

## Installation Guide Tools

Broom, Electric Saw (carbide blade), Eye and Ear Protection, Cool Glide, Rubber Mallet, SureGuard®, Mask, Felt Pads, Pencil, Pull Bar, Straight-edge (6 ft), Tape Measure, Utility Knife, Wall Spacers (1/4"), Block Plane.

## Product Inspections

At Gaia Flooring our highest priority is to ensure that your eTERRA eSPC™ Black & Red Series luxury vinyl flooring products exceed expectations. The installer and owner are responsible for inspecting all planks before and throughout installation discarding any defective materials or pieces with questionable appearance of color, finish, or sheen. The owner and installer should discuss installation and layout to maximize satisfaction. The owner or installer assumes all responsibility for the product quality of the completed installation. Use constitutes acceptance. Inspect each piece prior to installation and ensure that the click system is free of cracks, defects, and debris. Be sure that the Valinge 5G black tube/spring is set in the female side of the short end of the click system. NOTE: When it comes to the appearance of your floors, film techniques are used during production to create a visually appealing look. These techniques include hand distressing, wire brushing, and color toning. As a result, there will be variations between planks. These are fixed characteristics that are not to be mistaken for a manufacturing defect. Please remember that any samples, photos, or models provided are solely for demonstrative purposes. They do not guarantee that your purchased goods will mirror these examples. Variations between these visuals and installed flooring are not considered manufacturing defects. We recommend purchasing an additional 5% for back stock and replacement planks. It is important to carefully inspect the planks for their dimensions in appropriate light settings. If any plank appears doubtful, it should not be used for the project. Any complaints related to such issues will only be accepted if they are reported prior to installation. In this

case, we stand committed towards providing a replacement within reasonable time frames after the investigation, (if) determined to be a manufacturing defect, of the complaint, once concluded successfully. Any visual defects must be reported within the first 15 days following installation. Gaia Flooring does not accept responsibility for any shipping costs, installation repair, or replacement expenses resulting from the installation of a plank with visual defects.

## Warranty Owner

This Limited Warranty applies exclusively to the original end-user and is not transferable. The warranty safeguards the product's initial installation site location, and it covers only one site installation. A second location installation will not be covered by this warranty. It is important to note that this product warranty is specific to one site installation.

## Obligations Of Owner

Note that the warranties outlined below are applicable to Gaia flooring products only in the event that they are installed and maintained in accordance with our most current installation and maintenance guidelines. For the most up-to-date procedures, please refer to the Gaia Flooring website. The original purchaser must present proof of purchase and adherence to recommended installation and maintenance procedures when filing a claim. In the event that a defect or another matter covered by the limited warranties described below is discovered, please notify [customercare@gaiafloor.com](mailto:customercare@gaiafloor.com). They will carry out a thorough review and, if necessary, initiate the claim process. It is the responsibility of the owner to engage a C-15 qualified flooring installer or certified to install flooring in your state to ensure proper installation in your state if applicable.

## SITE AND MATERIAL PREPARATION

### Site Requirements

eTERRA eSPC™ Black & Red Series luxury vinyl flooring is intended to be a floating installation. This is a glueless flooring installation and can be installed directly over most existing floor coverings. It should be installed indoors in a climate-controlled environment, on a clean, dry sub-floor that meets building codes and is securely anchored. The installation location-specific structural components may need slight modifications for a successful installation. All responsibility here lies solely with the owner/contractor to satisfy local regulations before moving forward.

eTERRA eSPC™ Black & Red Series flooring is best suited for indoor installations in climate-controlled environments, maintaining 35-55% relative humidity and temperatures between 60-80° F. Additionally,

eTERRA eSPC™ Black & Red Series cannot be laid over sump pumps or drains as these can cause damage over time when exposed to moisture from below or above grade levels. All "wet" work – i.e. – paint, drywall, concrete, masonry, and plumbing must be complete and dry prior to the delivery of the flooring. This product is not suitable for any outside use, sun-rooms, solarium's, showers, saunas, seasonal porches, camping trailers, boats, RV's or rooms that have a potential of flooding. Do not install in rooms or homes that are not temperature controlled. Gutters and downspouts should be in place and the exterior grade complete to allow for proper drainage of water away from the building's exterior perimeter. Portable heaters are not recommended as they may not heat the room and sub-floor sufficiently. Kerosene heaters should never be used.

