

Installation Guidelines-FreeStyle Flooring

In General

These installation instructions cover most installation procedures. If you run across a situation that isn't addressed in this document or requires more detailed assistance please contact SelectTech, Inc. Customer Service at 877.737.4537.

All shipments should be carefully inspected for damage or defects prior to installation. SelectTech will not be responsible for any cost associated with replacement or repair as a result of damaged or defective tiles being installed which were identifiable prior to installation.

If you encounter any condition or defects during installation which could jeopardize the installation or affect the installation procedure you should STOP the installation immediately and contact SelectTech's Customer Service Desk.

SelectTech flooring products are warranted in accordance with SelectTech's Standard Product Warranty. If you do not have a copy of SelectTech's Standard Product Warranty and wish to obtain one, call SelectTech's Customer Service Desk. **EXCEPT AS EXPRESSLY PROVIDED IN THE STANDARD PRODUCT WARRANTY, SELECTECH MAKES NO REPRESENTATIONS OR WARRANTIES, EXPRESS OR IMPLIED, INCLUDING, WITHOUT LIMITATION, ANY WARRANTY OF MERCHANTABILITY OR FITNESS OF ITS PRODUCTS FOR ANY PARTICULAR PURPOSES, AND HEREBY DISCLAIMS THE SAME.** Without limiting the foregoing, SelectTech will not be responsible for scratches, gouges or other damage, deterioration or loss caused by abuse, misuse improper installation, improper maintenance or failure to protect tiles during installation and building construction. SelectTech shall not be responsible for any damage or loss resulting from failure to strictly follow any part of these Installation Instructions, and such failure shall void any and all portion of the Standard Product Warranty which are affected by such failure.

Product Inspection

Inspect the tiles to be sure they meet the order specification for color, style and quantity including "Attic Stock" requirements. FreeStyle is packed in cartons of 10 tiles each @23.8 sq. ft./carton.

"Parquet" Installation of Wood Styles

FreeStyle's hidden interlock design utilizes 2 "over" and 2 "under" edges. These edges must always be installed in the same direction. As a result, tiles cannot be quarter-turned in the field to achieve a Parquet pattern. If your job specifies "Parquet" the order must also specify "Parquet", in which case, half of the required tiles are manufactured in the Horizontal direction and half in the Vertical direction. If "Parquet" is not specified on an order, all tiles are delivered with the wood grain running in the same direction (Standard tile is marked "HOR" (horizontal). To install a "Parquet" floor, HOR and VER tiles will be alternated.

Tile Flatness

FreeStyle utilizes a patented "zipper" interlock system, designed to facilitate adhesive free installation with tight seams, while using flexible, moisture proof material with high recycled content. This design results in a slight dipping at the edges of the tile which is normal. Some amount of "cupping" may also be present on initial installation. This will diminish over time as the floor "settles in" following installation.

FreeStyle Basics

FreeStyle is an 18.5" x 18.5" (2.38 ft²/tile) interlocking floor tile. FreeStyle is designed to be a free-lay system and does not require use of adhesives. When estimating a job, a general waste or contingency factor of 3 - 5% may be required. Actual waste factors will vary based on job size, layout, installation experience and other factors. A dead-blow hammer should be used for joining these products. Rubber mallets are **not** effective. The use of a cutting tool will be required for cutting around obstacles.

Receiving and Storing FreeStyle

FreeStyle is shipped in boxes containing ten tiles. Never store the tiles upright. Stack the boxes of tiles (or loose tiles) on a flat surface with the edges of the boxes flush to one another. Improper storage or overhanging edges will distort the shape of the tiles and cause difficulty when installing. Allow the tiles to acclimate to the installation environment for a minimum of 48 hours. If FreeStyle has been shipped or stored in cold conditions (less than 50 Degrees F), then acclimate the tiles for at least 72 hours. Tiles will acclimate more quickly if the boxes are spread out and opened.

Preparing the Subfloor

FreeStyle may be installed over concrete, wood, asbestos tile, rubber, vinyl composite tiles and other standard floors. FreeStyle is not recommended for installation over carpets or any floor that is designed to compress or move.

