

Installation and Maintenance

Floor Tile

About Floor Tile

Tiles exhibit all of the beautiful, natural, and varied characteristics of full grain, aniline dyed leather. The natural feel of leather is enhanced through a proprietary process which results in a tile that is resilient and stable. Prior to being cut and sized, a light application of a water repellent finish is applied. This protective coating is absorbed into the tiles and becomes an integral part of the leather surface, thus providing resistance to abrasion, fading, and staining while still highlighting the smooth tight natural texture of the leather. Applied directly on concrete floors or a smooth hardwood surface, leather suppresses sound and adds a warm, luxurious feel to the room.

Floor Installation Instructions

- 1 All other construction on the site should be completed before installing so that the installation area is as clean and free of dust as possible.
- 2 Care should be taken in opening the packaging to prevent damage to the leather by sharp knives or industrial razor blades.
- 3 Allow to acclimate on site for a minimum of one to two weeks. In order to provide adequate conditioning, the product should be removed from the packaging and fanned out against the wall vertically. Since the leather tiles are a natural product, there will be expansion and contraction related to environmental changes in temperature and humidity. As a result, it is best for the tiles to acclimate in an area with low humidity. A moisture content of 8–9 percent will lessen the amount of spaces that can occur between the tiles after installation. The moisture content can be measured with a moisture meter to determine if the tiles are ready for installation. Expansion and contraction is considered normal and acceptable for this type of natural product.
- 4 Tiles are a natural product with shade variation. When installing, randomly select the material to enhance the natural beauty of any shading variations.
- 5 Tiles can be applied to either finished grade plywood or concrete. Plywood is the recommended choice as it provides a consistent, level surface and reduces moisture issues common with concrete. Leather tiles should not be installed on floors with under-floor radiant heating because the rapid temperature changes may cause the tiles to contract and expand at a different rate than the floor surface. Plywood needs to be at least 1/2 in (1.3 cm) thick if installed over concrete or 3/4 in (1.9 cm) thick if only over sub-flooring.
- 6 Counter sink the screws to attach plywood. Fill screw holes, voids, and joints with Ardex Feather Finish or an industrial grade plastic wood compound. Sand the surface so that it is completely smooth and even.
- 7 To ensure adequate adhesion, thoroughly mix the adhesive to an even consistency and apply the first coat to the entire surface of the backside of the tiles with a paint brush. A roller may be used to apply the adhesive to the floor. Once again, make sure the entire surfaces of both materials are covered. The first coat of adhesive acts as a primer for the floor and for the tile. Allow the adhesive to completely soak into the back of the tiles and the sub-flooring. The adhesive will turn from milky white to clear when it is cured. The first coat must cure completely before the second coat is applied. Cure time is usually thirty minutes or less.
- 8 Apply a second coat of adhesive in the same manner as above. Again, use a paint brush to apply the second coat of adhesive to the back of the tiles. Apply the second coat to the plywood or concrete using a roller as directed above. Both applications must cover the entire surface of the tile and the floor as previously outlined. Allow the second coat of adhesive to cure thoroughly. The second application of adhesive is mandatory in order for the tiles to adhere properly to the substrate. If this step is omitted the tiles will become loose and potentially lift up from the substrate.
- 9 The adhesive should be applied to the perimeter of the room (twice). Fill in the floor working in six foot (1.8 meter) sections.
- 10 Using rollers from Everhard (or similar product), roll over the entire surface of each tile to ensure proper adhesion. Apply additional pressure to corners, points and seams. Use 1-1/2 in (3.8 cm) or 2 in (5.1 cm) wide rollers.
- 11 Leather tiles measuring 6 x 18 in (15.3 x 48.3 cm) and 18 x 18 in (48.3 x 48.3 cm) can vary in size up to 1/16 in (0.16 cm). Additional trimming on site may be required. Tiles can be cut on site with a straight edge and a utility blade.
- 12 Floors can be walked on immediately after installation, but wait 48 hours before damp mopping.