### Suitable Substrates

3/16" in 10' radius (5 mm in 3 m) or 1/8" in 6' radius (3 mm in 2 m) sand high areas or joints. Fill low areas with a high compressive strength (min. 3,000 psi) Portland-based compound. Vertical deflection must not exceed 3/16". Jobsite moisture and pH issues should be addressed and corrected prior to installation. Substrates must be free from excessive moisture or alkali. Remove dirt, paint, varnish, wax, oils, solvents and other foreign matter, and contaminants. Failure to use a moisture barrier could affect the integrity of the eTERRA eSPC™ Black & Red Series installation or your warranty. Ceramic tile, Terrazzo, Marble Tile floors with grout lines will require a cementitious patch to fill any grout lines, voids, or cracks.

Radiant heat systems must maintain a minimum of 1/2-inch physical separation between the heating elements or tubing and this flooring product. Electric heating mats that are not embedded into the sub-floor are not recommended for use underneath this flooring, as doing so will void the warranty. It is crucial to thoroughly evaluate both electric and hydronic radiant heat systems to ensure there are no leaks and that the system heats evenly across all areas. Any inconsistencies in heat distribution or signs of wear should be addressed before installation to prevent potential damage to the flooring. The floating installation method is the only method recommended for use with radiant heat systems. The floor temperature should never exceed 80°F (26.67°C), and the use of an in-floor temperature sensor is recommended to prevent overheating. Relative humidity must be maintained between 35% and 55%. Additionally, new concrete or gypcrete sub-floors must be allowed to cure and dry for a minimum of 4 weeks before operating the radiant heat system.

Seasonal expansion and contraction are normal and do not indicate a defect in the flooring product. It is important to remember that rugs placed over radiant-heated flooring can increase the surface temperature in that area by 3°F to 5°F. When turning off the radiant heat system, it must be reduced slowly at a rate of 10°F per day. The system should never be turned off abruptly. For more information on radiant heating systems, refer to the Radiant Panel Association website at <http://www.radiantpanelassociation.org>.

**WARNING:** Do not sand, dry scrape, bead blast, or mechanically chip or pulverize existing resilient flooring, backing, lining felt, asphaltic "cutback" adhesive, or other adhesive. These products may contain asbestos fibers and/or crystalline silica. Avoid creating dust. Inhalation of such dust is cancer and respiratory tract hazard. Local building requirements may require that the existing floor material be tested to determine if there are asbestos materials. RFCI's (Resilient Floor Coverings Institute) Recommended Work Practices for Removal of Resilient Floor Coverings are a defined set of instructions addressed to removing all resilient floor covering structures. These instructions should be consulted for each installation.

### Do Not Install Over:

Existing resilient tile floors that are below grade | Existing cushion-backed vinyl flooring | Carpet | Hardwood flooring | Sloping floors or floor drains | Existing floating floors | Foam underlayment | Loose lay vinyl flooring | Rubber | Cork | Laminate | Air Vents

### Concrete & Gypcrete Sub-floors

Sub-floor material must have a minimum density of 3000 psi. Concrete must be smooth and permanently dry. Concrete sub-floors should meet requirements as described in ASTM F710 "Standard Practice for preparing concrete floors to receive Resilient Flooring." Certain gypcrete and other non-cementitious sub-floors may not meet this requirement. Sub-floor must be fully cured. Depressions, cracks, grooves, expansion joints and other sub-floor imperfections must be filled with an appropriate patch or leveling compound. Grind down any high spots as needed. Moisture and alkalinity tests must be performed on all concrete substrates regardless of grade level or age of slab. Perform either an In-Situ Relative Humidity (RH) Test (ASTM F2170) and a Calcium Chloride Moisture Test (ASTM F1869). Perform pH test per ASTM F710 to determine alkalinity of the slab. Concrete moisture vapor emissions should not exceed 80% RH per ASTM F2170 or 3 lbs. per ASTM F1869, and pH should not exceed 9 per ASTM F710. For floors outside of this range the issue must be corrected prior to installation. The manufacturer's warranty does not cover discoloration from mold or from flooding, floods, leaking plumbing or appliances, water entering through sliding glass doorways, as well as floor covering failure due to hydrostatic pressure or moisture vapor emission.

