

Important Notice

The installation instructions are intended to assist in achieving an optimal installation. Imagine Floors by Airstep recommends installation be carried out by a professional installer. Any variation to these instructions by installers or a person installing will adversely affect or void the warranty.

- Imagine Floors hybrid floors are to be installed using a floating floor system method and must not be adhered, nailed, or pinned in any way to the subfloor or structure. Scotia, skirting or any finishing trim must have a gap between the bottom of the trim and the top of the floating floor around the entire perimeter of the installation to allow free expansion or contraction of the total raft. Failure to do so will result in open joints, separating planks, cupping, peaking or spring in most cases.
- Floating floor installation systems are not advised if any type of load is likely to exceed 180kg per object. If desired, heavy objects must be installed first and not placed on top of any floating floor installation. The floating raft must be able to move around heavy/fixed objects to avoid open joints, separating planks, cupping, peaking leading to most cases in floor failure. The perimeter gap must be respected around all heavy/fixed objects. A floating flooring installation should ALWAYS stay floating!
- If installing Imagine Floors hybrid flooring on any type of particle board or harsh substrate, you must first install a 200µm builder's plastic on top of the substrate wall edge to wall edge. This will reduce potential friction or jamming making sure the acoustic backing of the hybrid does not adhere or get jammed to the substrate if building movement occurs. Butted joints must be taped using no less than a 50mm wide duct tape. Once installed, inspect for smoothness as there must be no creases or imperfections prior to installing the hybrid flooring onto the builder's plastic described above. It is also the installers responsibility to assess any substrate for smoothness.
- Silicon or caulking compounds must not be used in relation to any Imagine Floors floating flooring installations as this inhibits free movement of the total raft area. Imagine Floors by Airstep has a range of water resistant accessories to compliment the hybrid flooring.
- Avoid any overuse of tapping blocks or mallet hammering to the end joint locking system. Any overuse will cause damage and micro fractures to the end joint locking system which will lead to failure resulting in peaking, lifting, or squeaking in most cases.
- Imagine Floors recommends that batches are not mixed. In circumstance where the installer has 2 or more batches, they must check to ensure they are compatible in design, colour, surface texture, gloss level, dimensions and locking system.
- Uneven subfloors will cause the lock system to break and /or the floor to sound drummy, or become noisy, and will cause early deterioration and failure of the floor. Refer to Subfloor Testing and Preparation.
- Most installations will require approximately 5% - 7.5% cutting allowance added to the total square meterage of total area. This does not include any extra flooring required for repairs etc.
- Imagine Floors hybrid has been designed to be installed in a climate controlled environment (>5°C) preferably at a normalised indoor room temperature (10°C to 30°C). Imagine Floors hybrid cannot be installed in solariums, seasonal porches, camper vans, boats or any other application where the temperature cannot be controlled.

NOTE: It is the installer's responsibility prior to commencing installation to verify that the product and accessories supplied are the correct product, colour, pattern and quantity. Prior to installation, each plank must be carefully checked in optimal lighting for any obvious visual defects to the surface or lock system. Never install defective product. If the product is incorrect or has any visual defects or damage, contact your nearest retailer. Imagine Floors by Airstep will not be responsible for any visible defects after the flooring has been cut and/or installed.

Site Testing and Conditioning

Concrete subfloors must be tested in accordance with the current AS1884 installation practices standard for moisture using the relative humidity in-situ probe test with results recorded. RH levels can be up to 80% for concrete subfloors and 10-14% moisture content for wood-based subfloors.

Soleil Hybrid flooring requires 24 hours acclimatisation on site if consistent room temperatures are between 10°C to 30°C with unopened boxes stacked flat and no more than 3 high and separated 200mm to allow proper air circulation. Post installation temperature range for optimal performance must be maintained between 10°C and 30°C including in front of large windows or doors. Window coverings must be used to reduce exposure to direct sunlight and heat on the floor's surface.

Extreme Temperatures Prior to Installation

Should Imagine Floors hybrid flooring be exposed within 24 hours prior to installation to extreme temperatures (under 5°C or over 50°C) (which may be due to storage in vehicles or transport to site), acclimatisation is mandatory at a constant room temperature between 10°C to 30°C for a minimum of 24 hours, in unopened packages prior to installation. Ensure individual stacks are no more than 3 packs high and they are spaced at least 200mm apart to allow airflow between stacks. The temperature must remain between 10°C to 30°C for the entire installation period and thereafter installation completion. The relative humidity in the installation area must be maintained at 30-60% during and after installation to prevent condensation forming under the laid flooring.

Subfloor Testing and Preparation

Subfloors must be clean, dry, flat & structurally sound. Concrete floors must be checked with a straightedge 2m long. When the straight edge is placed at rest on the subfloor no part of the surface shall be more than 3mm below the length of the straightedge in any direction.

Depressions and cracks must be filled using a suitable 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 floor covering (e.g. ceramic tiles, linoleum, PVC etc.) provided the floor is flat, dry and in the case of ceramics in a residential installation, grout line tolerances are no more than 3mm wide and 3mm deep. Otherwise grout joints must be filled to the level of the tiles with a suitable leveller. Carpet, any textiles or carpet underlay and/or existing floating floors are not a suitable subfloor.

