



## **RIGID PLANK: INSTALLATION GUIDELINES, MAINTENANCE, AND WARRANTY**

**Before starting installation, it is important you read all instructions and warranty information.** By starting installation of this product you are agreeing that you have read and understand all installer/owner's requirements and responsibilities and are aware that deviating from the instructions and recommendations in this installation guide may result in voiding the product warranty. If you need additional assistance please contact Southwind Tech Services at 1-800-272-2808.

Southwind's Rigid Plank flooring is a floating floor and should NOT be secured to the floor. Do not install fixed objects, such as cabinets, on top of the flooring or fasten trim/molding/transition pieces directly to the floor.

It is the sole responsibility of the installer/owner, prior to installation, to assure that the planned installation area is suitable for the flooring and meets local building codes. Confirm that all subflooring meets or exceeds all industry standards/local building codes; as well as the recommendations listed herein. The manufacturer accepts no responsibility for product failure extending from or related to failure to meet job environment and subflooring requirements.

**The installer/owner assumes full responsibility for the final inspection of this product. Inspection should be done prior to installation and should include: print/color/texture, factory finish and locking system. If the product is not acceptable, DO NOT INSTALL IT. Contact your supplier immediately for assistance. Flooring that has been installed will be deemed to have been inspected and quality accepted. Southwind will not accept any responsibility for any flooring installed with visible defects**

Southwind's Rigid Plank is rated for indoor use only. The area must remain climate controlled (65°F – 85°F) for the life of the floor. Do not install outdoors.

If Rigid Plank flooring is installed in a sun room, avoid peak hours of sunlight by closing blinds, shades or drapes.

Rigid Plank flooring is waterproof, but is not a moisture barrier. It is suggested a moisture barrier is used when installing over newer concrete or a wooden subfloor. However, water leaking over or around the outer edges of the flooring can damage a wood subfloor. This is not considered a defect in the flooring.

### **Subfloor Requirements and Preparation:**

All sub-floors must be clean, flat (smooth) and dry prior to installation. Sweep or vacuum your subfloor immediately prior to installation ensuring there is no debris or grit, as it may interfere with installation.

**All subfloors must be flat, high or low areas exceeding 3/16" in a 10' radius must be corrected.**

You can trim doorframes by turning a panel upside down to use as a height guide. Using a handsaw or jamb saw, cut

door frames to the necessary height so that planks slide easily under them.

**Wood Subfloors:** Must be a minimum of 3/4" CDX Plywood, OSB, or APA approved plywood. Sand down high areas and fill low areas with a Portland based patching compound. To avoid squeaking, nail or screw the floor every 6". Repair or replace any damaged sheathing.

**Concrete Subfloors:** Must be fully cured (at least 60 days old), flat (smooth), and leveled prior to starting the installation. Grind down any high areas and fill any low areas with a Portland-based patching compound.

Moisture arising from new or old concrete can create high levels of moisture vapor emissions, hydrostatic pressure and high levels of alkalinity. This combination is highly corrosive and will damage the floor over time. To avoid this problem, a calcium chloride test and PH level test must be performed prior to installation. If the level of vapor emissions / hydrostatic pressure exceeds 8lbs and /or the alkalinity level is 9 or higher, a moisture barrier must be installed over the concrete.

**Radiant Heated Systems:** The Hydronic or Embedded radiant heating system needs to be operational and working for one week prior to install date to reduce any residual moisture. Three days prior to install lower the temperature to 65°F. 24 hours after the installation has been completed, the temperature can be gradually increased 5° increments. Temperature must never exceed 85°F (29°C). It is the responsibility of installer/owner to confirm the suitability of the radiant heating system for use with this product. Any damage to the floor caused by the radiant heating system will not be covered by the product warranty.

