

# Installation Instructions

imagine™  
floors by Airstep.

Masterpieces

LAMINATE

**Airstep Flooring Masterpieces (Floating Floor) installation guidelines must be reviewed by installers prior to commencement of installation. All installations should be in accordance with current standard for installation of floorcovering AS/NZ1884-2012, as well as, any current best practice including the latest technical developments. Should you have any queries in relation to the below recommendations, please contact your retailer or Airstep Flooring representative.**

## Preparation

These instructions are intended to assist in achieving an optimum installation. Any variation to these instructions may affect the warranty. Masterpieces floors are designed to be installed as a floating floor system on an approved 2mm foam underlay.

NOTE: Floating floor installation systems should NOT be used if any type of loads are likely to exceed 200kg per object area or if the load is greater than 30kg/cm<sup>2</sup> – only direct stick method should be considered.

## Pre-Installation Checks

It is the installer's responsibility prior to commencing installation to verify that the material is the correct product, colour, pattern and quantity. Prior to installation, each plank should be carefully checked in good natural light for any damage or any obvious visual defects in the material. Note: Colour, grain and texture variation from sample may occur. If the product is incorrect or has any visual defects or damage, contact your retailer or Airstep Flooring representative immediately. Never, install defective product. Claims for visual defects can only be accepted prior to installation and cutting.

## Site Testing and Conditioning

Concrete sub floors must be tested in accordance with AS1884-2012 for moisture using the relative humidity in-situ probe test and pH. RH levels of the substrate should not exceed 75%.

Masterpieces material must be allowed to condition on site for a minimum period of 48 hours in its original unopened packaging. This must be in a dry, well ventilated area with an air temperature between 18°C and 28°C with an optimal relative humidity between 30-70%. The temperature must remain within this range for the entire installation period and a minimum of 48 hours after installation completion. This may require covering the windows to prevent any fluctuations of temperature during or after the installation to prevent thermally induced changes to the product.

Boxes (unopened) should be stored no more than 5 high to avoid damage and maximise acclimatisation. Packs should not be opened until time of installation to avoid moisture ingress prior to installation.

## Sub Floor Testing and Preparation

Sub floors must be clean, dry, flat, structurally sound and there must be no exposure to sub terrane ground.

Concrete floors must be cured and completely dry, with a surface free of trowel marks and surface irregularities and thoroughly checked for the following:

- Planeness - When a straightedge 2 meters long is placed at rest at 2 points 2 meters apart, no part of the surface shall be more than 3mm below the length of the straightedge in any direction. Uneven floors may lead to movement and noise, so it is imperative to assess the planeness prior to installation.

Depressions and cracks must be filled using a suitable (considering the traffic loads) approved levelling compound in accordance with the manufacturer's instructions. All irregularities must be levelled.

Timber, plywood and particleboard subfloors, must be checked for any loose boards/panels or excessive deflection or movement. If loose boards are found or movement is excessive, the subfloor should be repaired and damaged boards replaced, then if required, sanded to a level, smooth and dust free surface. The floor can be installed over most existing floorcovering (e.g. Ceramic Tile, Linoleum, PVC, VCT etc.) provided the floor is flat & dry. Carpet, carpet underlay and/or existing floating floors are **not** suitable *subfloors*.

## Underlay

Masterpieces floors must always be installed over a continuous damp proof membrane extending wall to wall and turned up 60mm to provide an adequate barrier to potential moisture. A good quality 2mm sealed cell underlay with integrated moisture barrier must be used to reduce sound transmission and possible moisture ingress from the substrate. Airstep Flooring 2mm sealed cell underlay with integrated moisture barrier on one side includes a 100mm overlap with self-adhesive tape along the edge once peeled off. This will ensure a continuous seal when the underlay is installed. If alternate tape is being used, ensure it is vapour tight tape prior to taping and all edges are securely taped with no gap. For additional protection, 200uM builder's plastic can be installed, first overlapping joins by 300mm, then taping joins with a waterproof tape and turning up at walls and all vertical fixtures.

### Wet Areas

Although Masterpieces flooring has been designed for improved protection against water and moisture it is NOT waterproof and excessive moisture is to be avoided. Masterpieces flooring can be installed in kitchens provided cleaning and maintenance guidelines are followed.

### Perimeter/Expansion Gaps

A perimeter expansion gap of 10mm-12mm must be maintained against all vertical fixtures (e.g. walls, cabinets, sliding doors, island benches, plumbing fixtures etc.). In environments of higher relative humidity, a minimum gap of 15mm is required as the product may expand up to 2mm-4mm per LM in the width however, the wider the floor, the higher the humidity, the larger the perimeter expansion gap must be.

For installation over large areas or in between multiple rooms that exceed a total of 12m in length or 8m in width, a 15mm expansion gap is required within the floor or between rooms. A trim or skirting/scotia can be used to cover this gap, ensuring the floor is not pinned to the substrate or vertical fixtures. Silicone or caulking compound is not recommended as this will prevent free movement of the total floor area.

