

Vinyl Factsheet

Benefits

- **Huge choice** in terms of decors across wood, ceramic, stone and geometric designs
- **Impressive realism**- not just in the design but in finishing techniques that allow for wood knots you can feel, tiles you can grout etc. See appearance options
- **Excellent performance** in durability for high traffic areas, scratch resistance and cleanability. Vinyl also tends to be much more non-slip than natural materials. Some products are water resistant for bathrooms and kitchens. Warm and soft to touch compared to ceramic and stone floors- and a good heat insulator anyhow, and suitable for use with underfloor heating systems.
- **Sound reduction**- vinyl has negligible impact sound compared to the tap/click of laminate and transmits less sound and vibration compared to solid floor.
- **Considerably cheaper** than the 'real' thing- both to buy and to fit – and tile/plank approach minimises wastage.

Installation

Installation Preparation

Vinyl requires a dry, sound, level, subfloor as the relative thinness of vinyl and its light reflection performance will quickly reveal imperfections after installation as well as cause potential wear issues.

Existing wooden/MDF floors may need a plywood underlay up to 6mm thick and then the joints will need to be skimmed or taped. Non-wood sub-floors will need a self-levelling screed to be laid to ensure a suitable base for the floor. A damp proof membrane may be required depending on sub-floor moisture levels.

However, new rigid core products are less flexible and can be laid more easily over existing floors.

Product Options

- **Dry back-** a sheet or tile that needs to be fixed to the sub-floor using an adhesive
- **Self-adhesive-** tiles with a peel-off backing paper to stick to the sub-floor. Some tiles have adhesive overlaps to stick to each other rather than the sub-floor.
- **Loose lay vinyl-** tiles that simply drop onto the floor and rely on a high friction backing to keep them in place – they demand a very sound, level sub-floor but are the easiest type of tile to lay or replace.
- **Click-** tiles that have a mechanical jointing system to attached to one another (like a locked tongue and groove system) and a ‘float’ on the sub-floor without being glued down. There are many proprietary versions of the click system which offer fast, clean installation and stability.

Appearance Options

Vinyl tiles and planks cover a high variety of sizes and shapes and can be mix-and-matched to achieve an infinite number of designs. Current fashions include extra wide and long planks for wood through to very small planks for wood. Border effect can be easy to achieve in LVT.

Other notable options include:

- **Embossed**- this is where the top clear layer of the tile has been embossed to create a realistic texture that matches the style of the stone or wood décor. Registered embossed is the most authentic- the texture matches the design so that, for example, a wood knot or hand-scraped element in the wood design can be felt on the surface of the flooring.
- **Grouting and grooving**- vinyl tiles can be laid with grouting inlay stripes or beads of vinyl for added realism – and there are acrylic grouts that can be applied. In wood decors, planks are available with v-grooves or bevelled edges between planks for added realism.