

# Installation Guidance Note: Allura Flex

## General key points

- Loose lay installations up to 150 m<sup>2</sup> in regular traffic areas allowed over existing (non-acoustic) smooth rigid subfloors.
- For real loose lay installations it is important to make a tight installation, squeezing the product between walls or fixed objects.
- A tackified loose lay installation for areas >150 m<sup>2</sup> or in case of heavy traffic.
- Always conduct moisture tests on all substrates, if excess moisture is found in the substrate proper remediation steps should be taken before installation.
- Always prevent the use of excessive moisture on the floor.

In case of any doubt please contact your local Forbo flooring technician.

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## General Advice

The appearance, performance and durability of the installed floorcovering will be determined to a large extent by the quality of the prepared subfloor and the conditions in which they are laid. As with any resilient floor covering irregularities in the subfloor will be apparent in the finished flooring.

The installation of Allura Flex tiles & planks should be carried out in accordance with the national code of practice for the installation of resilient floor coverings, BS8203:2017. Areas to receive flooring should be clean, free from other trades, fully enclosed and weather tight. Subfloors should be clean and free of contaminants, smooth, sound, even and permanently dry.

It is recommended that existing floor coverings and its residues such as glues or tackifiers are removed, and the subfloor is prepared in accordance with National Code of practice for the installation of resilient floor coverings, BS8203:2017. If any doubt exists full adhesion is advised or contact your local Forbo Flooring technician

Always conduct moisture tests on **all** substrates. All ground based level floors should have an effective moisture barrier. Always record and keep your moisture content results prior to the start of the installation. If excess moisture is found in the substrate proper remediation steps should be taken before installation; if this is not possible alternative flooring solutions are advised.

Areas to receive flooring shall be adequately lit to allow for proper inspection of the substrate, installation and for final inspection.

It is essential that the laying area is at a steady temperature of minimum 18°C for 48 hours prior to, during, and for 24 hours after installation. The material and adhesive should be conditioned in the same environment for at least 24 hours prior to the installation. Where the floorcoverings have been stored or transported immediately prior to delivery in temperatures below 10°C the acclimatization period should be extended to 48 hours.

Prior to installation tiles should be checked to ensure that the correct colour, batch number and quantity have been received and that the material is in good condition. No claim will be accepted for incorrect colour, pattern or obvious damage if the material has been fitted.

Use material from the same batch/dye lot. The use of different production batches will always result in visible shade differences. The batch number is clearly marked on the material packaging and must be checked before commencement of installation. Store Allura Flex tiles and planks in cartons stacked, maximum 5 cartons, and laying flat. Allura Flex can be installed directly from the box, there is no need to shuffle tiles or planks as there is a large variation of tiles in a box.

Allura Flex is occupier ready on completion of the installation. However, if the newly installed floor is going to be subjected to heavy site traffic, particularly high point load wheeled traffic, the floor should be protected during this phase (see "on completion" at the end of this guide).

### Acceptable substrates

Allura Flex may be installed on the following substrates (subject to the conditions in this guide):

- New or existing concrete or cement screed substrate
- New or existing wood panel or particle board substrates
- Old in-situ floor finishes (resin) at least 2 mm thick
- Old floor paint
- Old compact resilient floor coverings up to 150 sqm (semi-flexible tiles, vinyl asbestos tiles, sheet vinyl flooring and linoleum).
- Raised Access floors

**For any subfloor not listed above or if any doubt exists, contact Forbo Flooring Technical Services.**

**Note: Allura Flex** can only be laid on a substrate that has previously received only a single layer of resilient floor covering. The performance rating of the old floor covering must satisfy the new rating required, particularly if the room is to be used for a different purpose.



**Concrete slabs or cementitious screeds:** New and existing ground floor slabs are usually cast on a damp-proof membrane in accordance with the National Code of practice for the installation of resilient floor coverings. If an effective damp proof membrane is not present or any doubt exists, a surface damp proof membrane should be applied.

Where required, smoothing and levelling compounds rated for heavy traffic areas should be applied to screeds and slabs. If a smoothing compound is not being applied to the surface of the slab/screed a suitable primer should be applied to keep the subfloor dust free.

**Wood panel substrates (tongue-and-groove boards)** - plywood or particle board floors should be prepared in accordance with the National Code of practice for the installation of resilient floor coverings. Differences in height between boards greater than 1mm should be sanded flush.

**Old ceramics tiles:** laid on a sound concrete or cement screed substrate, soundly adhered to the bedding screed (sealed ceramics tiles) or substrate (adhesive-bonded ceramics tiles) require degreasing/cleaning followed by a primer a general heavy duty self-smoothing/levelling compound suitable for the room's intended purpose should be applied across the entire surface area.

