



VISUAL APPEARANCE OF FREESTYLE FLOORING PRODUCTS

PRODUCT DESCRIPTION

FreeStyle Flooring is an adhesive-free, interlocking modular floor tile system. Each 18.5"x18.5" tile is comprised of an injection molded, flexible vinyl base, that provides a "built-in underlayment" and a hidden interlock system; and a 2 mm thick finish layer.

Freestyle's design provides effective performance in manufacturing environments. Its flexible but beefy construction and the weight of the tile allow it to be installed, adhesive free, over existing floors, with little or no floor preparation; and to withstand fork truck, pallet jack and scissor lifts that are typically used in manufacturing.

In many cases, particularly in renovation work and in time-sensitive operating environments, it is impractical and/or extremely expensive to demolish an existing subfloor, bead blast the subfloor to remove surface contaminants, apply moisture barriers where testing indicates that moisture in the subfloor exceeds levels specified by adhesive manufacturers, smooth and level the subfloor and then install a new floor covering. FreeStyle has been designed to provide a simpler, cost effective option in these environments.

MANUFACTURING PROCESS

Most floor tile products are manufactured using a calendaring process or an extrusion process. Both of these processes squeeze melted plastic through dies or rollers to create a sheet which is then converted into a tile product. These products can be applied only after the subfloor has been smoothed and flattened to meet stringent specifications. In addition, moisture levels in the subfloor must be below specified levels to ensure that commercial adhesives will work as designed. Warranties are voided when tiles are not installed in accordance with both tile and adhesive manufacturers' specifications.

FreeStyle overcomes both adhesive related issues and subfloor irregularity by combining a standard tile product with its unique underlayment/interlock system. During the manufacturing process the tile top layer is adhered to an injection molded "underlayment" that provides FreeStyle's functionality: the built in underlayment provides the bulk, strength and flexibility to allow it to be installed directly over existing floors or imperfect and high moisture subfloors. The patented "zipper" interlock system is designed to maintain tight seams while simultaneously providing tolerance that allows it to be installed over this type of imperfect floors.

EFFECTS OF PRODUCT DESIGN ON VISUAL APPEARANCE

Due to the design and manufacturing process there is always some "shape" to FreeStyle. This is most visible following initial installation and in environments where side lighting accentuates surface details. Most of SelecTech's surface finishes are matte finish, and are intended to diminish the visibility of the shape. However, some users prefer high gloss finishes and if a floor is finished to a high gloss it will further accentuate this appearance.

During the injection molding process molten plastic is injected through small, centrally located channel on the bottom side of the tile. Plastic shrinks significantly during the cooling process and shrinkage varies based upon product thickness and shape. The top surface and the topsheet are similar in composition

but not identical so the two components have slightly different shrinkage. This shrinkage differential of the bonded components imparts a shape which is a slight “pillowing” effect near the perimeter of the tile and a slight dip at the edges. The pillowing diminishes after initial installation as the tile “relaxes” to the floor, however, FreeStyle never achieves the flatness of a tile installed over a well prepared subfloor. In addition, the injection point is always the hottest area of the tile and this can be visible as a slight dimple at the center point of the tile.

FreeStyle ESD Floor Installation

