



BROADLOOM CARPET INSTALLATION GUIDE

Urban Surfaces' carpet collections combine comfort, durability, and style. Designed to withstand everyday wear, they are stain-resistant, fade-resistant, and pet-friendly—providing a soft, inviting feel with long-lasting performance and reliability. Relevant Product lines for this guide: TurnKey™, and EasyLiving™ Soft Back Carpets.

REQUIREMENTS FOR INSTALLATION

Pre-Installation

The site conditions must be properly maintained for 24 hours before, during, and permanently after installation to ensure successful installation: An HVAC system must be operational during installation. Installation site temperature (including carpet, underlayment, and adhesive) must be between 65°F and 95°F. Do not begin installation if the subfloor temperature is below 50°F. Ambient humidity should not exceed 65%.

Protect

Protect your floor from prolonged exposure to direct sunlight exposure via the use of window treatments, drapes, blinds, or shades on the windows to protect carpets from direct sunlight to prevent fading and discoloration.

Overage Allowances

Order 5-10% more square footage of flooring than needed to account for cuttings and waste. Failing to purchase enough materials for the job, or not keeping materials for repairs, may result in different dye lots on a future order or products being discontinued. It is not recommended to mix dye lots or batch numbers.

Product Inspection

Check to ensure your carpet is in its original packaging and free from any visible damage or defects. Inspect all material for correct color, design, dye lot or batch number, size, and quantity needed to finish the job, prior to beginning installation.

NOTE:

Avoid installing material from different batches, especially across large areas. It is possible for there to be slight shade and milling variations across products from different batches/dye lots. This is due to slight variations within industry tolerances that occur during different dates of manufacturing. Generally, this will not be noticeable unless batches are mixed or side-matching is attempted, such as during repairs or later installations. Batches that are close in production runs may be able to be mixed. This should be verified by the contractor/installer before installation to verify product batch compatibility. Intermixed batches that are not compatible or do not match are the responsibility of the contractor/installer.

Subfloor Requirements

1. The substrate must be structurally sound, clean, dry, and level. It must be free of dust, dirt, oil, grease, paint, curing agents, concrete sealers, loosely bonded toppings, loose particles, and other substances or conditions that may prevent or compromise the installation.
2. The subfloor must be free from moisture-related conditions that can damage the installed flooring in order to help prevent pH damage, damage arising from hydrostatic pressure, and situations in which mold and/or mildew could

grow. Moisture requirements vary from one subfloor material to another. All subfloors must fall within an acceptable moisture limit.

3. Repair any indentations or projections in the subfloor that could telegraph through the cushion. Repair or replace missing boards or other damage to wood subfloors. A minimum of 18" of ventilated air space is required between the floor joists and the ground.
4. Fill cracks or depressions with a cementitious patching/leveling compound. It is acceptable to use gypsum-based patching and/or leveling compounds that contain Portland or high alumina cement and meet or exceed the compressive strength of 3,000 psi. Wax-based (green) sweeping compounds are also acceptable but sweep and remove them immediately to minimize contaminants.

NOTE: Do not sand or scrape Vinyl Asbestos Tile (VAT) without following proper abatement procedures and precautions in accordance with all state and local codes. Urban Surfaces does not claim that this procedure is an acceptable mitigation method in place of asbestos removal and accepts no responsibility if any loose asbestos-containing floors are affected by the removal of Urban Surfaces products.

Crawl Spaces

The concrete slab or ground must be dry. Ensure that crawl spaces have open ventilation year-round to ensure proper air circulation and prevent moisture buildup. Crawl-space clearance between the earth and underside of joists should be no less than 18" (45.7cm) and the perimeter vent area should be equal to 1.5% of the total square footage of the crawl space or as mandated by code. Crawl spaces should be insulated and have a vapor barrier covering exposed earth.

Acceptable Subfloor Types

It is possible to install carpets over many existing substrates, provided they are flat, clean, stable, firmly fixed in place and structurally sound. It is not acceptable to install carpet over floor coverings of any kind. Remove all carpet, needle felt, cushion vinyl, perimeter glued products, textured ceramic tiles, Mexican pavers (and similar types of flooring), LVP/LVT, laminate, looselay, or any existing floating floor prior to installing new carpet.

