

StrataMax Installation System

General Information

StrataMax flooring can be installed by two installation methods. It is designed as a lay flat structure when installed by the modified loose lay installation method using acrylic double-face tape under seams. It can also be installed by the traditional full spread method using S-288 adhesive over approved substrates and underlayments. The modified loose lay method requires that the flooring be cut 1/8" to 3/16" away from all vertical surfaces such as walls, cabinets, pipes, etc. This gap must then be filled with a good quality siliconized or acrylic caulk.

- Transport and store flooring rolled face out on a cardboard tube, do not kink or distort.
- Always roll flooring face out until ready to install.
- Do not use products containing petroleum solvents or citrus oils to prepare substrates.
- Just prior to installation, lay flooring out flat to acclimate to conditions and allow the roll-up stresses to relax.
- Flooring and room temperature should be a minimum of 65 degrees F (18 degrees C) for 48 hours before installation, during installation, and 48 hours after installation. Minimum 55 degrees F (13 degrees C) thereafter.
- Plan layout for minimum number of seams.
- Accurately measure length and width of room. Included recessed areas/doorways.
- Allow an extra 1-1/2" of flooring on each end for trimming.
- If more than one piece of flooring is needed, allow for correct pattern match at seam.

Suitable Substrates

All substrates listed below must be properly prepared and meet certain requirements. There may be exceptions and special conditions for these substrates to be suitable for StrataMax flooring installation. (Refer to the Subfloors and Underlayment section of the Armstrong Guaranteed Installation Systems manual, F5061, for more details. Or visit www.floorexpert.com.)

- Concrete (on all grade levels)
- Approved suspended wood underlayments
- Single-layer, fully adhered, existing resilient floors
- Ceramic tile, terrazzo, marble
- Polymeric poured (seamless) floors

StrataMax, because of its unique structure and design, can also be installed directly over suspended single-layer wood subfloors such as plywood or oriented strand board (OSB) **when using the modified loose lay method**. The subfloor system must be designed to meet or exceed applicable building codes with a minimum of 18" well-ventilated air space below. The subfloor panels should have a smooth, sanded face and show no swelling of edges or surface due to exposure to weather conditions or construction traffic. The panels can not be contaminated by staining agents. **Otherwise, an additional 1/4" or thicker underlayment is recommended.**

Single-layer wood subfloors increase the potential for staining from the panel components, coated nails, construction adhesives, spills, overspray and show-through from texture and mechanical or water damage when resilient flooring is installed directly over them.

Armstrong cannot be responsible for:

- joint or texture show-through
- tunneling and ridging over board joints
- discoloration from stain sources in the panel, regardless of the type of panel used
- problems caused by local climate conditions, basement wall and subfloor construction, or improper installation

Do not install over:

- Particleboard, or waferboard panels
- Existing resilient tile floors that are below grade
- Existing cushion-backed vinyl flooring
- Carpet
- Hardwood flooring that has been installed directly over concrete

Job Conditions

- All substrates must be sound, dry, clean, smooth, and free from excessive moisture or alkali. Remove dirt, paint, varnish, wax, oils, solvents, other foreign matter and contaminants that could cause staining or interfere with a good bond.
- In renovation or remodel work, remove any existing adhesive residue* so that 100% of the overall area of the original substrate is exposed.
- When installing over an existing resilient floor, use S-199 One-Part Embossing Leveler or S-194 Patch, Underlayment & Embossing Leveler/S-195 Underlayment Additive to fill and smooth any embossing in the old floor. This is particularly important when fully adhering StrataMax flooring.
- The area to receive resilient flooring and the flooring materials and adhesives should be maintained at a minimum of 65 degrees F (18 degrees C) for 48 hours before installation, during installation, and 48 hours after completion. Maintain a minimum temperature of 55 degrees F (13 degrees C) thereafter.
- Verification must be made that subfloor moisture levels do not exceed acceptable limits when installing flooring over concrete subfloors. Conduct a Calcium Chloride Test to measure subfloor vapor transmission levels prior to installation. Armstrong recommends a maximum acceptable moisture emission level of 3lbs/1000 sq.ft/24 hrs. for StrataMax flooring. If subfloor moisture vapor transmission levels exceed the recommended limit, the concrete must be allowed to dry out prior to installing the floor.
- Radiant heated substrates must not exceed a maximum surface temperature of 85 degrees F (29 degrees C)

*** WARNING: EXISTING IN-PLACE RESILIENT FLOOR COVERING AND ASPHALTIC ADHESIVES. DO NOT SAND, DRY SWEEP, DRY SCRAPE, DRILL, SAW, BEADBLAST, 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.

See 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 or Armstrong World Industries, Inc. 1 800 233 3823

The floor covering or adhesive in this package does NOT contain asbestos.

Room Preparation

Remove baseboard, quarter-round moldings, wall base, appliances and furniture from room. For best results, the decorative trim and jamb moldings at doorways should be undercut to allow flooring to slip underneath. After preparation work, be sure to sweep and vacuum the entire work area to remove all dust and debris. Check the substrate one last time for smoothness, cleanliness, loose boards, or squeaks. Correct as necessary. Installation on stairs is **not** recommended.