- Remove all debris, sweep and vacuum the floor if necessary.
- Repair any major surface imperfections (cracks over 3/8") in the subfloor.
- It is recommended that FreeStyle be installed over existing floors. Appropriate caution and procedures must be used in the event a preexisting resilient floor covering is to be removed. Vinyl asbestos tile, asphalt tile, some asphaltic "cutback" adhesives and backings of many sheet vinyl floorings contain asbestos that is not readily identifiable. Unless positively certain that a product is asbestos free, you must presume it contains asbestos. Removal of these materials must comply with various federal, state and local regulations pertaining to the removal of in-place asbestos. Do not sand, dry sweep, dry scrape, drill, saw bead blast or pulverize any such existing product(s) unless you are certain they do not contain asbestos..
- Following proper removal of a pre-existing resilient floor, if there is a pre-existing adhesive it should be scraped and/or sealed with a barrier coat, such as Nu-Flor #500 from W.F. Taylor or another similar sealant, prior to installation.

Tools

- A dead-blow hammer (21 to 42 oz) (*Required*) NOTE: Rubber mallets do not work
- A utility knife in conjunction with a straight edge. (*Required*)
- A carpenter's square. (*Required*)
- A chalk line (*Required*)
- A table saw with a fine-tooth blade (for making multiple straight cuts). (*Required*)
- A jig saw, orbital or similar cutting tool for irregular cuts. Use a fine tooth finishing blade (*Recommended*)
- A 24" VCT tile cutter (optional). A cutter can be purchased from Gundlach Company, Model # H-24. (*Optional*)
- 3/8" Wall spacers

End Cut Template (instructions for preparing a Template are below

Basic Design Features

Each tile is comprised of a

- 2.38 ft² finished surface,
- two adjacent sides that are below and extend 3/4" beyond the finished surface. These will be hidden when the tiles are interlocked (the **Underlock Edges**)
- two adjacent finished sides with matching interlocks molded under the finished surface (the **Finished Edges**) The **Finished Edges** will be placed over the **Underlock Edges** during installation

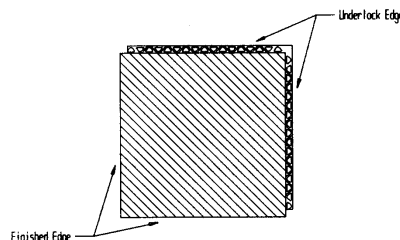


Figure 1

Plan Layout – Work from a Corner

FreeStyle Flooring is designed with a directional hidden interlock system which must *always* face the same way. It is helpful to think of the point where the two Underlock Edges come together as the point of an arrow, pointing you in the direction to install tiles. With this interlock feature it is easier and more effective to work in rows beginning from a corner. At your starting point the Finished Edges should be **facing into** the corner. This can be done working *either* out of a left hand corner (working left to right) or a right hand corner (working right to left).

Figure 2



ALWAYS MAINTAIN THE SAME DIRECTION FOR EACH TILE, line up the edges of the tile and position a Finished Edge over the Interlock Edge.

Establishing a Starting Point

Like all tile products, layout planning begins by squaring the room: find the center of the room or area to be covered and establish perpendicular lines to guide your layout. Bring those squared up lines into a selected corner for your starting point and snap lines.

Installing Tiles

Position the first tile in the selected starting corner. Make sure it is aligned with and flush with both lines. Orient the tiles as shown in Figure 2. Install Row 1. Keep the first row flush to established lines at all times. When the first row is complete return to the starting corner and begin another row. Figure 2 Continue until the main part of the floor is installed.

1. Align the adjoining tile(s), making sure that the interlocks are free of debris. When properly aligned, the interlocks can be started by pressing firmly with the heels of your hands. Tap firmly along the interlocks with the dead-blow hammer to complete each seam. IF TILES ARE NOT INTERLOCKING WITH RELATIVE EASE RECHECK FOR ALIGNMENT. CONTINUING TO HIT IMPROPERLY ALIGNED TILES WILL DAMAGE THE INTERLOCKS.
2. Do not stand or sit on tiles as they are being hit into place. It is important that the tile is free to move as it is being hit into place so that it does not stress the interlocks. If a tile is cupping, push it flat while hitting it with the hammer to facilitate interlocking.
3. Due to any residual expansion and contraction that may occur during installation, cut and install all perimeter tiles at the end of the job.
4. Leave a 3/8" gap from the edge of the tiles to the wall, columns or any vertical obstruction. Cover expansion spaces with specified cove base or molding. When expansion cut is exposed, if desired, fill area with a matching colored silicon caulk to allow movement and prevent dirt accumulation.
5. When working with multiple installers, have the first installer start the first row. After he has installed three or more tiles, the second installer can start on the second row. After the second installer has installed three or more tiles on the second row, a third installer can start on the third row. Do not work on more than three rows at a time. This staggered installation procedure is intended to allow the tiles to naturally fit square to one another and to prevent any unnecessary tension in the interlocks.
6. Some FreeStyle tile can be ordered in "Parquet" style. These are quarter-turned during manufacturing. When installing a "Parquet" job, alternate tiles from boxes marked "HOR" (Horizontal) and "VER" (Vertical)
7. FreeStyle is durable—but not indestructible. Care should be given not to scratch the tiles during installation. See Maintenance Instructions

