



# Stone Composite Installation Instructions

## IMPORTANT! PLEASE READ THIS BEFORE INSTALLATION

**Ground Level STONE COMPOSITE WARRANTY WILL NOT APPLY IF ANY OF THESE REQUIREMENTS ARE NOT MET AND ULTIMATELY THE PRODUCT WILL FAIL.**

1. Ground Level Stone Composite should be acclimated prior to installation. Ground Level should be staged on site no less than 24-48 hours prior to installation. Ground Level should only be installed in a job site with HVAC system installed and running including consistent humidity and temperature between 65-80 Degrees F.
2. Ground Level Stone Composite requires a flat subfloor. Any area of subfloor that has deflection of more than 3/16" in 8' should be remedied prior to installation.
3. Use a Moisture Barrier if installing over concrete or a crawl space. Minimum 6mils thickness visqueen or moisture mitigation system required. Hydrostatic pressure from potential subfloor moisture can cause the locking system for Ground Level to fail.
4. Do not install built-in cabinets over Ground Level Stone Composite. Ground Level must be allowed to float, expand, and contract from season to season. A minimum of 1/4" must be used against all fixed vertical surfaces.
5. Use transitions at exterior doors and thresholds. Ground Level is a floating floor and needs plenty of room to expand and contract from season to season. No less than 1/4" expanse must be used. For long runs over 30' use an expansion space of 3/8" against fixed surfaces.
6. Don't glue Ground Level Stone Composite to the subfloor. Ground Level is only warranted as a floating floor and will fail if glued down.
7. Ground Level STONE COMPOSITE uses an Angle Angle locking system. This system does not require a tapping block. Using a tapping block can result in damage of the locking system and cause long term end joint separation.
8. Do not install Ground Level STONE COMPOSITE over existing hardwood flooring. Moisture from the subfloor can be trapped and cause rotting and dangerous mold.

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### For best visual representation of your floor

This flooring replicates the look of a natural product which has natural variations in color, texture, and sheen/gloss. For best visual effect, shuffle planks or tiles from several cartons and do not install similar planks or tiles next to one another.

### Subfloor preparation

Subfloor should be dry and level to 3/16" per 8 ft. radius for best installation results. For installation over concrete subfloor or crawl space, a 6 mils plastic moisture barrier or moisture mitigations system is required to be used as underlayment.

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#### Read these instructions thoroughly before beginning installation

While stone composite flooring is waterproof, it is not a moisture barrier. It is important to make sure your concrete is cured and tested for moisture and that a moisture barrier is installed in the crawl space or over any concrete subfloor. Topical spills will not damage stone composite flooring, however hydrostatic pressure from moisture build-up in the concrete can cause stone composite flooring to rise, cup, and eventually break the locking mechanism. Ground Level will not be held liable for problems resulting from moisture coming from the concrete or subfloor. Because houses and buildings, as well as adjacent hardwood or laminate floors, expand and contract, we recommend leaving a 1/4" expansion gap between the perimeter walls and any adjacent hardwood or tile floor. For runs over 30' in length Ground Level requires a 3/8" expansion gap against all fixed vertical surfaces.

Carefully examine the flooring prior to installation for color, finish, sheen, and quality and dye lot consistency. Ensure adequate lighting for proper inspection. If flooring is not acceptable, contact us immediately and arrange for replacement. We cannot accept responsibility for flooring installed with visible defects. Prior to installation of any flooring, the installer must ensure that the jobsite and subfloor meet the requirements of these instructions. Ground Level is not responsible for flooring failure resulting from unsatisfactory jobsite and/or subfloor

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conditions. Flooring should be one of the last items installed in any new construction or remodel project.

Flooring should be installed after permanent HVAC systems are functional. Flooring should be installed after cabinetry. Flooring is intended to be a floating floor and will not perform as intended with permanent cabinetry installed on top. It is not permissible to glue flooring to subfloor. Manufacturer will not be held liable for product failure where cabinets are set on floor.

Crawl spaces must be a minimum of 18" (46 cm) from the ground to the underside of the joists. A ground cover of 6–20 mil black polyethylene film is essential as a vapor barrier with joints lapped 6" (15 cm) and sealed with moisture resistant tape. The crawl space should have perimeter venting equal to a minimum of 1.5% of the crawl space square footage. These vents should be properly located to foster cross ventilation. Where necessary, local regulations prevail.