The substrate shall be free of: residual adhesive (including cutback adhesive), adhesive removers, alkaline salts, excessive carbonation/laitance, mold, mildew, dust, wax, oil, grease, solvent, paint, curing compounds, sealing compounds, hardening/parting compounds, or any other foreign materials. DO NOT apply moisture barriers over wood subfloors. DO NOT install any Urban Surfaces product over sleeper floor construction, wood that lies directly on concrete, etc. Sleeper floors and other wood structures on top of concrete that do not meet the crawl space requirements can create moisture issues beneath the subfloor that will be trapped by the flooring's waterproof properties. This can lead to mold, mildew, or even wood rot of the subfloor construction.

Non-Approved Subfloors

- Carpeting
- Used Carpet Pad
- Parquet Over Concrete
- Cork
- Cushioned Vinyl Flooring
- Engineered Hardwood
- Sleeper Substrates
- Floating Floors
- Rubber
- Laminate
- Solid Hardwood

- The gully between the tack strips and vertical abutments must be slightly less than the carpet's thickness but not exceed $\frac{3}{8}$ " (9 mm).
- Do not install tack strips across door openings and/or sills when carpet is installed in adjacent rooms.
- Cut tack strips to follow the contour of door casings and other irregularly shaped abutments.
- Use J-pin tack strip or gripper metal such as "Z-bar" when transitioning to hard surface flooring.
- Do not staple carpet to tack strips.
- Use the manufacturer's approved adhesive to secure tack strips on radiant-heated floors.
- Do not use nails or screws on radiant-heated floors.

BEFORE INSTALLING

Product Conditioning

It is important that flooring products maintain a constant temperature between 65°F (18°C) and 95°F (35°C) for 24 hours prior to, during, and permanently after installation. An HVAC system must be on and functional.

Prep

Prepare subfloor to be dry, smooth, level, clean and dust-free. See subfloor and substrate requirements prior to installation.

BASIC INSTALLATION

Follow these critical steps for a successful installation.

Tackless Strip

Carpets with synthetic secondary backing need to be stretched 1-1.5% in both width and length using a power stretcher and fastened onto tackless strips. Knee kickers can be used for positioning, but stretcher hooks, stingers, or spikes are not recommended.

Tack strips must be a minimum of 1 inch (25mm) wide and $\frac{1}{4}$ inch (6mm) thick.

Residential Applications: For areas over 30 feet and products with heavier latex application, either architectural strips (1 $\frac{3}{4}$ inch wide with 3 rows of pins) or 2 conventional strips (with 2 rows of pins each) are required.

Large Areas: Sufficient stretch can be difficult to achieve in areas over 30 feet in length or width, potentially causing wrinkles. Alternate installation methods are suggested for these areas.

Additional Considerations

- To prevent injury, tack strip pins must not protrude through the carpet. The use of J-pin tack strips is recommended.
- Securely fasten tack strips with a minimum of 12" between fasteners or 2 fasteners per piece if less than 12" (nails or staples) to maintain power stretching tension.
- Place tack strips so the pins are angled toward the vertical abutment.

When installing over hydronic radiant-heating systems, it is crucial to locate the hot water pipes embedded in the concrete to prevent punctures. To do this, first turn off the heat, then wet mop the entire floor, and finally turn the heat back on. The areas above the pipes will dry faster than the rest of the floor and should be marked accordingly. Once the pipe locations are identified, tackless strips can be nailed down in areas where there is no risk of puncturing the pipes. If the concrete won't hold nails or there's a chance of puncturing the pipes, the strips should be glued down instead.

Radiant Heating System

Ensuring stable job site conditions, subfloor suitability, and proper acclimation are especially important when installing over a radiant heat system. It is the responsibility of the installer/owner to ensure that the recommended environmental conditions are met for installation.

Refer to your radiant heat system manufacturer to determine its compatibility with vinyl flooring and to learn the specific requirements for installation. It is recommended that the user consults with the radiant heating provider for best practices, installation methods, and proper subfloors. In-floor radiant components must be within the substrate below the flooring, separated by a minimum distance of $\frac{1}{2}$ " (13mm). The surface temperature of the slab should never exceed 95°F (35°C). The heating system should be operational for at least two weeks prior to installation to calibrate temperature settings.

Cushion

Buckling and wrinkling may result from choosing the wrong cushion. Select a cushion that is suitable for the intended use.

Residential Applications: Minimum density of 6 lbs not to exceed $\frac{7}{16}$ " thickness

Commercial Applications: Minimum density 8 lbs not to exceed $\frac{3}{8}$ " thickness

To prevent slippage, lifting, and resistance during carpet installation, use the longest possible lengths of carpet cushion and install cushion seams at right angles or staggered at least six inches from carpet seams.

