts to verify date and proof of purchase to resolve any problem that may occur. If a defect is found, Empire will repair the defective area or replace the floor with similar color, pattern and quality at your option.

---

**NOTE: This warranty will be null & void if this product is installed with obvious visual defects. Should a defect be found in the flooring before installation, it is the installer's responsibility to immediately stop and directly contact Empire for further instructions and assistance before installation. Installation of a defective product implies acceptance of its condition and will void your warranty.**

Improper installation and maintenance of this product will void the warranty.

No warranty will be offered for appearance related claims once the product has been installed.

Empire warrants that this product in its original manufactured condition is free from defect in material, workmanship and grading.

The finish and wear guaranty warrants that, the original purchaser will not have problems with the finish peeling off or wearing through, from the date of purchase.

### What is NOT covered?

- Damages incurred by natural disasters (fire, flooding etc).
- Damages incurred through improper storage, handling or installation of the product.
- Damages incurred through excessive or inadequate temperature levels in area of installation Temperature should be maintained between 18° and 23°C (65° to 73°F).
- Damages incurred by improper handling through shipping companies. This responsibility lies solely with the shipper; such claims must be forwarded directly to them.
- Dents, scratches or abuse to the floor.
- Abuse, lack of maintenance, neglect, abnormal use or misuse, corrosive chemicals, burns or any other usage not recommended by the manufacturer.
- Warping, chipping, bridging due to water and moisture damage or incorrect installation.
- Failure due to structural changes in the sub-floor, settling of the building or uneven subfloors that have not been properly leveled.
- Damages incurred by exposure to water or abrasive cleaning products.
- Installation of flooring with visual defects.
- Surface scratches & minor wear and tear from everyday usage.