### Wood Sub-floors

Sub-floor must be structurally sound, with joists spaced maximum 16" on center. Do not install over chip board, wafer board, or floating wood floors. Wood sub-floors must be CDX-rated plywood at least 3/4" thick, PS2 rated OSB at least 3/4" thick, A.P.A. rated particle board (minimum rating of BB or CC), or existing wood flooring that is securely fastened to a wood sub-floor beneath. Test wood sub-floors for moisture content using a moisture meter recommended for wood flooring. Take a minimum of 20 readings per 1000 sq. ft. Sub-floor moisture should not exceed 12% in any location.

### Radiant Heat

eTERRA eSPC™ Black & Red Series flooring is only recommended for use over radiant heat systems as seen on the eTERRA eSPC™ Black & Red Series installation guide. It is essential to ensure stable job site conditions, sub-floor suitability, and proper acclimation when installing over a radiant heat system. The installer is responsible for ensuring that the recommended environmental conditions are met during installation. Please consult your radiant heat system manufacturer to determine its compatibility with GAIA flooring and to understand the specific requirements for installation. Damage caused by radiant heat systems are not covered under warranty.

### Installation Tips

Flooring is the finishing touch on any construction or remodeling project, so be sure to get it installed after all other elements are in place, including Paint & Millwork. eTERRA eSPC™ Black & Red Series should not be installed underneath cabinetry or fixed items. Ensure you keep spare boards in climate-controlled locations in case replacement planks are needed for any unforeseen damage. With a flooring professional, it's easy to quickly and efficiently fix an issue. Additional underlayment should not be used. Do not install eTERRA eSPC™ Black & Red Series in high humidity areas such as steam rooms or saunas. To ensure maximum stability for your floor, never attach it to any other surface. Maintaining a moderate temperature between 60-80°F and ensuring the sub-floor is sufficiently flat, level, and solid are critical elements for installation in residential homes. eTERRA eSPC™ Black & Red Series provides a clean, seamless fit for your floor. If the installation is not done with precision and care, damage may occur to click profiles enlisting professional services and using suitable tools to complete the job is required.

### Basement and Crawl Spaces

Concrete slab or ground must be dry. Ensure that crawl spaces have open vents year-round for proper air circulation and prevent moisture build-up. The ground in the crawl spaces must be covered entirely using 6 mil polyethylene vapor barrier. Crawl space clearance between the earth and underside of joists should be no less than 18", and the perimeter of the vent area should equal 1.5% of the total square footage of the crawl space or as mandated by code. See Figure 1.

