

Sapphire SPC installation instructions

Read completely before beginning installation

IMPORTANT

Improper installation may void the warranty. Inspect every plank and confirm site conditions before installation. Installed material is considered accepted by the installer and owner.

Product overview

Sapphire is a rigid-core SPC/RCB vinyl floor designed for stable floating installation in residential and suitable commercial interiors. Its wide-board format combines a click-lock joint with an attached IXPE pad.

CONSTRUCTION	Rigid-core SPC / RCB vinyl	WEAR LAYER	0.3 mm with double SUPER UV and ceramic-bead protection
BOARD FORMAT	Wide board; 228 mm width	ATTACHED UNDERLAY	IXPE pad attached
INSTALLATION	Floating click installation	EXPANSION GAP	Minimum 10 mm
MAXIMUM COVERAGE	10 × 15 linear m in an uncontrolled environment	RADIANT HEAT	Maximum 28°C at floor surface
MOISTURE BARRIER	Painted barrier or 200-micron polyethylene required	WATER RESISTANCE	Topical water and water beneath panels for up to 16 hours

Key installation requirements

- Install only indoors over a dry, clean, sound and sufficiently flat subfloor.
- Acclimatise closed cartons flat for at least 24 hours in the conditioned installation area.
- Use a painted vapour barrier or 200-micron polyethylene over the complete concrete subfloor.
- Do not add a separate soft underlay: Sapphire already includes an attached IXPE pad.
- Maintain a minimum 10 mm expansion gap around the perimeter and every fixed vertical obstruction.
- Install transition profiles when the continuous floor exceeds 10 × 15 linear m in an uncontrolled environment.
- Never trap or anchor the floating floor beneath fitted cabinetry, fixed islands, partitions or other permanent objects.

Environmental conditions

Maintain 12-30°C and approximately 35-80% relative humidity during installation. Protect the floor from extreme temperatures, prolonged direct sunlight and localised heat. Embedded underfloor heating must not exceed 28°C at the floor surface; never place heating mats directly below the planks.

LIGHT EXPOSURE AND SOLAR CONTROL

SPC flooring is designed for general indoor applications under normal residential and commercial lighting conditions. Slight colour variation or gradual colour change caused by normal natural-light exposure is a natural characteristic of flooring materials and cannot be completely avoided.

Failure to provide adequate protection in areas with abnormal or concentrated lighting conditions may result in colour changes or alterations to the surface appearance. Where such conditions occur, use suitable solar-control measures such as blinds, curtains, sunshades or other shading protection. If a change in colour or surface appearance is observed, take immediate measures to prevent continued prolonged exposure.

Pre-installation and subfloor requirements

All subfloors

- Dry, clean, structurally sound and free of dust, debris, grease, curing compounds and adhesive residue.
- Flat within 3 mm over 0.95 m or 4.7 mm over a 3.3 m radius, with no undulations. Grind high spots and level low areas.
- Protected from moisture vapour, hydrostatic pressure and alkalinity by a suitable moisture-control system. The finished floor is not a vapour barrier.
- Prepared so doors, frames and trims allow the completed floating floor to move freely.

Concrete

- Allow new concrete to cure for at least 60 days unless verified otherwise by the screed-system manufacturer.
- Test and document moisture conditions. The original Sapphire guide cites a maximum of 85% RH / 8 lb MVER.
- Repair cracks, depressions and joints that affect flatness. Do not bridge active structural or movement joints.

Wood-based subfloors

- Ensure boards are dry, stable and securely fixed. Eliminate movement and squeaks; sand high areas and fill low areas.
- Provide adequate cross-ventilation below suspended floors and protect the substrate from moisture.

Existing hard finishes

- Ceramic tile, resilient tile and sheet vinyl must be sound, firmly bonded, clean and flat.
- Fill grout joints wider than 3.5 mm or deeper than 3 mm. Correct embossed or uneven areas.
- Never install over carpet. Do not sand old resilient flooring or adhesive that may contain asbestos; obtain specialist advice.

Tools and accessories

MEASURING	Tape measure, pencil, chalk line	SPACING	10 mm spacers
CUTTING	Fine-tooth saw, guillotine or jigsaw	LOCKING	Rubber mallet and suitable tapping block
FINISHING	Pull bar / heel iron and straightedge	MOISTURE CONTROL	200-micron polyethylene and vapour tape

Before laying

- Inspect planks in good daylight for visible faults, damage, shade and décor variation. Do not install unacceptable material.
- Work from several cartons and dry-lay enough material to agree the visual blend with the end user.
- Plan the first row so the final row is at least 50-60 mm wide, preferably half a plank.
- Use starter pieces at least 300 mm long and maintain a minimum 300 mm stagger between adjacent end joints. Avoid repetitive stair-step patterns.