### Tools Required

10mm-12mm Spacers • Drop Saw/Circular Saw • Jig Saw • Utility Knife • Straight Edge • T-Square • Pull Bar • No. 2 White Rubber Mallet • Pencil • Tape Measure • Safety Glasses.

### Installation Instructions

- Prepare the sub floor in accordance with Australia Standard 1884-2012 and as set out in these instructions.
- Plan the direction of the area to be installed to maximise the visual appearance once installed. The direction of the plank grain should be confirmed and the installation should be balanced from the centre of the area to minimise waste. Work out the trims to be installed as some trims are easier to install prior to the flooring. This will be dependent on the direction of the trim to the flooring and the type of trim to be installed.
- Measure the room and estimate the number of rows required. If the last row is not at least 60mm wide, the first row should be cut so that the first and last rows are similar in width.
- To minimise shade variation, mix and install product from several different packs alternately and stagger end joins more than 300mm. After laying a small quantity of product, view from a distance that allows you to clearly see the overall effect. If there is any doubt cease installation immediately and contact your Airstep Flooring retailer.

**NOTE: Planks are directional and mixed in each box (A & B) to create the Chevron visual.**

**For the long side use the system “ANGLE”. For the short side use the systems “SNAP or ANGLE”. “ANGLE” means tilting board on the long side (or short side) by approximately 15 degrees whilst exerting forward pressure to engage the lock system and then gently lowering the board into place. “SNAP” means you can gently tap the short end whilst the board is flat without lifting. This will engage both short end joins ensuring that it is tapped together gradually and avoid any damage by overhitting.**

1. Install the first row of plastic and/or underlay as required (Fig 1). Firstly, remove the short and long side tongue of the first board followed by only the long side tongue of the remaining first row boards then install the first row to the wall to assess the straightness of the starting wall. If the starting wall is undulating or uneven, square this row off to the other side of the room using a tape measure and scribe the first row of boards to cater for the undulations while accommodating a uniform 10mm-12mm expansion gap. (Fig 1)

From the left corner of the room put the first plank in place using spacer blocks against the wall to maintain a uniform expansion gap so both the end and side seam grooves are facing outwards. Planks are to be installed from left to right. To assist in laying the first row straight, the use of masking tape across each short end locking system is recommended. Continue this for the first two rows and remove after completion of installation. (Fig 2)

2. Install the second plank in the first row by angling and laying the short-end tongue onto the previously installed plank short-end groove. Care must be taken to properly line up the end join and NEVER force the join while out of alignment, otherwise this could result in permanent damage to the end groove. (Fig 3)

3. Continue in this manner for the rest of the first row. The last plank in the row should be cut to length while maintaining the recommended expansion gap along the perimeter of the room or all vertical surfaces. (Fig 4)

4. Use the off cut from the last board in the first row (min length 600mm) or cut a plank that is at least 600mm shorter than the first plank to start the second row. Install the first plank in the second row by inserting the long side tongue into the groove of the plank in the first row at a low angle to the installed plank. Then lower the plank

while maintaining a slight pressure toward the installed plank. Use a tapping block to gently engage the short end lock. The planks should fit snugly together and lay flat maintaining the appropriate expansion gap along the perimeter of the room or all vertical surfaces. (Fig 5-6)