Underfloor Heating

Imagine Floors hybrid flooring is suitable for installation with underfloor heating provided the heating system selected is a Hydronic In-slab system and is installed and operated as per the heating system manufacturer's installation and operating recommendations. See further pre-laying instructions below.

Imagine Floors Hybrid Flooring must never be installed over any electrical radiant heating system - the speed of sudden temperature changes having the potential to negatively affect the floor.

Hydronic Radiant Underfloor Heating System

Before installing Imagine Floors hybrid flooring with underfloor radiant heat systems, operate the system at maximum capacity for a minimum of 7 days to force any residual moisture from the cementitious topping of the radiant heat system. The moisture content of the screed prior to installation must be less than 1.5% (CM method). Shut down the floor heating at least 48 hours prior to installation. Make sure that the temperature in the room is at least 15°C during installation. It is recommended that the radiant heat be applied in a gradual manner (no more than 2°C per day) after installing the Hybrid Flooring. After installation, ensure the surface temperature of the subfloor never exceeds 27°C.

Underlay

Your Soleil hybrid floor has its own pre-adhered acoustically rated (BCA compliant) 1.0mm underlay so there is no need for additional underlay. The use of additional underlay/cork will negatively impact the performance of the installed floor and locking system.

Wet Areas

Although Imagine Floors hybrid flooring is water resistant, it must not be used as a moisture barrier, and must not be installed in areas that will be subjected to continual risk of excessive moisture/flooding such as saunas or outdoor areas.

If your Imagine Floors hybrid floor is being installed in a wet area (e.g. bathroom, laundry etc.) follow the instructions set out in the Installation procedure.

Separate or compartmentalise the wet area from the balance of the floor/area with an expansion trim or similar at the doorway or other adjoining areas. Seal the perimeter expansion gap using a soft grade silicone to prevent moisture seeping under the floor area of no more than 8m². Do not allow water to pool on the floor exceeding 5 mins. Wet towels or bath mats should never be left on the floor to dry. Any type of free standing bath tub can not be used as the floor needs to float.

Perimeter/Expansion Gaps

Most open plan areas can be installed without need for control joints, however it is a good idea to install control joints at doorways to allow the entire raft area to expand and contract freely. This is called “compartmentalisation”. A full perimeter expansion gap of no less than 8 to 10mm must be left against all fixed vertical surfaces (e.g. walls, kick plates, cabinets, sliding doors, island benches, plumbing fixtures etc.) A trim or skirting/scotia can be used to cover this gap, ensuring the floor is not pinned to the substrate or vertical surfaces. Silicone or caulking compound must not be used.

For installation of larger areas or in between multiple rooms that exceed a total continuous run of 15m in length or 15m in width, a ≥12mm expansion gap is required with control joints where the hallway meets the open plan area.

Note: For installations that include the floor passing through possible pinch-points, for example doorways and transitional areas from smaller passageways to larger rooms, additional perimeter expansion allowance is required with control joints.

Tools Required

Safety glasses, Dust mask, 8mm to 10mm Spacers, Jig Saw, Utility Knife, Straight Edge, T-Square, Pull Bar, Pencil, Tape Measure.

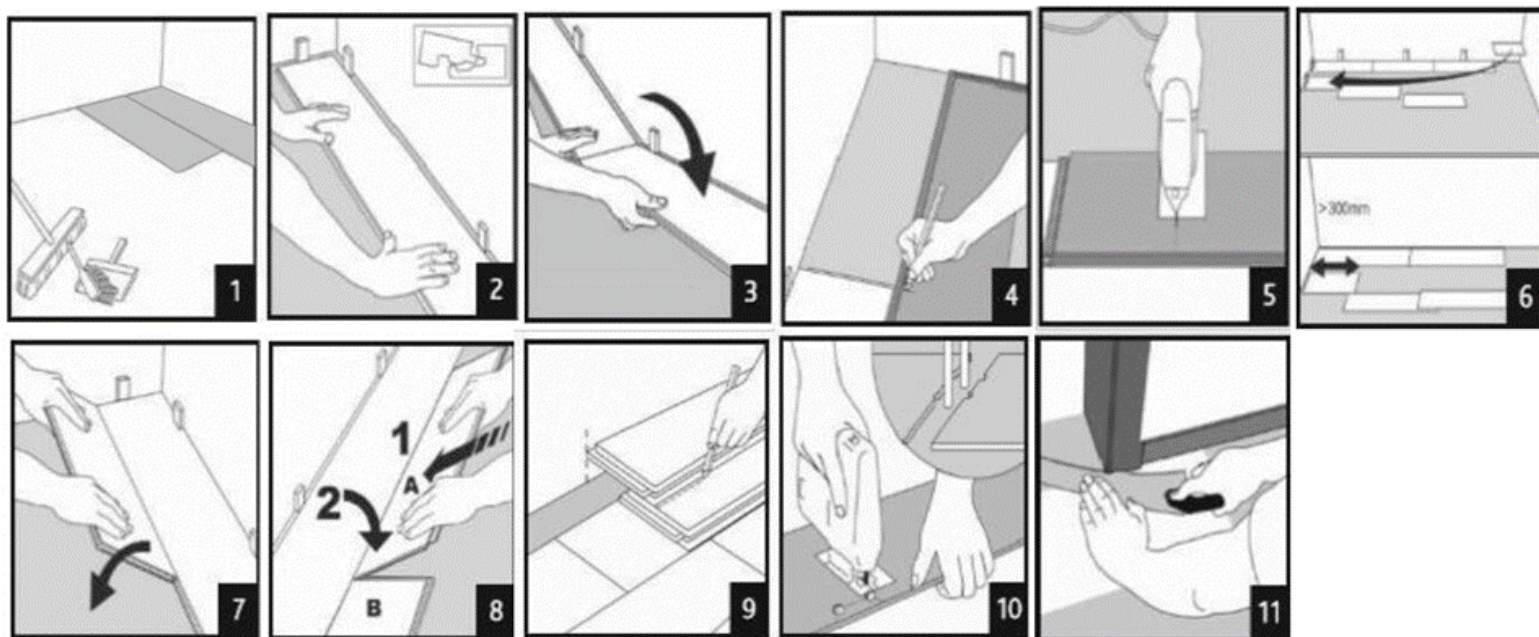
As a floating floor, the floor should not be adhered, nailed or pinned in any way to the subfloor or structure.