Installation procedure

First row

1. Begin at the left with the tongue facing the wall, following the locking orientation supplied with the product.
2. Place 10 mm spacers along the long and short sides, including close to plank joints.
3. Engage each end joint at a low angle and lower carefully until closed. Do not hammer directly on the locking profile.
4. Continue the first row, checking alignment. Cut the final piece to length; it must be at least 300 mm long.
5. Use the offcut to start the next row only if it is at least 300 mm and maintains a minimum 300 mm stagger.

Continuing the floor

6. Angle the long side into the previous row, engage the end joint and lower carefully until both joints are fully closed.
7. Use only a suitable tapping block or pull bar where required; never strike the exposed click edge directly.
8. Keep the first three rows straight and square, as they establish the complete installation.
9. Continue across the room while checking closed joints, correct stagger and consistent expansion gaps.
10. For the final row, measure at several points, deduct the 10 mm expansion gap and cut to width. Use a pull bar if required.

Maximum continuous floor area

MAXIMUM AREA	10 x 15 linear m in an uncontrolled environment	WHEN EXCEEDED	Divide with a suitable transition profile fixed only to the subfloor
DOORWAYS	Transitions required where outside the recommended coverage	FIXED OBJECTS	Keep at least 10 mm clear around all permanent obstructions

Finishing

- Remove all spacers and confirm the floor remains free to move.
- Install reducers, end profiles and transition mouldings without fastening through or into the Sapphire floor.
- Fix skirting or quarter round to the wall only. It must cover the expansion gap without pressing down on the planks.
- Do not install fitted cabinets, fixed islands or permanent partitions on top of the floating floor.
- Protect the completed floor from construction traffic with clean, rigid protective sheets that do not trap moisture.

FLOATING FLOOR RULE

Never nail, screw, silicone or glue the floor to the subfloor or vertical surfaces. Glue-down installation is not recommended except for staircases and requires written, product-specific guidance.

Protection, cleaning and maintenance

Routine care

- Remove installation dust with a soft broom or vacuum; switch off rotating beater bars.
- Use an effective non-staining entrance-mat system. Avoid rubber-backed mats, which may discolour vinyl.
- Damp-mop with clean water and a suitably diluted vinyl-floor cleaner. Test unfamiliar products first.
- Do not use steam mops, abrasive tools, harsh chemicals, ammonia-based cleaners, detergents, waxes or “mop and shine” products.
- Wipe spills promptly and allow the floor to dry before walking on it.

Furniture and traffic

- Lift furniture into place or move it over rigid hardboard runways; never drag heavy items across the floor.
- Fit non-staining felt pads or broad floor protectors beneath furniture and appliances.
- Use large, soft, non-staining castors suitable for resilient flooring; do not use narrow or ball-type castors.
- Keep pet nails trimmed and ensure stiletto or high heels have sound protective tips.

Heat, sunlight and vacant properties

- Limit prolonged direct sunlight and localised heat with blinds, curtains or suitable solar control.
- Maintain natural ventilation or intermittent climate control in vacant and holiday homes.
- Keep embedded underfloor heating at or below 28°C and change temperatures gradually.

Water exposure

Sapphire is described as waterproof in relation to the structural integrity of the flooring and can tolerate topical water and water beneath the panels for up to 16 hours. It does not waterproof the building, replace a vapour barrier or protect the subfloor from moisture and alkalinity.

- Remove surface water and spills promptly.
- After flooding or water beneath the floor, stop the source, carefully lift panels where necessary and dry the subfloor fully. Store lifted boards back-to-back or face-to-face and reinstall only undamaged material.
- Do not install where permanent water exposure, hydrostatic pressure or uncontrolled moisture is expected.

Warranty and document control

Installation must comply with the current FINfloor Sapphire warranty and product documentation. Retain proof of purchase, batch details, site moisture records and installation photographs. Specifications may be revised; always check www.finfloor.co.za before installation.

CURRENT PRODUCT BASIS

This 2026 guide refreshes the supplied Sapphire installation instructions in the current FINfloor visual system. Where project conditions fall outside this guide, obtain written product-specific advice before proceeding.

WARRANTY - FADING AND DISCOLOURATION

Fading or discolouration caused by abnormal or concentrated sunlight exposure - including direct sunlight through large windows, glass doors, skylights, reflective surfaces, or areas without suitable shading protection - is excluded from warranty cover. Minor colour variation or gradual fading from normal natural-light exposure is considered a normal characteristic and is not a manufacturing defect. Claims relating to fading or discolouration must include installation-location information, exposure conditions, photographs, product details and maintenance records. Responsibility will be assessed with reference to product quality, installation conditions, environmental factors and maintenance.

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