Procedure

StrataMax flooring is designed for modified loose lay installation using acrylic double-face tape only at seams and other critical areas. In bathrooms, tape should be used to secure the flooring in front of tubs and shower enclosures. Other critical areas could be a doorway where trim cannot be used to cover an exposed edge or an area in the kitchen with a heavy movable appliance. **Do not use the tape around the entire perimeter of the room.**

StrataMax flooring should be cut approximately 1/8" to 3/16" away from all vertical surfaces such as walls, cabinets, pipes, etc. This will prevent any fullness around the perimeter of the room and also provide a small gap that must be filled with a good quality siliconized or acrylic caulk, even in areas where trim moldings or vinyl wall base will be put on top. This will prevent moisture from getting beneath the new flooring. StrataMax flooring should not be cut full or snug. Make sure all areas are lying flat before applying caulk in the perimeter gap.

Seams

If a seam is required in a primary part of the room, it should be made after the product has been rough cut and is lying flat in proper position in the room but prior to final cutting and fitting around the perimeter. Overlap the selvage edges of both pieces of flooring so that the proper pattern match is achieved. Then, carefully fold back the seam edges without shifting the sheets, so that a strip of scrap material can be placed under the product where the seam will be cut. This will save your knife blade and prevent scoring the subfloor or old flooring directly beneath the seam. Reposition the two edges, ensuring a good pattern match.

[Seams should be double-cut. Straight edge and butt method of seaming is not recommended for this product. The seams of StrataMax flooring should not be stretched or compressed to obtain pattern match as it will create buckles in the flooring adjacent to seams.]

Use a sharp utility knife with a straightedge as a guide to double-cut through both pieces of material. Most patterns will have a grout line where the seam should be cut. Hold the knife blade vertical, at a 90 degree angle to the floor when cutting the seam, to ensure a straight, clean cut.

Fold back one side of the cut seam and remove the scrap material and selvage. Mark a pencil line on the substrate along the seam to be used as a reference for positioning the acrylic double-face tape. Install the acrylic double-face tape centering it under the seam. Use a hand roller or clean cloth to press it against the substrate. Peel the release layer off of the tape and begin to carefully reposition the two sides of the seam on top of the tape. (On long seams it may be easier to just remove a portion of the release layer at a time until you are sure the seam is falling back into position properly.) When both sides of the seam are properly positioned on top of the tape, use a hand roller to ensure a complete bond.

Use only acrylic double-faced tape intended for use with vinyl flooring. Ordinary carpet tapes may "read" through and also cause vinyl discoloration.

Seams must be coated using the S-564 Low Gloss Seam Coating Kit at the completion of the installation. Follow directions included in the kit and protect the coating from traffic until cured.

Note: *Stratamax flooring can also be installed as a traditional, fully adhered floor using S-288 Residential Flooring Adhesive. **Do not use fully adhered method directly over single-layer wood subfloor systems.** S-288 is applied with the fine notching of an Armstrong trowel having notches 1/32" deep x 1/16" wide x 5/64" apart. Over **nonporous surfaces** such as existing resilient flooring and embossing levelers, allow enough open time for the adhesive to dry until tacky with no transfer to the finger (Dry-to-Touch) before placing the flooring into it. Over **porous surfaces** such as concrete and wood, allow the adhesive enough time to thicken slightly but not to become completely dry to the touch.*

Finishing the Installation

Replace moldings and install vinyl wall base as needed. Leave a slight clearance between the flooring and the bottom of the molding. Nail molding into the wall, not into the floor.

When replacing appliances, or whenever moving heavy furniture over the flooring, place a wood panel under the object. Without moving the panel, slide or roll the object over it. Follow with additional panels as needed. This prevents scratches, tears or buckling of the flooring material.

Care and Maintenance Instructions

Proper care and maintenance will help ensure your floor always looks its best. Simply follow our maintenance and prevention steps outlined below.

Immediately After Installation

- For 8 hours after seam application, protect the sealed seams on your flooring. This will ensure proper seam bond. If your seams are disturbed before they're dry, permanent damage may result.

Proactive Protection for Your Floor

- When moving appliances or heavy furniture, it is always wise to lay a plywood panel on your floor and "walk" the item across it. This protects your floor from scuffing and tears.
- Use floor protectors, such as Armstrong Floor Protectors, on 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.
- All Armstrong floor care products have been specifically developed to care for Armstrong floors. You may purchase Armstrong floor care products at your local flooring retailer.

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. Remove dried spills with Armstrong New Beginning Deep Cleaning Floor Stripper on a clean white cloth and rinse. Never use highly abrasive scrubbing tools on any resilient floor.
- Wash your floor regularly with Armstrong Once 'n Done Resilient & Ceramic Floor Cleaner.
- For heavy duty cleaning, use Armstrong New Beginning Deep Cleaning Floor Stripper.
- Do NOT use detergents, abrasive cleaners, or "mop and shine" products. These products may leave a dull film on your floor.
- Over time, if the shine on your floor begins to dull, Armstrong Satinkeeper Resilient Low Gloss Floor Finish can be used to renew your floor's shine. Do NOT use paste wax or solvent-based polishes.
- Vinyl flooring, like other types of smooth floors, can become slippery when wet. Allow time for floor to dry after washing. Immediately wipe up wet areas from spills, foreign substances, or wet feet.