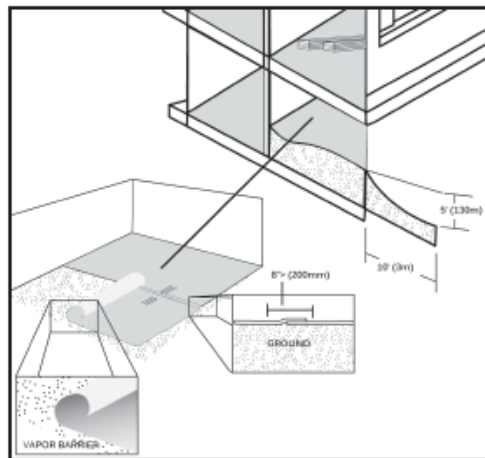


Figure 1: Basement and Crawl Spaces



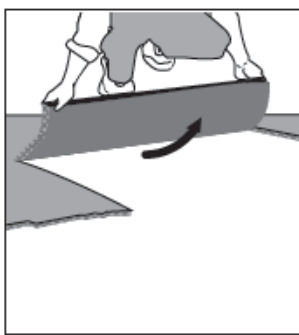


Figure 1: Site and Material Preparation



Figure 2-a: Site and Material Preparation

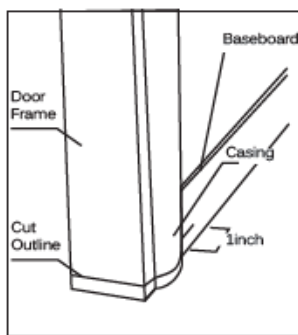


Figure 2-b: Site and Material Preparation

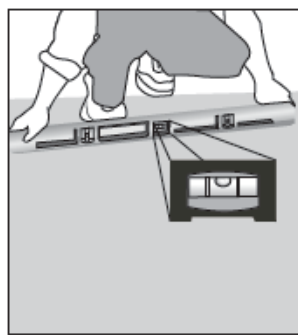


Figure 3: Site and Material Preparation

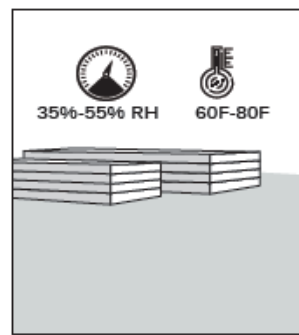


Figure 4: Site and Material Preparation



Figure 5: Site and Material Preparation

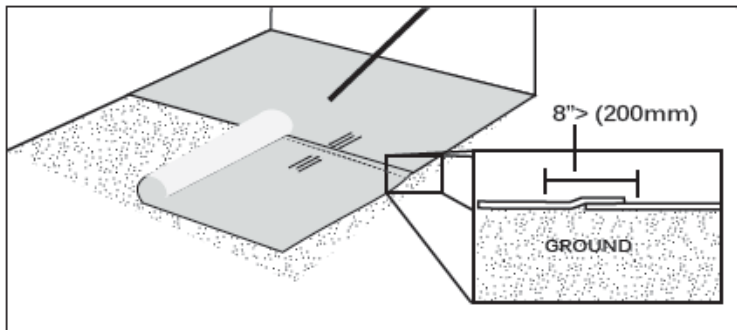


Figure 6: Site and Material Preparation

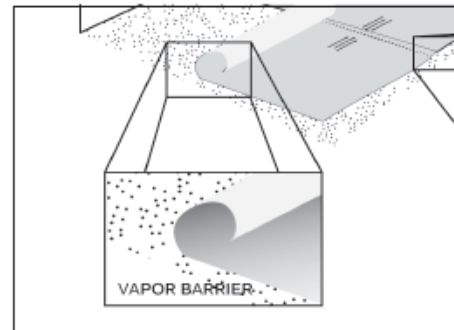


Figure 7: Site and Material Preparation

#### Site and Material Preparation

Figure 1: Take up the carpet and padding, and carefully remove unsuitable substrate. **WARNING:** Only proceed with the removal if the materials are verified not to contain asbestos.

Figure 2-a,b: Undercut the door frame and wall base to achieve a seamless look. Slide the flooring at least 1/4" underneath the door frame and wall base while leaving at least 1/4" concealed expansion space.

Figure 3: Prepare the sub-flooring for a smooth, even finish - eliminating bumps and filling low spots to create no more than 3/16" in 10' radius (5 mm in 3 m) or 1/8" in 6' radius (3 mm in 2 m)—sand high areas or joints. Fill low areas with a high compressive strength (min. 3,000 psi) Portland-based compound. Vertical deflection must not exceed 3/16".