For concrete floors, glue the carpet cushion down using a good-quality cushion adhesive applied in a 15"-18" zig-zag pattern around the perimeter of the tackless strip, along the seams, and in the center. For wood floors, use staples placed no more than 6"-8" apart around the perimeter and stagger them along the seams to prevent depressions.

With either method, ensure all wrinkles are eliminated before securing the cushion. Finally, tape all cushion seams with 2" wide duct tape.

Layout and Cutting

Cut carpet pieces 3" to 5" longer than needed to cover the area. The extra carpet should be allowed to go onto the wall around the room's perimeter.

Where two pieces will be seamed together, overlap them by 3" to 5". The excess carpet material allows for stretching, trimming, seaming, and tucking during installation.

To create a seam, use a metal straight edge as a guide and cut through both layers of carpet. This will ensure both sides of the seam perfectly match. Follow the instructions in the Seaming section below to join the two pieces.

Cutting Cross-Seams/T-Seams

Minimize cross seams to no more than 2 per room. For best seam quality, row cut both seam edges as you would for length seams. If the rows are not straight or you cannot find/separate them, use a straight edge on the backing as an alternative cutting method.

Seaming

Always apply an acrylic, thermoplastic, or universal seam sealer to both edges between the primary and secondary backings. Smooth wet seam sealers with your fingertips to speed up drying and prevent transfer to the face yarn and seaming iron. Improperly sealed seams can result in edge raveling.

Next, center a seaming tape, which is pre-coated with a thermoplastic adhesive, beneath the seam. Use a seaming device to heat the tape, melting the adhesive and laminating the carpet backing to the tape. Seams should be made over a hard, flat surface, such as a seaming board. For proper penetration of adhesive into the carpet backing from the seaming tape, use a carpet seam roll.

NOTE:

- Use premium 3", 4", or 6" tape with a low melting point or use of a sinch iron/tape.
- Six-inch-wide seaming tape will provide the best results for peaking seams.
- Back-rolling the seam edges and pre-stretching the carpet along the seam area will help minimize seam peaking.
- Hot melt seams, particularly those with cut or cut-loop constructions, should not be rolled with star or spike patterned rollers.

To prevent secondary backing distortion, ensure the seaming iron is at the correct temperature, as this can vary depending on the iron and tape manufacturers. A grooved iron is recommended for better adhesive penetration when using a seaming iron.

Always use a heat shield and move the iron in the direction of the pile. Use a non-heat-conductive seam weight instead of a metal weight to avoid trapping heat and moisture. Make sure there is enough ventilation to get rid of any fumes from the seaming process.

Layout and Cutting

Cut carpet pieces 3" to 5" longer than needed to cover the area. The extra carpet should be allowed to go onto the wall around the room's perimeter.

Where two pieces will be seamed together, overlap them by 3" to 5". The excess carpet material allows for stretching, trimming, seaming, and tucking during installation.

To create a seam, use a metal straight edge as a guide and cut through both layers of carpet. This will ensure both sides of the seam perfectly match. Follow the instructions in the Seaming section below to join the two pieces.

Final Trimming & Tuck

Once all carpet has been seamed and stretched onto tackless strip, use a wall trimmer to trim all perimeter carpet. Once trimmed, tuck the edges into the gap between the tackless strip and abutments for a clean finished look. Vacuum the carpet to remove stray carpet fibers and fuzz to complete the installation.

AFTER INSTALLATION

Post-Installation Care

To protect the carpet:

- Use plywood to protect the carpet when moving heavy objects.
- Use protective chair mats under chairs with casters to prevent excessive wear.
- Use a non-staining building material paper to protect the carpet during additional construction. Do not use plastic sheeting, as it will trap moisture and potentially damage the carpet.

Visit www.urbansurfaces.com for the maintenance guide and cleaning instructions. For questions not addressed here, contact Urban Surfaces Technical Support at 1-800-492-8722.

Check Out Our Video Installation Series

We are more than just a supplier, we are a resource too. We've got what you need to properly train your team for the moment of truth, no matter when or where. Our videos thoroughly demonstrate how to install:

- ✓ LooseLay Flooring
- ✓ Floating Floor
- ✓ GlueDown Floor
- ✓ Moldings, and More!





THANK YOU FOR CHOOSING URBAN SURFACES

Proudly serving the multi-unit and builder markets with beautiful, innovative, and high-quality flooring products since 2001.

Revised March 3, 2025