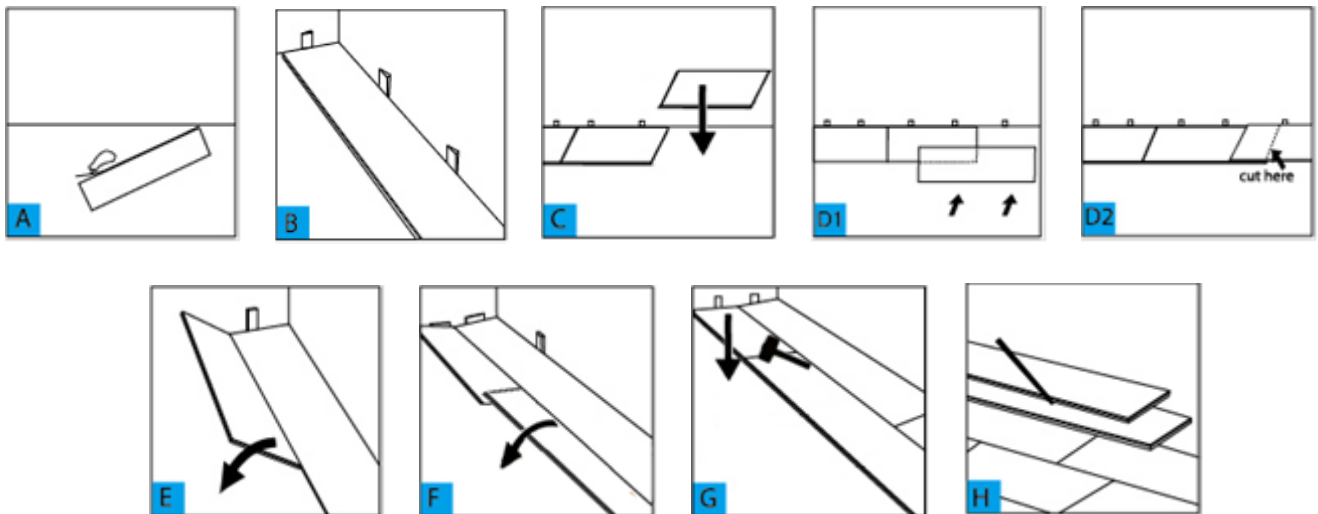
Southwind's Rigid Plank Flooring can be installed over existing non-cushioned resilient flooring, ceramic tile, and existing wood floors as long as the floors are clean, level, and well-bonded to the sub-floor. Do not sand existing resilient floors as they may contain asbestos.

Do not install Rigid Plank over existing carpet. This will void the warranty.

**Do not install Rigid Plank flooring over soft, rough, non-flat or uneven surfaces.**

**TOOLS AND SUPPLIES REQUIRED:**

Safety glasses, straight edge or T-square, framing square, chalk-line, tape measure, 1/4" spacers, pry-bar, table saw, and compound/miter saw, hand or jamb saw, rubber mallet



## FLOATING FLOOR INSTALLATION INSTRUCTIONS:

- When calculating flooring square footage requirements, allow a minimum of an additional 10% for cuts, waste, and defects. If installing a diagonal or other special pattern, allow for 10% additional materials.
- Southwind recommends a 1/4" (6mm) expansion gap around the entire perimeter of the installation, any transitions to adjacent flooring materials, door frames, and heating vents.
- It is always recommended to pull planks from a minimum of 3 different boxes during installation to assure an even distribution of any minor color variations and slight differences in embossing levels and give the consumer a better idea of what the floor will look like when installation is finished.
- Verify locking profile prior to installing, checking for debris or damage. Clean, trim or discard any affected sections.
- Begin by measuring the width of the room and divide the total width of the room by the width of the plank. Adjust the first row width so that you finish with at least a half a width of a plank on the far wall.
- Set up a starting line for the first row by measuring the width of the (adjusted) plank. Add 1/4" (6mm) to this number and mark the floor at each end of your starting wall, approximately 6" (150mm) away from the corners.
- Using a chalk-line, carefully snap a line between these two points. Check to make sure there will be approximately 1/4" (6mm) between the edge of your first row of planks and the wall. This space allows for any slight expansion of the Rigid Plank Flooring and will be covered by the baseboard and/or quarter-round.
- Remove the tongue (on the long side) from the first row of planks. This will ensure that the decorative surface of the flooring is under the finished trim when installed. The saw will be required to remove the tongue (Figure A).
- Starting in the left-hand corner, place the first plank with its trimmed side towards the wall. Use spacers along each wall to maintain an expansion gap of 1/4" (7-8mm) between the wall and the flooring (Figure B).
- Attach the end of the 1st plank and the second plank by aligning the joints and pushing down on the inserting plank locking the planks together. To insure a tight fit, place a small piece of flooring over the joint and gently tap down with rubber mallet. (Figure C).