Figure 4: Properly preparing your flooring before installation is key. To

#### Trim Accessories

GAIA Flooring offers a 1 year Residential Limited Warranty and 90 day Commercial Warranty for its hard surface accessories when used in proper indoor residential applications. This warranty guarantees that the product will be free from manufacturing defects and is provided to the original end-use purchaser. The warranty takes effect from the date of purchase and lasts for the designated warranty period above. Coverage is valid only while the product remains owned and maintained by the original end-use purchaser. For any warranty-related claims, the original invoice from GAIA Flooring or an authorized dealer is required as proof of purchase.

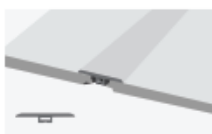
avoid issues, ensure that the temperature and humidity of the storage/transport environment is controlled between 60 – 80 degrees Fahrenheit, the Relative Humidity RH between 35%-55%. Lay flat and away from areas with excessive sunlight. Do not store standing. Note: it is essential to maintain consistent temperature and humidity levels. The stocking and transportation environment should not deviate more than 25°F and 20% relative humidity from the final installation environment.

Figure 5: Clean and clear debris from the sub-floor before installation.

Figure 6: For maximum floor protection, installing a vapor barrier plastic polyethylene sheeting on concrete sub-floors with at least 8 inches of overlapping seams is required for warranty coverage. All installations over concrete sub-floors require a moisture barrier. Do not install additional underlayment.

#### For Valinge 5G Locking System Only (eTERRA eSPC™ Black & Red Series)

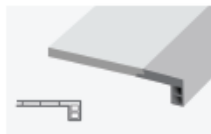
The Valinge 5G Locking system encloses a black plastic tongue in the shortest side of each plank:



T-Molding



End Cap



Flush Stairnose



Reducer



Quarter Round



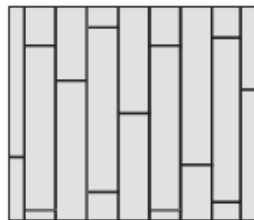
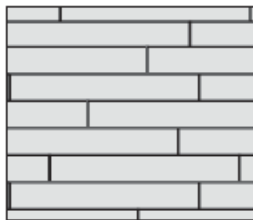
Overlap Stairnose



Flush Stair Tread

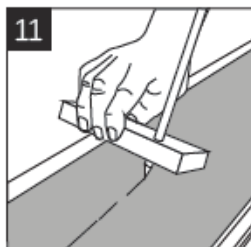
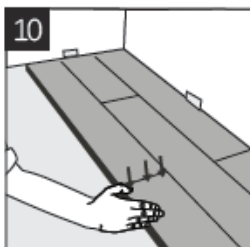
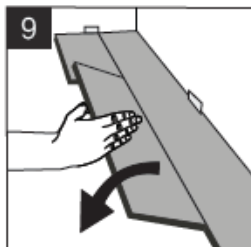
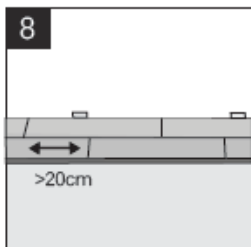
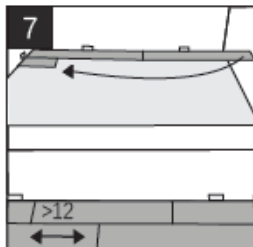
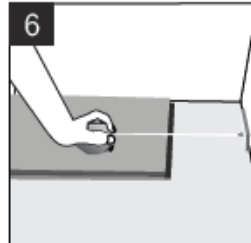
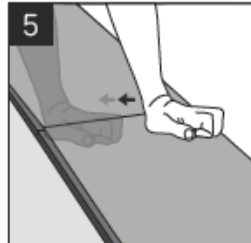
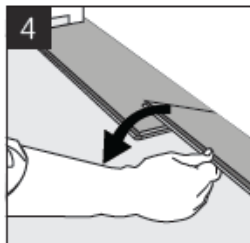
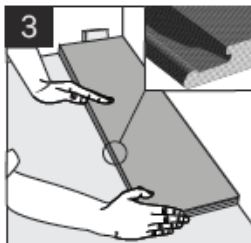
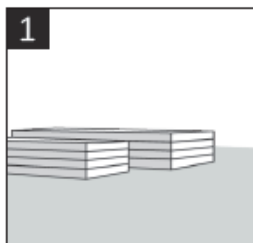
\*Only available in Black Series

## FLOORING INSTALLATION STEPS



### Before Installation

Map out the area of your site and inspect materials for defects before installation. Claims for defects only accepted before installation. Slight color variations are standard and make floor look natural.