Fitting Partial Tiles

1. Create an End Cut Template by removing both of the Underlock edges from a tile. Make clean cuts.
2. Beginning in a corner, place a loose tile over the installed corner tile. Line up the edges precisely. BE SURE THAT THE INTERLOCKS ARE ORIENTED IN THE SAME WAY AS THE INSTALLED TILE.
3. Place spacers against the wall you are working against. Butt the End Cut Template against the spacers and lay the Template over the tile to be cut. Line up edges and mark your line.

4. Cut tile using the methods and safety procedures suggested below
5. Lift the Overlock Edge of the Row 1 Tile, slide the partial tile into position and tap interlocks
6. Continue using this method around the perimeter of the room

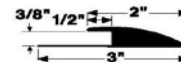
Cutting FreeStyle

When cutting FreeStyle, the installer must exercise appropriate safety precautions. Protective eyewear and gloves must be worn. The following cutting tools are all appropriate tools for cutting FreeStyle:

- A circular saw with a fine tooth blade is effective for straight cuts
- A jigsaw or band saw can be used for shaped cuts. A coping saw or key hole saw can also be used for smaller jobs
- Utility knives or carpet knives. Score the tile until it is cut all the way through. Always have a supply of sharp blades on hand.
- A straight edge and/or carpenter's square can be used to ensure straight and square cuts when cutting by hand.
- A 24" VCT tile cutter by Gundlach Company, Model # H-24, is effective for straight cuts on very large installations

Transition Strips and Corners

To finish edges use Johnsonite EG-XX-W. (3/8" to 0"), or equal. This edging strip cannot be installed over the Underlock Edge. See Figure 1. If the edge that requires finishing is an Underlock Edge, use a sharp razor knife to cut it off flush with the finished surface.



1. Be sure the area directly beneath and around the edge to be finished is clean and dry.
2. Apply adhesive onto the top side of the thin base surface of the transition strip which will go UNDER the tile. Use Adhesive, Anchor AC50, or equal. Allow the cement to set up for about 5 minutes.
3. Lift the edge of the tile and fit the edging (using minimal pressure) along the length of the entire edge to be finished. Once the Edging is properly in place, place the tile with the attached edge back on the floor and use your foot or a weighted roller to firmly adhere the Edging to the tiles.
4. Trim off excess using razor knife. If finishing a right angle corner, trim at 45 degrees.

Other transition and edging units are available from Burke-Mercer or Johnsonite.

Rolling Loads

Heavy rolling loads can cause the tiles to compress and creep, and come unsnapped along traffic areas and particularly at turning or pivot points. To prevent this apply a releasable adhesive (Parabond M5080, or equal) in these areas only. Follow adhesive manufacturer's instructions for application.

Temperature Conditions

If you are installing the tiles in an area that is not maintained in the 62F to 75F degree temperature range the tiles will expand and/or contract more than in standard installations. Allow more expansion space for tiles installed in cool environments. Failure to do so may result in buckling. Allow for greater shrinkage for tiles installed in warm environments. Failure to do so may result in excessive gaps at walls or transitions. Where temperature swings in excess of 20 degrees may occur, expansion joints should be used.

Seam Sealer

Where improved moisture resistance of the seams is required use SelecTech SeamSealer™, which can be purchased directly from SelecTech. To apply, use a plastic squeeze bottle applicator with a small tip. Lay a small bead of seam Sealer along the middle of the top edge of the hidden Interlock Edge. Tap the tile into place. Use sparingly to avoid having excess squeezed to the top, finished surface. Wipe off excess with a damp, clean cloth.

For unusual conditions or extraordinary installations, contact SelecTech for guidance (877-738-4537)