**Note:** Care must be taken when aligning the planks. If the planks are not lined up correctly, it will damage the locking system. The resulting damage is not considered a defect in the product. If the plank needs to be unclicked, slide the plank horizontally to disengage. DO NOT pull up to unclick. This will damage the locking system.

- Continue along the wall until you reach the last full plank, connecting each plank in manner described above. To fit the last plank, turn plank over (face down). Place the plank in the corner so the tongue on the short end touches the adjacent wall. Measure overlap between the installed plank and the last plank (Figure D1 & D2). Using a sharp utility knife and a straight edge, score a line on the top surface of the plank. Use saw to cut plank to size.
- Begin the next row with the cut off piece from the previous row to create the necessary stagger pattern. This piece should be a minimum of 8" (20cm) long and the joint offset from the previous row should be at least 10" (26cm) apart. To attach, tilt the plank you are installing slightly upwards (about 15-25°), insert its tongue into the previous row's groove and lower it into place. The plank will click into place with light pressure (Figure E).
- Install the second plank in the second row by inserting the long end tongue into the previously installed plank's groove. Align the plank so that the short side tongue is positioned just over the groove lip of the previously installed (Figure F). Once the end joints are aligned, push down to lock in the planks. Very little force is required to fit the tongue into the groove. You should be able to feel the tongue lock into the groove (Figure G). Use a scrap piece of flooring placing it over the joint. Gently tap down the installing

plank until seated completely. Continue locking each piece into place in the same manner.

- To fit the last row, lay a plank on top of the previous row. With the plank against the wall, mark a line down the length of the plank and cut the planks accordingly (Figure H).
- To finish the perimeter of the room, install quarter round molding using finishing nails. Nail quarter round directly into the baseboard not the flooring.
- Replace or install new matching baseboards and quarter round in all areas. Baseboards are to be nailed into the wall and quarter round into the baseboards. **DO NOT** nail into the Rigid Plank Flooring.
- Furniture and appliances should be moved onto a newly installed floor using an appliance hand truck over hard boards. Cover all feet and floor contact points with heavy self-adhesive felt pads to protect the floor.

### **PROTECTION AND MAINTENANCE:**

- Southwind recommends using a Ph neutral vinyl floor cleaner (**Diversey Stride, Bona Stone Tile and Laminate Cleaner, Zep, Hilway Direct HD pH Neutral Cleaner**), as required. The floor may be slippery when wet. Allow the floor time to dry after cleaning.
- **NEVER USE** floor polish or floor cleaning wax, oil soaps, etc. These products can damage and/or leave a film on the flooring. Frequently moved furniture should be equipped with felt pads to avoid scratching the floor. Heavy furniture and appliances should be equipped with non-staining large surface floor protectors.
- Furniture with caster wheels should be easy swiveling, large surface, non-staining and suitable for resilient floors. Do not use ball-type caster as these can damage the floor.
- Lift heavy objects when moving furniture or appliances. **DO NOT** roll or slide them across the floor. Felt pads on chair legs should be replaced periodically, as they wear and accumulate grit with use and can damage the
- Caster wheeled chairs should have wide rubber casters. Protective mats are required under office chairs.
- Do not buff, wax or use cleaning products that contain surfactants. Never steam clean or use a steam mop on the floor.
- Sweep or vacuum the floor regularly to remove dirt. Do not use a vacuum with a beater bar or turn the beater bar off.
- Clean up spills immediately.
- Use walk off mats at entrances to prevent dirt and grit from being tracked on the floor.
- Use non-staining floor mats as they can possibly discolor the floor. **Do not** use rubber protective mats.

