The Quick Way to ...

INSTALL VINYL FLOORING

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With so many options available today, resilient vinyl is one of the most popular floor coverings for your home or office. Below are the essential things you'll need to know during your vinyl installation. For more detailed information on what to do before, during and after your vinyl installation, see the full **Installing Vinyl Flooring** guide on FindAnyFloor.com.

VINYL INSTALLATION METHODS

Vinyl is installed one of three ways depending on the type of vinyl you choose:

- **Felt-Backed Sheet Vinyl** – Installed with full spread adhesive (the vinyl is completely glued to the subfloor) or perimeter adhesive (the vinyl is only secured around the perimeter and at seams).
- **Vinyl Tiles/Planks** – Secured to the subfloor with a factory applied adhesive (peel-and-stick vinyl), with tab or spray adhesive or with full spread adhesive.
- **Fiberglass Sheet Vinyl** – Installed as a loose lay (floating) floor, a semi-loose lay (only secured at specific points) or with full spread adhesive.

TOOLS AND MATERIALS

You will need most of the general tools and materials plus anything specific for your installation method.

- ❑ Carpenter's square
- ❑ Gloves
- ❑ Masking tape
- ❑ Measuring tape
- ❑ Pencil and/or felt tipped pen
- ❑ Shears or snips
- ❑ Utility knife

Felt-Backed Vinyl Installation
- ❑ 100 lb roller and/or rolling pin
- ❑ Floor pattern or craft paper
- ❑ Full spread adhesive
- ❑ Notched trowel
- ❑ Scissors
- ❑ Seam sealer kit
- ❑ Staple gun

Vinyl Tile/Plank Installation
- ❑ Chalk line
- ❑ Full spread adhesive, adhesive tabs or spray adhesive
- ❑ Notched trowel
- ❑ Vinyl tile cutter

Fiberglass Sheet Vinyl Installation
- ❑ Acrylic double-sided tape or pressure sensitive adhesive
- ❑ Floor pattern or craft paper
- ❑ Notched trowel or paint roller
- ❑ Scissors

PREPARE THE FLOOR

- Vinyl can be installed above wood (plywood, plyboard and OSB board) subfloors and concrete subfloors on any grade level.
- If approved by the manufacturer, vinyl can be installed over radiant heating systems and existing vinyl or linoleum. Remove all other floor coverings. However, do not remove any existing flooring if you find asbestos. Follow all local, state and federal guidelines when handling and/or disposing of asbestos.
- All subfloors and existing flooring must be structurally sound, level and dry.
- Some floors require an underlayment for stability. Only use underlayment grade plywood, class 4, 0.215" service-grade hardboard or Type 1 lauan plywood. For more specific information about these underlayments, see the full **Installing Vinyl Flooring** guide on FindAnyFloor.com.
- Do not use other types of lauan plywood or lesser quality plywoods as they are not dimensionally stable enough to support the floor. These types of plywoods could have hollow spots (which will cause soft spots in the floor) or could delaminate (which will cause your vinyl to bubble).
- For concrete slabs, perform all moisture tests as directed by the manufacturer. This may include a Polyethylene, Calcium Chloride, and pH Alkalinity test. Follow all your manufacturer's recommendations if your subfloor has excess moisture.
- Ensure your subfloor is level and free from all dips, valleys or imperfections (such as drywall mud, paint overspray, etc.). Scrape your subfloor clean. Sand down any high areas. Use self-leveling compound to level all low areas.
- Allow your vinyl to acclimatize to your installation area. Follow all the manufacturer's recommendations for room temperature (both before and during the installation) and acclimatization time.
- If desired, undercut door casings in the installation area.
- Remove all molding, if desired. In some cases, you can leave molding in place and either install the vinyl under the molding or install the vinyl almost flush with existing molding.
- Remove and set all doors asides, especially if working with sheet vinyl.
- Remove all toilets if working in a bathroom.
- Sweep and/or vacuum your floor before installing your vinyl.
- Always install safely using the proper safety equipment. Follow all manufacturer safety recommendations.

✓ TIPS AND TRICKS

- When possible, use the same brand adhesive as the vinyl to ensure compatibility.

- Some vinyl will expand slightly width-wise and shrink slightly length-wise. Always follow your manufacturer's recommendations for expansion spacing. Some manufacturers recommend leaving an expansion space while others do not.

- If using a full spread adhesive, always wear gloves.

- If using sheet vinyl, do not unroll the vinyl until you are ready to cut and install it.

- Do not store your vinyl in direct sunlight.

- "Hook blades" work well for trimming vinyl in place. These work with any standard utility knife and can be purchased at most home improvement stores.

- When trimming vinyl along walls, use a scrap piece of wood to create a crease in the vinyl along the wall. Cut along the crease.

- Cut vertically from top to bottom when trimming vinyl on outside corners.

- Cut "V" shapes in the vinyl when trimming on inside corners until the vinyl lays flat along both walls.

- Place heavy objects on the vinyl during trimming and gluing to ensure the material does not shift before it is secured to the subfloor.

- If you install a peel-and-stick vinyl tile/plank incorrectly, heat it with a heat gun or hair dryer and quickly move it into the correct position.

