

Carpet Tile Installation Instructions

Happy Feet Carpet & Hardwood

Make sure you inspect carpet tile prior to installation. No claims will be honored if tile are installed with visible defects. Read all instructions prior to beginning installation.

Also refer to the most recent CRI standard for additional information.

Note: It is recommended that installers lay out 9–16 tiles first, in the desired installation, and get end user approval of the installation method before installing.

Site & Tile Material Conditioning

Floor temperatures must be a minimum of 65°F for 24 hours prior to installation. Floor temperature can usually vary 5–10° lower than room temperature. Carpet tile must be conditioned to room temperature for 24 hours prior to installation. Relative humidity must be between 10–65% maximum for 24 hours prior to installation. These conditions must remain constant and be maintained for 48 hours after completion of installation.

Surface Preparation

Dust, dirt, debris, and non-compatible adhesive must be removed before installation begins. Surfaces must be smooth and level with all holes and cracks filled with a latex-based Portland cement patching compound.

Old Carpet

Remove old carpet and check adhesive for compatibility. If unsure, remove or cover adhesive with a Portland-based patching compound or appropriate sealer.

Latex Adhesives

Must be removed and floors sanded, or covered with a skim coat of Portland patching compound. Latex adhesive may also be covered with the adhesive manufacturer's approved adhesive sealer. Note: Failure to remove or seal old latex adhesive may cause installation failure, plasticizer migration, shifting, buckling, or edge curling; these conditions will not be covered under warranty.

Cut-Back Adhesives

Must be wet-scraped and covered with the adhesive manufacturer's approved adhesive sealer. Note: Failure to remove or seal old cut-back adhesive may cause installation failure, plasticizer migration, shifting, buckling, or edge curling; these conditions will not be covered under warranty.

Moisture Testing

Subfloor surfaces must be tested for moisture content. It is the responsibility of the general contractor and/or installer to perform moisture tests prior to starting the installation. Happy Feet Carpet & Hardwood recommends that calcium chloride tests be performed to detect the presence of moisture. Acceptable results require that moisture content does not exceed 3 lbs per 1,000 square feet per 24 hours. Carpet tiles will not resolve a moisture problem. Substrate must have a maximum pH level of 9. Note: Moisture emissions in excess of the recommended levels can cause the adhesive to chemically break down and fail. This condition can result in shifting, buckling, or edge curling of the tiles.

Subfloors

New Concrete — New concrete must be fully cured and free of moisture. New concrete requires a curing period of approximately 90 days. Tests for moisture and alkalinity must be performed as detailed under Moisture Testing.

Old Concrete — Old concrete should be checked for moisture. Dry, dusty, porous floors must be sealed. Sealers will not correct a moisture problem.

Wood — Wood floors must be smooth and level. If the floor is uneven, an appropriate underlayment may be required. Old finishes must be tested for compatibility with adhesives or removed and porous wood sealed.

Terrazzo / Marble — Level all grout lines with a latex-based Portland cement patching compound. Glossy surfaces must be sanded for adhesive bond.

Hard Surfaces — Carpet tiles must be well secured to the floor or removed. Broken, damaged, or loose tiles must be replaced. Wax must be removed from VCT before applying adhesive. Existing sheet vinyl is not a suitable substrate for tile installation and should be removed.

Preparation

It is the owner's or general contractor's responsibility to provide an acceptable substrate for the specified installation, which must also be inspected by the installation contractor prior to installation. The subfloor must be clean, dry, and free of dirt, oil, grease, paint, and non-compatible adhesives or coatings, including old cut-back adhesive. Existing adhesive trowel ridges must be leveled by scraping, sanding, or patching prior to adhesive application to ensure proper pressure-sensitive adhesive contact. All cracks should be filled using a Portland-base leveling or patching compound. Use of latex additive in lieu of water will create better bonding properties. Do not install over hazardous materials such as asbestos, resin, or silicate-based curing compounds. Do not use oil or silicate-based sweeping compounds. Bond tests must be performed over concrete with unidentified sealers or primers. Apply Happy Feet Carpet & Hardwood Premium Adhesive or an approved equivalent and tile in a 4 ft area, letting it set for 24 hours, then check to assure a good adhesive bond to the floor.