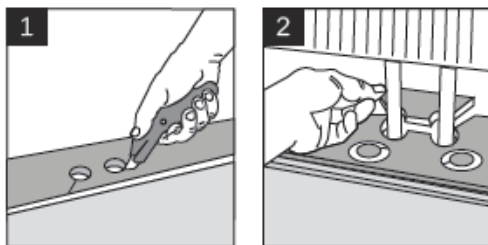
## Start of Installation

1: To keep your eTERRA eSPC™ Black & Red Series floors in top condition, always lay the boxes flat and avoid extreme temperatures (below 50°F or above 100°F) within 12 hours before installation. If exposed, acclimate for 48 hours. Store in a climate-controlled, low-moisture environment, and never store boxes upright. Stack pallets no more than three high and four inches off the ground for airflow. Protect from forklift damage and keep away from heating ducts, cooling ducts, and direct sunlight. Maintain temperatures between 60°F and 80°F with relative humidity between 35% and 55%.

2: Quality checks are the responsibility of the homeowner and the required licensed flooring installer. When installing components in an installation project, it is critical to inspect each piece before installation and confirm that the locking system has no cracks, defects, or other impediments. Be sure that the Valinge 5G black tube/spring is set in the female side of the short end of the click system. Warranties don't apply to materials with visible issues after being installed- this use constitutes acceptance of any flaws present at installment.

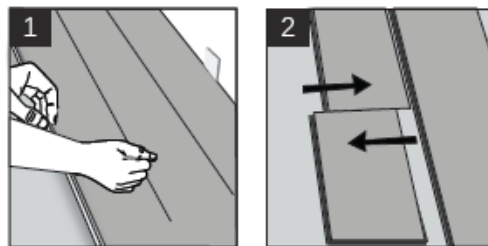
3: Start on the left corner and carefully place the plank 1/4" away from any walls. Use installation spacers for uniform expansion and to guarantee a secure fit throughout your perimeter. As well as removing any debris that may be on the locking mechanism.

4: To ensure that the Valinge 5G locking system is secure, follow these steps during installation. Second plank, first row. Gently place this panel close to the short end of the first plank.



### Installation around radiator/heating pipes

Drill holes two times larger than the diameter of the pipes. Remove a piece of the panel with a utility knife. Put the panel on one side of the pipes and the removed piece on the other side.



5: Connect the short ends together ensuring that the 5G Valinge tubing is intact and free from debris then engage the connecting short ends.

6: To ensure the structural stability, it is recommended to keep the length no shorter than 12 inches.

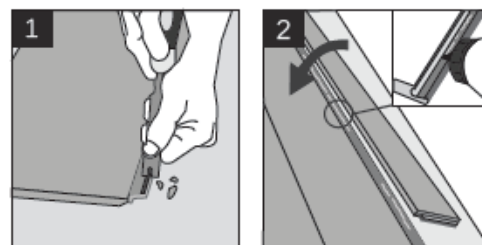
7: To cut the last plank of a row to fit, turn it away from the previous plank and place it over the gap. Mark and cut the plank, then break off the excess. The plank will now be the correct length to complete the row with the connecting edge on the right side.

8: Ensure that the short seams are at least 20cm apart from row to row, and stagger the planks in the first two rows as shown.

9: The Valinge 5G drop click Locking system allows for easy connection of flooring panels by folding them down. It is important to start from the corner closest to the previous row and fold down towards the center. Then, continue towards the opposite long side while ensuring that the panels are close to each other.

10: Once connected the long edge then angle the short end in the correct position. Click the ends together and push the short end. The 5G Valinge is a flexible plastic tongue that is inserted into a tongue groove.