INSTALL THE UNDERLAYMENT

If installing a plywood underlayment, keep these things in mind:

- Stagger sheets so seams are at least 12" from any seams in the subfloor.

- Leave a 1/8" expansion perimeter around the whole room.

- Leave between 1/16" and 1/32" expansion gap between underlayment sheets. Fill with leveling compound, then sand so the whole floor is level and flat.

- Place factory edges to factory edges when possible.

- Use ¼" crown divergent, galvanized staples spaced 4" apart in the field and 2" apart at all seams. (Some manufacturer's recommend using 1 ¼" 3d ring shank nails.)

- Let the underlayment acclimatize for 24 hours before beginning your vinyl installation.

INSTALL FELT-BACKED SHEET VINYL

Felt-backed sheet vinyl can be installed with or without seams. Store your roll of felt-backed sheet vinyl in the installation area for 24 hours so the material can acclimatize to the room conditions.

INSTALL SHEET VINYL WITHOUT SEAMS

Use this method when you are working in a small area with few obstacles that will require only one sheet of vinyl.

1. Measure your installation area. Add 3 inches to each of your measurements.

2. Cut out your sheet vinyl based on your measurements.

3. Place the vinyl in the installation area. Trim away all excess around walls and obstacles.

4. Roll one half of the vinyl back and secure with masking tape.

5. Apply the adhesive to the subfloor or perimeter as directed by the manufacturer.

6. Unroll and lay the vinyl into the adhesive. Apply pressure from the center to the edges. Roll the floor with a 100-lb roller as directed by the manufacturer.

7. Repeat steps 4 through 6 for the other half of the vinyl.

8. Re-roll the entire floor as directed by the manufacturer.

INSTALL SHEET VINYL WITH SEAMS

Use this method when you are working in a large area with multiple obstacles and seams.

1. Create a pattern of your floor using a pattern kit (available at most home improvement stores) or craft paper, scissors and tape. Make sure the pattern is flat on the floor at all times and account for all obstacles.

2. Unroll your pattern on top of your vinyl. Ensure there is a piece of vinyl beneath the entire pattern. Try to position seams in low traffic areas. If your vinyl has visible lines such as grout lines in tile patterns, plan your seams accordingly. Seams are much less visible if hidden within a grout line.

3. At each seam, overlap the two pieces of vinyl by at least 1". Make sure the patterns match so the seam blends together. Tape the two pieces of vinyl together with masking tape.

4. Following a metal straight edge, use a utility knife to cut through BOTH pieces of vinyl at each seam. Once cut, align the seam edges so flush and tape securely.

5. Cut the rest of your vinyl to fit your pattern. Leave 3" around the perimeter.

6. Once cut, carefully roll up the vinyl and take it to the installation area. (Consider sweeping/vacuuming the install area just prior to laying down your vinyl.)

7. Unroll carefully and align correctly with the room. Trim all edges so they are flush with walls or obstacles. Leave expansion spacing per your manufacturer's recommendations.

8. Starting with the largest piece of vinyl first, roll back and tape the half opposite the seam.

9.   Apply the adhesive to the subfloor or perimeter as directed by the manufacturer.

10. Unroll and lay the vinyl into the adhesive. Apply pressure from the center to the edges.

11. Roll back and tape the other half of the vinyl (near the seam). Use a pencil to trace the seam onto the subfloor. Roll back and tape the second (smaller) piece of vinyl.

12. Apply the adhesive on the whole floor under both sheets of vinyl and along the seam (for full spread) or on either side of the seam as directed by the manufacturer (for perimeter adhesive).

13. Carefully unroll both pieces of vinyl and set in the adhesive. Make sure the vinyl is tight but not overlapping at the seam. Wipe away any excess adhesive from the seam.

14. Roll the vinyl and the seam with a 100-lb roller or as recommended by the manufacturer.

15. Repeat steps 8 through 14 for all other seams on the floor.

16. Re-roll the whole floor as recommended by the manufacturer.

17. Use a seam sealer kit to seal all seams. Follow all the directions provided with the kit.

18. Let the new vinyl cure and bond for 24-72 hours or as directed by your manufacturer. Do not move anything back into the room and keep foot traffic to a minimum during this time.

INSTALL VINYL TILES/PLANKS

Vinyl tiles and planks are laid out much like ceramic tile. If you are using peel-and-stick vinyl, you'll remove the protective backing and secure in place. For other types of vinyl, you can use tab, spray or full spread adhesive. If using one of these methods, follow all the adhesive manufacturer's recommendations during installation.

INSTALL VINYL TILES / PLANKS

1.   Snap a chalk line between the center points of each opposite wall to divide the room into four equal quadrants.

2.   Layout a row of loose vinyl tiles in all directions at the center intersection point. Evaluate the fit. If there are small cuts (less than ½") along walls, move the starting point down by ½ a vinyl tile width and re-snap your chalk lines. If desired, snap chalk lines to divide the larger quadrants into smaller (approx 2' x 3') sections.