Installation

Note: All environmental factors need to be considered—including temperature, relative humidity and direct sunlight (all windows within the installation area must be covered) to minimise risk during the installation period and thereafter. These factors must be within designated parameters prior to installation of your new Soleil Hybrid Flooring. Installation must not commence or proceed if factors do not meet specifications.

- 1) Plan the direction of the area to be installed to maximise the visual appearance once installed. The direction of the tile/plank grain should be confirmed, and the installation should be balanced from the centre of the area to minimise waste. To minimise shade variation, mix and install product from several different packs alternately. 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 nearest retailer.
- 2) Measure the room and estimate the number of rows required. If the last row is not at least 50mm wide, the first row should be cut so that the first and last rows are similar in width.
- 3) Start installation from the left corner of the room, put the first plank in place using spacer blocks against the walls to maintain the appropriate 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 1-2)
- 4) Install the second plank in the first row by laying the short end tongue onto the previously installed plank short-end groove. Lock the planks together by pressing down directly over the end join to vertically engage the lock. You will feel the planks lock together as the end join engages. 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 2-3)
- 5) 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 appropriate expansion gap along the perimeter of the room or fixed vertical surfaces. (Fig 4-5)
- 6) Use the off cut from the last board in the first row (min length 300mm) or cut a plank that is at least 150mm 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 firmly lower the plank while maintaining a slight pressure toward the installed plank. The planks should fit snugly together and lay flat maintaining the appropriate expansion gap along the perimeter of the room or fixed vertical surfaces. (Fig 6)
- 7) 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. Firmly lower the plank while maintaining a slight pressure towards the installed piece. The planks should fit snugly together and lay flat. Engage the short edge join as per first row. (Fig 7-8)
- 8) Work across the length of the room installing all planks in the second row. You must 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.
- 9) Continue installing, being certain to maintain a random pattern repeat, assisted by offsetting end joins by at least 300mm. Maintain the appropriate expansion gap against all fixed vertical surfaces.
- 10) Check to be certain all planks are fully engaged; if slight gapping is noticed or the planks will not lay flat, simply disengage the long side join and then carefully slide the short/end join apart. Do not pull up on this join as it will damage the locking mechanism! Reinstall the plank. (Fig 9-11)
- 11) The last row (possibly the first row) plank width should be no less than 50mm on the long side. Remember to allow for the appropriate expansion gap to the wall.
- 12) Install wall mouldings and door transition mouldings last. Be sure that all mouldings are fastened directly to the wall or subfloor; do not place any fasteners through the floating flooring. Care must be taken when fitting wall mouldings that they do not push down on the floor. This will affect the floors ability to expand and contract and will lead to product failure.

NOTE: If necessary, to disassemble your Soleil Hybrid Floor, separate the whole row by lifting it up carefully at an angle. To separate the planks, leave them flat on the ground and slide them apart. If planks do not separate easy, you can slightly lift up the planks (15°) when sliding them apart. (Fig 9-11)



For Care & Maintenance of your Soleil Hybrid Floor, please refer to the Cleaning, Care & Maintenance guide.

Post Installation

If construction works are still underway, the floor must be protected from site debris, dirt, soil, traffic etc. by use of a protective surface (e.g. sheet plastic, hard boards). 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 both during and after installation.

Dramatic temperature fluctuation of the floor will cause joins to lip or gaps to occur and is not covered by the warranty.

These guidelines are intended to assist in achieving an optimal installation. Any variation to the recommendations above will affect any warranties. For further information, please contact your local retailer.