

Hilltop Essentials Installation Instructions

Before You Start/ Preparations

Please read all the instructions before you begin the installation. Improper installation will void warranty.

Locking System

Valinge Angle/Angle Method

Important Notice

Every application and installation is different therefore we strongly recommend the customer consult a licensed installer/contractor to verify that the conditions and application meet local requirements or industry expectations. Any installation guidelines are not intended to supersede federal, state or local regulations which may require modifying the existing installation, materials or structural components. The owner assumes responsibility for compliance with all building codes, including maintaining the required distance from heat sources such as fireplaces. After installation, make sure to keep the room within a temperature range of 60°F to 80°F. Excessively high or low temperatures may cause this product to expand or contract and lead to visual defects of the floor that will not be warranted. For the best result, make sure to always work from 2 to 3 cartons at a time, mixing the planks during the installation.

Installation in areas with sustained direct sunlight:

In cases where the flooring is in direct sunlight for much of the day (Sunrooms, etc.) it is recommended that the planks be glued down in those areas. The planks are still clicked together as per the floating installation instructions, but an approved premium cork flooring adhesive should be used in areas as needed. Be sure to follow the adhesive manufacturer's instructions. When employing the direct glue down installation method, DO NOT include a 6-mil poly vapor barrier in the assembly. Flooring material must be adhered directly to the subfloor.

This product has a pre-attached underlayment. Do not install over carpet or any additional underlayment (except a 6 mil poly-film moisture barrier over concrete). The use of the Sentinel Protect Plus Underlayment under the product is warranted for residential applications only, including multi-family housing and condominiums (residential unit only). Do not use any additional underlayment in commercial applications (e.g. industrial areas, commercial foyers, restaurants, etc. or any areas with heavy rolling loads). Using additional underlayment in commercial applications such as these will void the warranty.

- Calculate the room surface prior to installation and plan an extra 10% of flooring for cutting waste.
- In most cases, this product does not need to be acclimated. However, if the boxes of flooring were exposed over 2 hours to extreme temperatures (under 50°F or over 100°F) within the 12 hours before the installation, acclimation is required. In this case, keep the boards in room temperature for at least 12 hours in unopened package before starting the installation. The room temperature must be maintained between 60° to 80°F before and during the installation.
- For floor surfaces exceeding 6400ft² and or lengths exceeding 80ft, in any direction, use expansion moldings.

- Do not install cabinets or fixed objects on top of the flooring. Proper expansion space (1/4") is required. Undercut all doorjamb.
- Inspect your subfloor before you begin. It must be clean and level to 3/16" within a 10 ft span.
- Although this floor is waterproof, it is not to be used as a moisture barrier. The subfloor must be dry (max 2.5% moisture content - CM method). This product is also not to be installed in areas that have a risk of flooding such as saunas or outdoor areas.
- If this flooring is intended to be installed over an existing wood floor, it is recommended to repair any loose boards or squeaks before beginning the installation.
- Concrete subfloors must be fully cured for at least 60 days, and should have minimum 6-mil poly-film as a moisture barrier between the concrete subfloor and the flooring.
- If installing over existing tile floors, any grout line greater than 1/8" should be filled in with an approved levelling compound.
- With a floating floor you must always ensure to leave a 1/4" gap between walls and fixtures such as pipes and pillars, stairs, etc. These gaps will be covered with trim moldings after the floor is installed.
- Decide the installation direction. It is recommended to install the length direction of the planks parallel to the main light direction.
- Measure the area to be installed. The board width of the last row shall not be less than 2". If so, adjust the width of the first row to be installed. In narrow hallways, it is recommended to install the length direction of the planks parallel to the length of the hall.
- Inspect each individual plank individually before installation. No claims on surface defects will be accepted after installation.

Important Notice

In-Floor Radiant Heat:

Flooring can be installed over 1/2" (12mm) embedded radiant heat. Radiant heat systems must have a minimum of 1/2" (12mm) separation from the product. Maximum operating temperature should never exceed 85°F (30°C). Use of an in-floor temperature sensor is recommended to avoid overheating.

- Before installing over newly constructed radiant heat systems, operate the system at maximum capacity to force any residual moisture from the cementitious topping of the radiant heat system. The maximum moisture content should be 2.5% (CM method). Before starting the installation, turn the heat off for 24 hours before, during, and 24 hours after installation when installing over radiant heated subfloors.
- Make sure that the temperature in the room is between 60°F (15°C) and 80°F (25°C) during installation.
- Once the installation has been completed, the heating system should be turned on and increased gradually (5 degree increments) until returning to normal operating conditions.
- Refer to the radiant heat system's manufacturer recommendations for additional guidance.