11: Use a scribe to cut the row when dealing with irregular walls. Drill a hole in a scrap piece of wood and insert a pencil to create a scribe. The scribe can be used to match the wall variations, minimizing the appearance of an out-of-square room.



### When angling is not possible

Remove the vertical locking part of the strip and push the planks horizontally together between last board and the wall.

### Dismantling panels

1: Separate the whole row by carefully lifting up and release the whole row. Fold up the row and release the whole long side.

2: Disassemble the panels by sliding the short ends horizontally. Never fold up a panel, as this may damage the profile.

## Maintenance and Care

### eTERRA eSPC™ Black & Red Series Products

eTERRA eSPC™ Black & Red Series Products Glueless Floating Flooring is the perfect solution for withstanding reasonable wear and tear in any home. To ensure the life cycle, follow these simple guidelines for protection and care.

#### Routine Maintenance

Quickly tackle spills and splatters with a damp cloth as they occur to ensure the longevity of your hard surface flooring. When deep cleaning, use Luxury Vinyl pH-neutral Cleaner or plain pH-balanced water on white clothes for tough spots such as oil, paint, lipstick, and ink stains; then wipe away any remaining residue. Remember routine maintenance - regularly sweep with a dust mop and use a vacuum with an appropriate attachment. Do not use a vacuum with a beater bar to prevent dirt build-up that can damage finishes over time. Opt for specialized products designed explicitly to maintain hard surfaces for lasting results between professional cleanings.

#### Hard Surface Cleaner

Avoid washing or mopping the floor with any liquid cleaning products (containing bleach, ammonia, chlorine, mop & shine products, or anything other than pH balanced) to keep it in optimal condition. Do not use steel wool pads to address tough-to-remove spots/spills. Excessive moisture and detergents can cause warping, decontamination, swelling, and joint-line separation, which may void your warranty. Clean up spills immediately. Do not use steam mops or excessive water/pH-balanced liquids, and allow to pool on the surface of the flooring. Not only does this create a slippery, unsafe environment, but can affect your warranty.

To ensure your luxury vinyl flooring lasts for years, take special care when dealing with difficult spots. Quickly eliminate candle wax or gum by hardening the area using ice and gently scraping it off using a plastic scraper - like a credit card. Keep in mind that sandier areas may require more frequent sweeping & vacuuming. Wipe up any residue with a damp cloth after each use.

### Site Protection

Keep your luxury vinyl flooring looking their best with entry mats and hard surface rug protectors designed to prevent dirt, sand, and other contaminants like oil or driveway sealer from being tracked onto surfaces. These accessories can help maintain a clean environment. Ensure the mats you choose do not have a rubber back, as this can trap moisture, heat & humidity between the floor and the rug. Over time, the rubber-backed mats can also discolor the flooring.

To preserve the integrity of area rugs over time, avoid slippage through an approved Rug Pad for added protection.

For further defense against scratches or indentations caused by heavy objects invest in floor protectors with wider leg/roller bases - you'll experience less damage as heavier items require larger diameter components to disperse weight correctly. Finally, it's important to keep relative humidity levels between 35-55% throughout the year so that natural expansion & contraction of luxury vinyl flooring is minimized at all times.

#### Heating season (Dry)

During the heating season, dry conditions created by wood stoves and electric heat can cause materials to shrink. To prevent this issue, it is recommended that a humidifier be used to maintain comfortable humidity levels in your home.

#### Non-Heating Season (Wet)

During warm weather, the humidity levels in your home can become uncomfortable. To maintain a pleasant atmosphere, try using an air conditioner, dehumidifier, or periodically turning on the heating, as this will help maintain humidity levels during summer.

#### Extra Material

Extra material must be stored horizontally in an indoor, climate-controlled environment (35-55% RH and 60-80 degrees Fahrenheit), unopened, and in its original packaging. Avoid direct sunlight, store on a flat surface, and ensure the area is dry and well-ventilated. Products that do not meet these storage conditions cannot be used as test samples for product quality complaints and claims, nor can they be used as proof for product quality determination in complaints and lawsuits.