# LVT Loose Lay Installation Guide

## Materials Required for Installation

Tape Measurer
Square Ruler
Chalk Line
Utility Knife
100lb Roller
Moisture Reading Device/Testing Method Moisture Mitigating Primer

## Acceptable Subfloors

Alife Vinyl Floors will not warrant or accept responsibility of any kind for flooring failures related to the use of unacceptable substrates and surfaces. Any failure of the subfloor or flooring due to the subfloor is not the responsibility of Alife Vinyl Floors. **All subfloors must be tested for moisture and documented for warranties to be maintained. All subfloors must also be primed with approved Moisture Mitigating Primer/Moisture Vapor Barrier.**

## Acceptable Substrates

Concrete
Portland Based Underlayments
Terrazzo
APA Approved Plywood
Fiber Cement Underlayment
Radiant Heated Subfloors (not exceeding 85°F (29°C))
Properly Prepared VCT
Properly Prepared Sheet Vinyl (single layer, fully adhered)

## Wood Subfloor

Wood Subfloors must be American Plywood Association (APA) rated subfloor grade as specified and warranted by the manufacturer. Wood subfloors are required to be primed.
**All wooden subfloors require moisture testing along with documentation.**

## Gypsum Concrete

All Gypsum Concrete subfloors are required to have moisture testing and to be primed prior to installation. **All gypsum concrete subfloors require moisture testing along with documentation.**

## Concrete

**All concrete subfloors require moisture testing along with documentation. All concrete subfloors are required to be primed.**

# Grade Levels

## Suspended

An acceptable suspended floor is a concrete or wood substrate with a minimum of 18” (460mm) of well-ventilated air space beneath it. **Alife Vinyl Floors requires that a moisture vapor barrier/primer be placed on the ground below the air space.**

## On-Grade

An acceptable on-grade floor is a concrete substrate in direct surface contact with the ground at the surrounding ground level. The concrete slab should be protected from moisture penetration and incorporate a permanent, effective moisture vapor retarder.

## Below-Grade

An acceptable below-grade floor is a concrete substrate partially or completely in contact with the ground below the average surrounding ground level. The concrete slab should be protected from moisture penetration and incorporate a proven moisture vapor barrier. The concrete slab should be protected from moisture penetration and incorporate a permanent effective moisture vapor retarder.

## Unacceptable Surfaces

Cushion-Back vinyl
Laminate
Any floating system floors
Carpet

## Moisture Testing

All concrete slabs, both old and new, must be tested for moisture transmission using the Calcium Chloride Moisture Test according to ASTM F1869. Moisture vapor transmission should not exceed the recommended levels of between 3-5 lbs. per 1,000 sq. ft. in 24 hours. This test should be performed and documented prior to installation. Also test for relative humidity in concrete floor slabs using in-site probes, which should be no more than 80% RH or 95% RH per ASTM F2170 before, during and after installation.

## pH Levels

pH on concrete substrates must be between 7 and 9.

## Storage and Handling

Acclimate the flooring a minimum of 48 hours before installation in the area it is to be installed Conditions between 65°F and 85°F (18°C and 29°C) are required before, during and after installation. Cartons should be evenly stacked no more than two high on a flat surface and away from any heating/ cooling ducts or direct sunlight.

The floor must be clean, smooth, flat and dry. Remove all foreign substances such as wax, grease, dirt, construction marks and contaminants, and any substance or chemical that would interfere with a good bond. Avoid using sweeping compounds. Do not install over substrates that have been chemically cleaned. The flatness of wood subfloors or underlayment must not exceed on variation of 3/16" in 10 feet.

**Please Note:** If removal of existing resilient floor covering is required, follow all recommended Resilient Floor Covering Institute (RFCI) work practices at www.rfci.com.

## Common Uses

Leveling Substrates
Filling holes
Filling cracks Embossing existing resilient floor, ceramic tile of VCT
Leveling non-water-soluble adhesives
Filling saw cuts and/or construction joints
Moisture Mitigating Primer

## WARNING

For installation over old resilient floor coverings or when considering removing existing resilient floors, please be advised that these products may possibly contain asbestos fibers or crystalline silica. Please follow all recommended Resilient floor Covering Institute (RFCI) work practices at www.rfci.com.

## Floor Preparation

The smoothness and cleanliness of concrete subfloors must meet or exceed the requirements of ASTM F710. Fill all holes and cracks with a latex fortified Portland cement based patching compound. Alife Vinyl Floors only recommends the use of latex fortified Portland cement-based products as a satisfactory patching or leveling compound. The floor should be flat 3/16" in a 10-foot span.