Applying Adhesive (EuroBac Tiles)

Happy Feet Carpet & Hardwood requires using an approved premium adhesive for the installation of EuroBac™ carpet tiles. The subfloor should be scraped clean of old adhesive and thoroughly swept before applying adhesive. The adhesive should be spread in one quadrant at a time, and only over areas that will be installed the same day.

The full-spread adhesive application method is required for EuroBac™ tiles. The adhesive must be spread using a 1/32 x 1/16 x 1/32 “U” notch trowel. The entire area should be covered with adhesive. The adhesive should be given adequate time to dry completely until it becomes clear and tacky. Drying times will vary based on local conditions but can be greatly reduced by using circulating fans. The adhesive is ready for installation when you can place your hand in the glue and remove it with no transfer to your hand.

One gallon pail will cover 180–250 sq ft, depending on the condition of the subfloor.

Layout

Begin the layout by carefully marking working lines on the floor surface to act as the starting position and guide for your carpet tile installation. First, determine that your room is as square as possible: take measurements to determine the center of the room and snap two chalk lines that intersect at the center of the room. These lines will provide a guide for squareness as you install the carpet tile as well as divide your room into four manageable quadrants.

To verify that the lines are square with each other, measure 12' from the center point up the length and make a mark. On the same horizontal quadrant line, measure 9' across the width and make a mark; the diagonal measurement between the two marks should be exactly 15' if your lines are square. If your measurement is not 15', adjust your lines accordingly.

It may be necessary to offset the centerline to ensure that perimeter tiles are no less than 12" (half of a tile). Position the first tile at the intersection of the horizontal and vertical layout lines, then dry-lay a few tiles in one of the recommended installation methods for that particular product (monolithic, quarter turn, ashlar, etc.), to give you and the customer an indication of the overall appearance.

Tile Placement

Starting in the corner of one quadrant, install carpet tiles in a pyramid fashion. Install by butting edges together evenly, being careful not to compress tile (this can cause peaked edges). Arrows are embossed or printed on the tile backing to show pile direction. Unless instructions are stated for quarter-turn installation, always lay tile with the arrows in the same direction.

Cutting / Trimming

Carpet tile will require cutting at perimeters, floor electrical outlets, and door openings. Whenever tile are cut or trimmed, adhesive must be used. Loop pile tile may require some trimming or clipping of tufts. This is typical of this type of construction and is not a manufacturing problem. Small pieces of tile should also have glue applied to the backing to help hold them in place.

Flatwire Cable / Trench Headers

Flatwire cables are easily accessible when carpet tile is used. Cable should be centered under tile and no adhesive used unless approved by the manufacturer. Trench headers require a control grid of adhesive on either side of header panels to prevent movement.

Stairs

Use a raised stair nosing and cut tiles to fit nosing, both step and riser. Use full-spread adhesive under carpet tile.

Finished Installation

When heavy furniture and wheeled traffic is moved over carpet tiles, use a plywood runner to avoid tile shifting. Roll the entire job with a 75–100 lb roller after completion of installation.

Chair Pads

Chair pads are recommended for use under chairs with roller casters. Casters should be the flat round type with 5/8" to 1" width minimum. If chair pads are not used, the appearance of the carpet tile will decrease and maintenance and/or shifting of the tile may be required more frequently.

Loop Pile Construction

Carpet tile with loop pile construction may experience yarn blossoming at the edges, which is consistent with this type of construction. Clipping or shearing the yarn edges can remedy this condition.

Some carpet styles require more attention from the installers during installation. Due to the light row, dark row construction of these products, dark lines may appear at the edges. This is not a manufacturing defect. These products will require shifting tiles around to avoid dark lines at the edges.

Tile Arrangement

Certain carpet tile styles are recommended for different installation methods than others (e.g. some styles are recommended for quarter-turn only, while others are more flexible). Check the product specification for the recommended installation methods for each particular carpet tile style.

Replacement Tiles

On occasion, it may be necessary to replace damaged or heavily soiled carpet tile. Tiles can be replaced with new tiles from onsite inventory or from other areas of the installation. A difference of appearance may be noticed when tile are replaced; this difference usually diminishes in a short time.

The procedures listed above are our best recommendations for installing EuroBac™ tile. This document is available upon request or on our website at www.happyfeetcarpet.ca. If you have further questions or require additional information, please contact your sales representative.