3.   Begin securing vinyl tiles/planks at the center intersection point in one quadrant and work your way towards the walls. Follow all the adhesive manufacturer's recommendations during installation.

4.   At walls, scribe fit vinyl tiles to fit.

5.   Once all vinyl tiles/planks are installed, roll the floor if recommended by your flooring manufacturer.

6.   Let the newly installed vinyl tiles/planks cure for between 24-72 hours or as directed by your manufacturer. During this time, do not move anything back into the room and keep foot traffic to a minimum.

INSTALL FIBERGLASS SHEET VINYL

Fiberglass vinyl can be installed as a loose-lay (floating) floor, a semi-loose lay (secured only along adjacent walls) floor or with full spread adhesive. Always follow your flooring manufacturer's recommendations with regard to seams. Some loose lay fiberglass vinyl floors cannot have seams.

If you are installing your fiberglass with a full spread adhesive, follow all the same installation steps as for felt-backed sheet vinyl.

INSTALL LOOSE LAY FIBERGLASS VINYL

Use these procedures to install a loose lay fiberglass vinyl floor without seams. If seams for a loose lay fiberglass vinyl installation are approved by the manufacturer, consider making a pattern of your floor as explained under the semi-loose lay section.

1.   Measure your installation area. Add 3 inches to each of your measurements.

2.   Cut out your fiberglass sheet vinyl based on your measurements.

3.   Place the fiberglass vinyl in the installation area. Carefully, trim away any excess around obstacles and walls.

INSTALL SEMI-LOOSE LAY FIBERGLASS VINYL

Use these procedures for installing a semi-loose lay fiberglass vinyl floor. If your semi-loose lay floor will not have any seams (or if your layout is simple), you do not have to create a pattern.

1.   Create a pattern of your floor using a pattern kit (available at most home improvement stores) or use craft paper, scissors and tape. Make sure the pattern is flat on the floor at all times and account for all obstacles.

2.   Unroll your pattern on top of your fiberglass vinyl. Ensure there is a piece of vinyl beneath the entire pattern. Try to position seams in low traffic areas. If your vinyl has visible lines such as grout lines in tile patterns, plan your seams accordingly. Seams are much less visible if hidden within a grout line.

3.   At each seam, overlap the two pieces of fiberglass vinyl by at least 1". Make sure the patterns match so the seam blends together. Tape the two pieces of fiberglass vinyl together.

4.   Use a utility knife to cut through BOTH pieces of fiberglass vinyl at each seam. Once cut, align the seam edges so they are flush and tape securely with masking tape.

5.   Cut the rest of your vinyl to fit your pattern. Leave 3" around the perimeter.

6.   Once cut, carefully roll up the vinyl and take it to the installation area. (Consider sweeping/vacuuming the installation areas just prior to laying down your fiberglass vinyl.)

7.   Unroll carefully and align correctly with the room. Trim all edges so they are flush with walls or obstacles. Leave expansion spacing per your manufacturer's recommendations.

8. Roll back and place acrylic tape along one of the edges of the vinyl. Unroll and press the tape/vinyl to the subfloor.

9. Along an adjacent wall, repeat step 8.

10. If desired, place acrylic tape in an "X" under appliances.

11. At seams, the fiberglass vinyl is secured to the other piece NOT to the subfloor. Roll back one sheet of vinyl and tape with masking tape. Place a strip of acrylic tape along the whole edge of the second piece, but DO NOT remove the backing on the floor side. Unroll the other piece of vinyl and align on the acrylic tape so the seam is flush. Use a seam sealer kit to seal all seams as directed by your flooring manufacturer.

SPECIAL CIRCUMSTANCE AREAS

Vinyl flooring may be installed in a variety of special circumstance areas such as:

- **Around Fireplaces** – Install vinyl flush with brickwork/fireplaces and caulk the entire edge.
- **Pipes and Vents** – Account for these objects in your pattern (for sheet vinyl) or make mini-patterns to help you cut around these areas for vinyl tiles/planks.
- **On Stairs** – Vinyl should not be installed on stairs for safety reasons.

For more detailed information about installing vinyl in these areas, see the full **Installing Vinyl Flooring** guide on FindAnyFloor.com.

TRANSITIONS AND TRIM

Install transitions and trim to hide any expansion spacing and put the finishing touches on your room.

INSTALL TRANSITIONS

- **For Carpet** – Metal, vinyl and rubber transition pieces are available. These types of transitions are either glued or nailed to the subfloor.
- **For Other Flooring Surfaces** – Transitions to laminate, hardwood, tile or bamboo should match or accent that flooring surface. Most times, these are already in place. For more information on these types of transitions, see the full installation guide for that flooring type on FindAnyFloor.com.

INSTALL TRIM

Install all wall base, shoe base and quarter round trim around the perimeter of the room. Do NOT glue the trim to the vinyl. Always glue to the wall and nail at an angle every 16". Caulk significant gaps between the trim and the wall.

CAULK THE FLOOR

Use flexible, mildew resistant silicone caulk to seal around all bathtubs, showers and other wet areas. If you did not remove your baseboard, caulk the perimeter to seal against moisture and prevent the edges of the vinyl from peeling up.