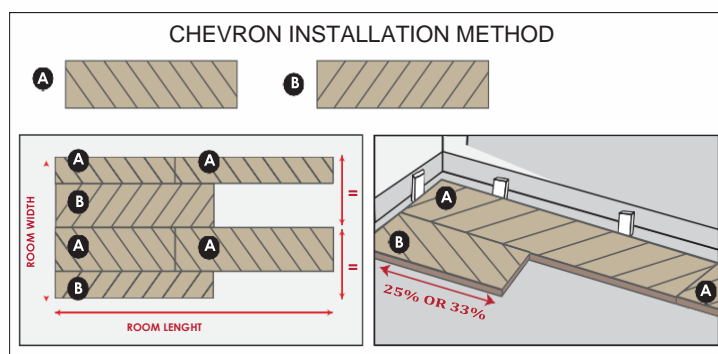
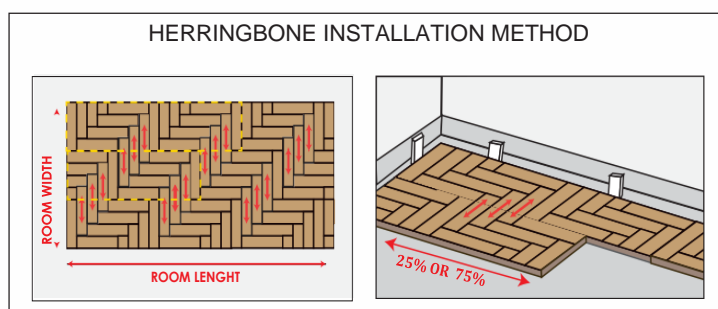
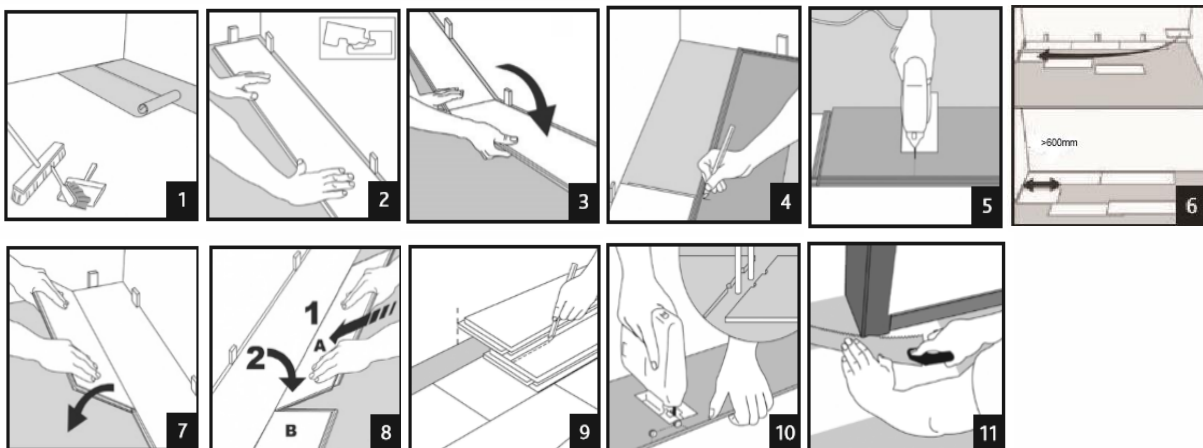
5. To install the remaining planks in the second row, first align the long edge tongue into the groove of the previous row at an angle. Slide the plank to the left until it meets the previously installed plank. Lower the plank while maintaining a slight pressure towards the installed piece. Use a tapping block to gently engage the short end lock. The planks should fit snugly together and lay flat maintaining the appropriate expansion gap along the perimeter of the room or all vertical surfaces. (Fig 6, 7, 8)

6. Work across the length of the room installing all planks in the second row. It is critical to keep these first two rows straight and square, as they are the “foundation” for the rest of the installation. Check often for squareness and straightness while installing the floor as failure to do so can result in gapping.

7. Continue installing, being certain to maintain a random pattern repeat, assisted by offsetting end joins by at least 400mm maintaining the appropriate expansion gap against all vertical surfaces.

8. The last row (possibly the first row) plank width must be no less than 60mm on the long side. Remember to allow for the appropriate expansion gap to the wall. Use a crosslinked PVA glue when fitting last row to secure the end join. Additionally, under door jambs remove the tongue on the plank and apply glue before installing. The use of a pull bar may be necessary to ensure a good join. (Fig 9-11)

9. Install wall moldings and door floor transition moldings last. Be sure that all moldings are fastened directly to the wall or subfloor; do not place any fasteners through the floating flooring. Care must be taken when fitting wall or floor moldings that they do not push down on the floor surface as this will affect the floors ability to have free movement and may lead to product failure and visual defects.



### Special Notes

- It is the homeowner's responsibility to provide a moderate indoor environment in order to prevent cracking and distortion of the flooring, even when unoccupied.
- 10mm-12mm is the minimum perimeter expansion gap for all applications. Larger floors or floors that will be exposed to higher levels of relative humidity will need larger expansion gaps. Some multi-room or very large installations will need expansion joints installed throughout the floor. In most cases, multi-room installations will need to be separated at doorways using expansion trims, a range of which are available from your local retailer. Your retailer will be able to advise you in this regard.
- Masterpieces floors are not designed to be exposed to extremes of humidity or temperature. It is important to note that floors exposed to such conditions may fail. Sensible protection of the flooring from such extremes, particularly in unoccupied homes, must be afforded. Measures can include curtains, awning, blinds, window tinting, and early commissioning and/or regular use of air conditioning or humidity control devices.
- Protection of the flooring from any radiant heat source should also be provided, e.g. around combustion heaters and other heaters, as these generate extreme low humidity. Masterpieces floors should not be installed until these measures are in place, and should not be installed more than 2 weeks prior to occupation of the home or premises. It is important to understand that any warranty, expressed or implied, may be voided if the floor is exposed to extreme conditions.
- Cleaning and maintenance guidelines must be followed to maintain the product optimal look and warranty.

### Post Installation

If construction works are still underway, the floor should be protected from all site debris, dirt, soil, traffic etc. by use of a protective surface (e.g. sheet plastic, hard boards). Please be careful to ensure no condensation occurs and any adhesive tape or protective material does not affect the aesthetics of the finished installation. Use window coverings to protect the floor from heat and fading under direct sunlight. Extreme or dramatic temperature fluctuation of the floor could cause joints to lip or gaps to occur and is not covered by the warranty.

These guidelines are intended to assist in achieving an optimum installation. Any variation to the recommendations above may affect any warranties. For further information, please contact your local Airstep Flooring Representative or retailer.