Vertical Installation Instructions

- 1 All other construction on the site should be completed before installing so that the installation area is as clean and free of dust as possible.
- 2 Care should be taken in opening the packaging to prevent damage to the leather by sharp knives or industrial razor blades.
- 3 Allow to acclimate on site for a minimum of one to two weeks. In order to provide adequate conditioning, the product should be removed from the packaging and fanned out against the wall vertically. Since the leather tiles are a natural product, there will be expansion and contraction related to environmental changes in temperature and humidity. As a result, it is best for the tiles to acclimate in an area with low humidity. A moisture content of 8–9 percent will lessen the amount of spaces that can occur between the tiles after installation. The moisture content can be measured with a moisture meter to determine if the tiles are ready for installation. Expansion and contraction is considered normal and acceptable for this type of natural product.
- 4 Tiles are a natural product with shade variation. When installing, randomly select the material to enhance the natural beauty of any shading variations.
- 5 Tiles must be installed over 5/8 in (1.6 cm) finished grade plywood for new-built installations and 1/4 in (0.6 cm) multi-ply over existing drywall. Tiles will NOT adhere to drywall, gypsum board, or masonite.
- 6 To install 5/8 in (1.6 cm) plywood, use screws to attach the plywood to the wall studs. Fill screw holes, voids and joints with Ardex Feather Finish or an industrial grade plastic wood compound and sand the surface so that it is completely smooth and even. To install multi-ply, apply Roberts 1407 Engineered Wood Flooring Adhesive adhesive or Full Spread Liquid Nails to the entire surface of the drywall using a trowel. Apply the multi-ply to the wall. Fasten the multi-ply with 3/4 in (1.9 cm) narrow crown staples to ensure an adequate bond of both materials. Staple the seams 1 in (2.5 cm) apart and 4 in (10.2 cm) on center. Seal seams with Ardex Feather Finish or an industrial grade plastic wood compound and sand smooth.
- 7 A water-based stain should be applied to the plywood or multi-ply substrate to match the existing color of the leather tile. If an exact match cannot be established, it is best to go darker in color than lighter. Staining the plywood helps to conceal minor gaps that can develop from expansion and contraction associated with natural products such as leather tiles.
- 8 To ensure adequate adhesion, thoroughly mix the water based adhesive and apply the first coat to the entire surface of the back side of the tiles with a paint brush. A roller can be used to apply the adhesive to the plywood on the wall. Once again, make sure the surfaces of both materials are covered. The first coat of adhesive acts as a primer for the wall and for the tile. Allow the adhesive to completely soak into the back of the tiles and the plywood. The adhesive will turn from milky white to clear when it is cured. The first coat must cure completely before the second coat is applied. Cure time is usually thirty minutes or less.
- 9 Apply a second coat of adhesive in the same manner as above. Again, use a paint brush to apply the second coat of adhesive to the back of the tiles. Apply the second coat to the wood substrate on the walls using a roller as directed. Both applications must cover the entire surface of the tile and the wall as previously outlined. Allow the second coat of adhesive to cure thoroughly. The second application of adhesive is mandatory in order for the tiles to adhere properly to the substrate. If this step is omitted the tiles will become loose and lift up from the substrate.
- 10 Using rollers from Everhard (or similar product), roll over the entire surface of each tile to ensure proper adhesion. Apply additional pressure to corners, points and seams. Use 1-1/2 in (3.8 cm) or 2 in (5.1 cm) wide rollers. It will be necessary to use a ladder to reach the top portion of the wall to ensure enough force is applied to properly roll the upper tiles.
- 11 Larger tiles measuring 6 x 18 in (15.2 x 45.7 cm) and 18 x 18 in (45.7 x 45.7 cm) can vary in size up to 1/16 of an inch. Additional trimming may be required. Tiles can be cut on site with a straight edge and a utility blade.

Resources

Spinneybeck Water Based Contact Adhesive	800.482.7777 or 716.446.2380
DAP® Weldwood® Nonflammable Contact Cement	dap.com; 800.543.3840
Roberts 1407 Engineered Wood Flooring Adhesive	robertsconsolidated.com; 866.435.8665
ARDEX FEATHER FINISH®	ardex.com; 724.203.5000
Everhard hand rollers	everhard.com; 800.298.2832

Care and Maintenance

Frequently sweep or vacuum with a soft bristle brush to remove loose dirt and debris. Since there is a water-resistant finish on the tiles, liquid will not immediately absorb into the surface. Blot any spills with a soft cloth but do not rub. If applied to the floor, damp mop the tiles approximately every 60 days. Use only water and ensure the mop is rung out well. Occasional conditioning with Spinneybeck Aniline Leather Cleaner, Conditioner & Protector is recommended. Tiles may be buffed with a soft, dry cloth or a floor buffer with a cotton pad. Never use leather cleaners such as saddle soaps, household cleaners such as Murphy's Oil Soap, cleaners that contain harsh chemicals, alcohol, or ink removers on the tiles.

Installation Disclaimer

Leather tiles are a unique and beautiful natural product. They exhibit all of the varied characteristics of full grain, aniline dyed leather: visible grain, saturated color, fat wrinkles, and subtle tonalities.

To ensure a successful installation, Spinneybeck strongly recommends that an installer is hired who has experience with leather tile and has a long history of successful installations. There are specific details and guidelines for application and the installation process is labor intensive. It is our experience that unless an installer has successfully completed at least 20 leather tile projects, the likelihood of problems with the installation will be very high.

Based on the expertise required to install leather tiles, Spinneybeck recommends the following installer. This contractor specializes in tile installations and his workmanship is excellent.

Floor Tile Specialists Inc.
Karl Szadok
t 516.984.6160 f 516.796.5424

Using installers with years of successful experience working with other natural products such as wood, cork, and marble for floor and wall applications does not ensure that their experience will translate well for leather tile installations. These types of products have their own application techniques, which are specific to each product.

Should you decide to select another installer, please understand that this will release Spinneybeck from any and all responsibility for the product and installation. **The one year limited product warranty will be void if an installer other than the contractor listed above is selected for your project.** Based on a decision to work with another installer, our Vice President of Operations, Jack Wolf, is available to review the installation instructions in detail with the appropriate person.

Please consider the information provided in this disclaimer before making a final decision on an installer.