### **30 Year Limited Residential Warranty:**

This warranty is subject to the procedures, recommendations, limitations, disclaimers and exclusions mentioned herein and in the general information, installation and warranty sections of this document.

When installed in a residential situation, the 8mm Composite flooring is warranted to be free from manufacturer's defects for thirty (30) years when used under normal conditions and installed in accordance with manufacturer's installation instructions to the original purchaser owner of the home, as long as they continually own the home for the period of the warranty. Note that you must retain an original label of the product purchased which denotes your warranty duration, as well as the UPC code and your original receipt of purchase. Should a manufacturing defect occur, Southwind will credit the original purchase price of the product. If the manufacturing defect develops after the product has been installed Southwind will cover a reasonable labor cost. This warranty is not transferable. Manufacturer's warranty and liability does not extend beyond the flooring planks and is limited to a maximum value of the original purchase price. Warranty is limited to repair or replacement of the planks or tiles at the sole option of the manufacturer. Claim compensation (if approved and/or authorized) is limited to the specific area which is deemed to be valid under the claim.

The warranty applies to the original owner/user that its products, when in its original manufactured condition, aside from previously mentioned information and exceptions, will be free from defects and dimensional inconsistencies during the warranty period when installed and used under normal use in accordance with the terms, installation instructions, limitations and conditions herein. This warrants to the original user that the finish on the product will not wear through nor separate from the flooring during the warranty period when installed and used under normal residential use in accordance with the terms, installation instructions, limitations and conditions herein.

This warranty is the entire and sole statement of warranty for the product and replaces any and all previous warranties, written, spoken, implied or otherwise. No implied warranties exist beyond the terms and conditions of this warranty, the manufacturer assumes no legal liability for any and all actual incidental and/or consequential damages, however, some states within the USA do not permit the exclusion or limitation of incidental and/or consequential damages, as such, this exclusion may not apply to you. This like all warranties gives you specific legal rights, in addition, you may also have other rights that vary from state to state or from province to province.

Rental units, leased properties and apartments are considered commercial properties under this warranty. The 10 Year Limited Commercial warranty applies to these types of installations.

Note that manufacturer/distributor/retailer reserves the right to visit or have its agent visit the premise where the product claim originates to inspect the product in dispute and to remove samples for verification and technical analysis. Failure to provide reasonable access to the installation area or to provide requested information and/or documentation may result in denial of the claim.

This warranty does not cover and specifically excludes such damages as: scratches or indentations from normal wear and tear, chips, and stains caused by normal wear and tear, sheen loss in high traffic areas, erosion from pebbles, stones, sand, all other abrasives, steam mopping, inadequate protection, insects, rot, mold, mildew, bacteria, lack of maintenance, weather conditions, fire, excessive cold, natural disasters, excessive heat, heating and air conditioning systems, accident, improper installation or handling, cleaning agents, negligence or other causes not attributed to manufacturing or workmanship defects. Failure to adhere to and follow all the instructions for installation and maintenance and incorrect or insufficient maintenance. Any modification to the product other than as outlined in the manufacturer’s installation instructions will render the warranty null and void.

**PRORATION OF 30 YEAR LIMITED RESIDENTIAL WARRANTY**

**30 Year Limited Residential Warranty**

1 <sup>st</sup> Year	100%	11 <sup>th</sup> Year	80%
2 <sup>nd</sup> Year	100%	12 <sup>th</sup> Year	70%
3 <sup>rd</sup> Year	100%	13 <sup>th</sup> Year	60%
4 <sup>th</sup> Year	100%	14 <sup>th</sup> Year	50%
5 <sup>th</sup> Year	100%	15 <sup>th</sup> Year	40%
6 <sup>th</sup> Year	100%	16 <sup>th</sup> Year	30%
7 <sup>th</sup> Year	100%	17 <sup>th</sup> Year	25%
8 <sup>th</sup> Year	90%	18 <sup>th</sup> Year	20%
9 <sup>th</sup> Year	90%	19 <sup>th</sup> Year	15%
10 <sup>th</sup> Year	90%	20 + Years	10%