Room temperature and humidity of installation area should be consistent with normal, year-round living conditions for at least 24–48 hours before installation of flooring. Maintaining an optimum room temperature of 65–80 degrees Fahrenheit and a humidity range of 30–50% is recommended.

## Starting Your Installation

Because houses and buildings, as well as adjacent hardwood or laminate floors, expand and contract, we recommend leaving a ¼" expansion gap between the perimeter walls and any adjacent hardwood floor. Work from several open boxes of flooring and "dry lay" the floor before permanently laying the floor. This will allow you to select the varying textures, colors, and sheens, and to arrange them in a harmonious pattern. Remember, it is the installers' responsibility to determine the expectations of what the finished floor will look like with the end user first, and then to cull out pieces that do not meet those expectations. Begin installation next to an outside wall. This is usually the straightest and best reference for establishing a straight line to work from. Establish this line by measuring an equal distance from the wall at both ends and snapping a chalk line.

The distance you measure from the wall should be the width of a plank or tile. You may need to scribe cut the first row of planks or tiles to match the wall to make a straight working line if the wall is out of square. You may want to position a few rows before starting installation to confirm your layout decision and working line. When laying flooring, stagger end joints from row to row by at least 8", when cutting the last plank in a row to fit, you can use the cut-off end to begin the next row. If cut-off end is less than 8", discard it and instead cut a new plank at a random length (at least 8" in length) and use it to start the next row. Always begin each row from the same side of the room.

The stone composite flooring locking system is Unilin Angle-Angle and does not require a tapping block. Many online resources can help with the understanding of how this system works and can be obtained through a simple web search.

## After Installation

Flooring should be one of the last items installed in a project. To protect the floors while other trades are finishing their work prior to final cleanup and turnover to the owner, use rosin paper and only use 3M Scotch-Blue™ 2080 Tape to hold the rosin paper to the floor (other blue tapes may damage the finish). Clean the floor thoroughly before laying the rosin paper to ensure that no debris is trapped underneath. DO NOT USE plastic film or other non-breathing coverings as this can cause the floor to become damaged from humidity buildups. Dust mop or vacuum your floor to remove any dirt or debris. Install any transition pieces that may be needed (reducers, T-moldings, etc. adhering them to the floor with only 100% clear silicone.

## Protection & Maintenance of Your Floor

- Lasting beauty can be achieved through purchasing a quality floor covering and providing proper ongoing maintenance.
- Furniture should be moved onto the newly installed floor using an appliance hand truck over

hardboard runways.

- Avoid exposure to long periods of direct sunlight. Close blinds or drapes during peak sunlight hours. Floor covering subjected to excessive heat and light is subject to thermal degradation. Use appropriate precautions to minimize potential effects on the floor covering.
- Oil or petroleum-based products can result in surface staining. DO NOT track asphalt sealer or automobile oil drips onto the vinyl floor covering.
- Use non-staining mats (rubber will discolor the floor and compromise the finish).
- Frequently moved furniture should be equipped with felt pads to avoid scratching the floor. Heavy furniture and appliances should be equipped with non-staining large surface floor protectors. Furniture with castors or wheels must be easy swiveling, large surface non-staining and suitable for resilient floors.  
DO NOT use ball-type castors as they can damage the floor.
- Use floor protectors under furniture.
- Use walk-off mats at entrances to prevent dirt and grit from being tracked onto the floor.
- Sweep or vacuum the floor regularly to remove loose dirt. DO NOT use vacuums that use a beater bar or turn beater bar off.
- DO NOT use electric brooms with hard plastic bottoms with no padding.
- Clean up spills immediately.
- Damp mop as needed using clean water. If a cleaning agent is desired only use diluted PH Neutral floor cleaner. DO NOT use harsh cleaners or chemicals on the floor. DO NOT use abrasive scrubbing tools. DO NOT use detergents, abrasive cleaners or “mop and shine” products. In most cases, a damp mop using only water is sufficient to clean the floor.
- Vinyl flooring, like other types of smooth floors, may become slippery when wet. Allow time for floor to dry after cleaning. Immediately wipe up wet areas from spills, foreign substances, or wet feet.