**Alife Vinyl Floors requires priming all subfloor(s) with a Premium Acrylic Latex Primer to prevent over absorption of adhesives, dust containment, and to ensure a better bond of the adhesive to the subfloor/underlayment.**

Do not fill actual expansion joints or other moving joints with elastomeric fillers that are designed to absorb movement in concrete slabs. Cementitious underlayment, patches and resilient flooring installed across true expansion joints will often buckle or crack when the slabs move. Usually, architects will specify expansion joint covers for the use with various floor coverings.

## Residential and Commercial Installation Requirements

(a) Floor must be clean, smooth, flat and dry before installation.
(b) Inspection of flooring material prior to installation is required. It is the purchaser's responsibility to verify with the installer that they have received the correct product before the start of installation.

Any defects, wrong product, or color should be immediately reported to the retail store from which the flooring was purchased before installation (within 24hrs of install). Alife Vinyl Floors will not be responsible for labor costs to repair or replace material with defects, wrong product, or color that were apparent before or noticed at the end of an installation. The job site and all flooring material and adhesive (if gluing down) must be acclimated for 48 hours before, during and after installation between 65°F and 85°F (18°and 29°C).

## Glue Down Application

Alife Vinyl Floors requires a full spread glue application partnered with a moisture mitigating primer for optimum product performance.

**For all glue down applications, Alife Vinyl Floors requires priming porous floors (Plywood, OSB, Luan, Gypcrete) with a Premium Acrylic Latex Primer to prevent over absorption of adhesives, dust containment, and to insure a better bond of the adhesive to the subfloor/underlayment.**

## Perimeter / Partial Glue Application

**Flooring should be laid directly into a well-defined band of adhesive approximately 12" in width against all perimeter walls. Open transition areas with no wall to lay against should be fixed with 12" wide band of adhesive outlining the area in which the floor will be installed.**

Along with the necessary perimeter band of adhesive, it is recommended that a grid pattern of adhesive (example Tic Tac Toe pattern) be applied to ensure that the entire area is securely bonded so as to limit the possibility plank movement in the areas away from the perimeter. It is recommended that all high traffic areas, areas with heavy rolling loads and commercial job applications be installed using the full spread method. Make sure each tile/plank is fit tightly to the next piece. Firm and tight is correct, overly tight will lead to compression and later peaking joints when the compressed planks try to return to normal length or width.

## Loose Lay Applications (No Adhesive)

**For Loose Lay applications, Alife Vinyl Floors recommends that the area to be installed does not exceed 150 sq. ft. without the use of adhesive or high-quality double-sided carpet tape around the perimeter. Happy Feet Loose Lay products should be cut tight to the perimeter walls and or surrounding trim. Once the initial row of planks is secured to the beginning wall, continue laying additional planks while insuring each plank is fit tightly to the next. Use special care when cutting in the final row to keep all adjacent planks firmly in place.**

**Start of Installation**

1. Decide how you want the floor to run. Plank products usually look best when they run the length of the room. This is all a matter of preference, though, so feel free to lay some planks in different directions to see which way looks better.

2. To avoid narrow plank widths or short plank lengths near the walls and doors, it is important to do some pre-planning. Using the width of the room, calculate how many full boards will fit into the area and how much space remains that will need to be covered by partial planks. Divide the remaining space by two to calculate the width of the partial planks. Do the same along the length.

3. The planks or tiles should be installed from one corner of the room working your way out toward the other wall. Planks or tiles should be laid tight against the wall.

4. Using a utility knife and straight edge, score the top surface of the plank then use more pressure to cut all the way through.

5. Start the next row. Planks should be installed randomly, making sure end joints are staggered and adjoining planks have end joints at least 6” (150mm) from the previous row’s end joint. Keep planks and tiles tight to the surrounding floor.

6. When fitting around door jambs or other irregular objects first make a pattern using heavy paper or poster board. Trace the pattern onto the flooring and cut with a utility knife.

7. If a seam is not tight you can easily lift the planks and reposition.

**NOTE: Product Size and Tolerance is 0.0625 inches per linear foot.**

**DO NOT** use a damp cloth or damp mop on the new flooring for at least 14 days after the installation. This will allow planks/tiles to become “seated” in the adhesive and prevent excess moisture from interfering with the adhesive bond.

**NOTE:** Avoid exposure to direct sunlight. During peak sunlight hours, the use of blinds or curtains is required. Prolonged direct sunlight can result in discoloration and volatile temperature variations causing damage to the floor, which is not covered by Alife Vinyl Floors.