*\*Proration means the warranty protection reduces over time.*

## 10 Year Limited Light Commercial Warranty

Southwind warrants that the wear layer of the 8mm Composite flooring will not wear through under normal light commercial use for a period of ten (10) years from the date of purchase. Vinyl layer wear-through is defined as 100% vinyl layer wear-through over a minimum of 3% of the total installation. Surface scratches and gloss reduction are not considered surface wear. This warranty is non-transferrable and applies only to the original purchaser and only if used in the following commercial areas:

- Retail Areas: Product Display Areas, Sales Floors, Novelty Shops, Boutiques, Showrooms, Hair Salons, Hallways, Entryways (walk-off mats are required)
- Medical Offices: Waiting Rooms, Patient Rooms, Exam Rooms, Storage Rooms, Hallways, Entryways (walk-off mats required)
- Institutional: Classrooms, Training Rooms, Meeting Rooms, Common Areas, Residence Halls, Hallways
- Hotels: Guest Rooms, Meeting Rooms, Conference Rooms, Lobby
- Offices and Restaurants: Offices, Meeting Rooms, Conference Rooms, Restaurant Floor, Break Rooms, Showrooms
- Rental units, leased properties, and apartments

The flooring must be installed properly in accordance with the manufacturer's installation guidelines. The floor must be maintained properly in accordance with the manufacturer's guidelines. The floor must be used indoors in a dry, climate-controlled area. Installation of flooring that contains a manufacturing defect is not covered under this warranty.

### Proration of 10 Year Limited Light Commercial Warranty:

**Within One Year:** Southwind will cover the original purchase of the product or replace the product.

Southwind will cover reasonable labor.

**From Year 1 - 5:** Southwind will cover the original purchase of the product or replace the product. Southwind will cover 50% reasonable labor.

**From Year 5 - 10:** Southwind will cover the original purchase of the product or replace the product. Labor costs are not included.

### Exclusions for Residential and Light Commercial Warranties:

- Noises of all types (creaks, squeaks etc.) emanating from the floor and/or subfloor
- Scratches, dents, chips, pet damage, and stains caused by normal wear and tear
- Mold, mildew, bacteria, or any issues due to high moisture, weather conditions, or natural disaster
- Damages caused by fire, accidents, cleaning agents, negligence, or lack of maintenance
- Damage caused by rolling loads or wheel chairs (motorized and non-motorized)
- Damage caused by appliance, plumbing leaks, heating and air conditioning systems (including heating ducts, heat sources, and heating components of all types)
- Damage caused by using chemically reactive material, stains, spillage, burns, gouges, scratches, abuse or using harsh scouring pads while buffing.
- Indentation from improper loading including high heels, spiked shoes, rolling loads, chairs or other furniture not using proper floor protectors as they may mark, abrade, or otherwise damage the surface and finish of your floor.
- Problems relating to installation issues are not manufacturing related
- Floors which have been installed in areas without adequate temperature control and/or when temperature has not been continuously maintained within required temperature level throughout the entire year as required herein.
- Changes to sheen/gloss levels in high traffic areas

- Claims due to differences in the color and texture from display models and literature
- Differences in color, and texture from board to board.
- Claims due to lightening or darkening of the product from exposure to light, or to areas which have not darkened due to less exposure to light than surrounding areas.
- Improper installation, handling, or inadequate protection
- Products sold “as is”. The original purchaser is responsible for correct installation, maintenance and cleaning of the flooring in accordance with the included instructions.
- Color variances from one print/batch number to another. Prior to installation, verify the colors are an acceptable match. Co-install all batched in evenly distributed and well mixed manner.
- Incidental or consequential damages not attributed to manufacturing or workmanship defects

To file a warranty claim, contact the original supplier where the flooring was purchased

All warranty claims must be made in writing through the original retailer and must include a complete copy of the original purchase receipt, installation documentation, as available. Other additional information that may be requested by the manufacturer/distributor/retailer regarding details included in this warranty.

For information regarding our products, please visit our web-site: [www.southwindcarpet.com](http://www.southwindcarpet.com)