Warning: Electric heating mats that are not embedded into the subfloor are not recommended for use underneath the flooring. Using electric heating mats that are not embedded and applied directly underneath the flooring will void the warranty.

Tools and supplies required

- Spacers • Rubber Mallet • Ruler • Pencil • Tape Measure • Utility Knife

INSTALLATION:

Start in a corner by placing the first plank with the tongue side facing the wall. Use spacers along each wall to maintain an expansion space of 8-12 mm (5/16 in - 3/8 in) between the wall and the flooring. **Diagram 1.**

To attach the second plank, insert the end tongue into the end groove of the very first plank at an angle of approx. 15-20 degrees. When lowered, the plank will click into place. Line up edges carefully. The planks should be flat to the floor. **Diagram 2.**

Continue connecting the first row until you reach the last full plank. Fit the last plank by rotating the plank 180° with the pattern side upward, place beside row. Measure and mark, then using a ruler and utility knife, score the plank and snap off. Attach as described above. **Diagram 3.**

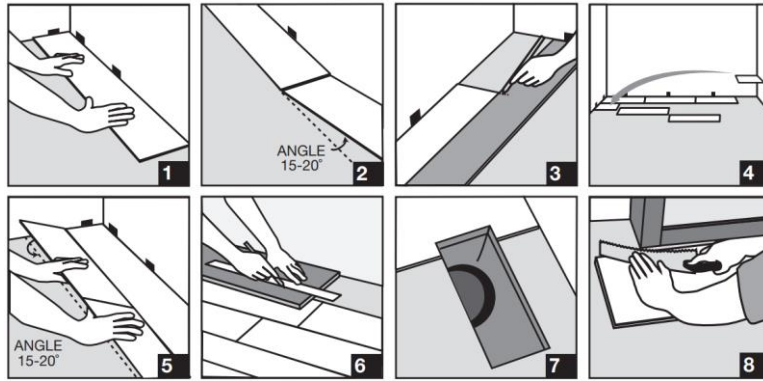
Begin the next row with the off cut piece from the previous row to stagger the pattern. Pieces should be a minimum of 20 cm (8 in) long and joint offset should be at least 40 cm (16 in). **Diagram 4.**

NOTE: It is faster to assemble planks into a new row at the ends and then attach the entire row to the previous row on the long sides. To start your second row, lay your first plank on the subfloor. Take your second plank, insert the end tongue into the end groove of the first plank at an angle of approx. 15-20 degrees. When lowered, the plank will click into place with light pressure. The planks should be flat to the floor. Make sure gaps are as small as possible. Continue assembling the planks this way until you have your second row complete. To attach the second row to the first row, tilt and push the side tongue into the side groove of the first panel at an angle of approx. 15-20 degrees. Lower and click into place lining the edges up carefully. Continue laying remaining planks in this manner.

Diagram 5. To fit the last row, lay a plank on top of the previous row. With the tongue to the wall, lay another plank upside down on the one to be measured and use it as a ruler. Don't forget to allow room for spacers. Cut the plank and attach into position. **Diagram 6.**

Door frames and heating vents also require expansion room. First cut the plank to the correct length. Then place the cut plank next to its actual position and use a ruler to measure the areas to be cut out and mark them. Cut out the marked points allowing the necessary expansion distance on each side. **Diagram 7.**

You can trim door frames by turning a plank upside down and using a handsaw to cut away the necessary height so that planks slide easily under the frames. **Diagram 8.**



Maintenance:

- Sweep or vacuum daily using soft bristle attachments.
- Never drag or slide heavy objects or furniture across the floor.
- Clean up spills and excessive liquids immediately.
- Damp mop as needed. Use recommended vinyl floor cleaners that do not contain wax or oil.
- The use of residential steam mops on this product is allowed. Use at lowest power with a suitable soft pad, and do not hold a steam mop on one spot for an extended period of time. Refer to the steam mop's manufacturer instructions for proper usage.
- Protect floor from constant direct sunlight. Close blinds or drapes during peak sunlight hours.
- Use proper floor protection devices such as felt protectors under furniture. Use protecting mats under rolling chairs.
- Use a mat at entrance ways. Ensure the mat does not have a rubber backing as it the rubber backing may cause discoloration.
- Do not use abrasive cleaners, bleach or wax to maintain the floor.