**Existing in-situ resin floor finish:** the old finish must be sound and fully bonded and at least 2 mm thick. If flatness, cleanliness and bond requirements are not satisfied, the old in-situ floor finish must be removed, and the subfloor prepared in accordance with the national code of practice.

**Floor paint:** existing paint finishes should be clean and sound. Sanding is not necessary if the paint is sound.

**Old flexible floor coverings:** semi-flexible asbestos free compact vinyl sheet and tiles or compact linoleum should:

- a. Be sound and bonded tightly to the sub floor.
- b. Have loose or broken areas removed and replaced with sound material or levelled with a good quality smoothing compound.
- c. Are level within the requirements stipulated
- d. Be abraded to remove old wax, seals and dirt (where adhesive systems such as tapes are to be applied) and then thoroughly cleaned.

If any doubt exists, or where full adhesion is required, existing floor coverings should be removed.

**Note:** Acoustic floor coverings in general, including cushioned PVC and acoustic linoleum floor finishes must be removed, and the subfloor prepared in accordance the National Code of practice for the installation of resilient floor coverings.

**Textile floor finishes:** textile floor finishes must be removed, and the subfloor prepared in accordance with national codes of practice where applicable.

#### **Raised Access Floors:**

Raised access floors should be smooth, level and clean. Degreasing may be necessary on steel faced panels. Any old adhesive residues must be removed.

Raised access flooring panels have a tendency to settle shortly after installation and this should be taken into account when assessing the appearance of the Allura Flex tiles or planks fitted onto raised access flooring systems. Ridges between uneven raised access floor panels and/or gaps between adjacent panels will telegraph through to the finished tile installation.

Raised access panels should be checked before commencing installation to ensure that they are close fitting and level. Uneven or loose floor panels should be levelled and/or re-fixed before installing Allura Flex tiles or planks.

Particular attention should be paid to joints in floor panels lying close to, or coinciding with, joints in Allura Flex tiles or planks.

#### **Notes:**

- Incidental low-level light will exaggerate any unevenness in the subfloor.
- Where the above conditions cannot be met or, if any doubt exists, the raised access floor should be overlaid with plywood or levelled using a suitable self-levelling underlayment compound.



## Underfloor heating

Forbo flooring products may be installed over underfloor heated floors providing the maximum surface temperature of the substrate does not exceed 27°C under any condition of use. To enable a secure bond of the adhesive to the substrate, the underfloor heating system should be turned off, or set to the lowest temperature, for a minimum of 48 hours prior to installation of the Forbo flooring material. The temperature of the substrate must not exceed 18°C during the installation of the flooring material. If necessary, an alternate heating source should be used to maintain the room temperature at a minimum of 18°C prior to, during, and for 72 hours after installation. The temperature of the underfloor heating system can be increased 72 hours following the installation. When raising the floor temperature, do so gradually so the substrate and flooring material can adapt to the temperature change together. A rapid temperature change could result in bonding problems.

## Installation methods

### Fully Loose lay installation

Allura Flex may be laid in individual areas up to 150sqm subject to a maximum length of 20m on the longest side of the area and the flooring being constrained by fixed walls on all sides. Areas over 150 sqm should be tackified or fully adhered. Laying the planks in this laying pattern it is advised to use of a double sided tape around the perimeter.

Note: it is important that planks and tiles are tightly fitted between walls or fixed objects in the area. This can avoid movement of tiles/planks over time. At doorways or open walkways between large adjacent spaces the flooring should be finished at the door/space threshold adhering the tiles or planks (double-sided plasticiser adhesive tape or fully bonded).

The separation of areas over 150sqm should be set out so as to prevent the position of the double-sided plasticizer resistant adhesive tape and the seam between each area being situated in main traffic lanes to avoid heavy traffic.

For installation in areas not constrained by fixed walls or where tiles or planks are liable to be subject to heavy static or dynamic loads it is advised to use a tackifier or a hard set glue.

Finishing at doorways: at doorways or open walkways between large adjacent spaces the flooring should be finished at the door/space threshold adhering the tiles or planks (double-sided plasticiser adhesive tape, tackifier or fully bonded). Where Allura Flex is continued into adjacent areas a joint should still be formed in the same manner as described above for separating large areas.

### Tackified installation

Areas above 150 sqm should be installed using a high-grab, plasticizer resistant tackifier adhesive. Forbo recommends Forbo Eurocol 542. Lay the tiles into the tackifier and roll with a 68 kg roller. Areas that cannot be rolled with the large roller e.g. abutments such as architraves or skirting boards should be rolled with a hand roller or pressed into the adhesive with a hand roller or rubbing hammer.

If alternative products are to be used consult with the supplier for more information, guidance and warranty.

Use a short pile roller to apply the tackifier. It is recommended that tackifiers are allowed to dry to a tacky finish before laying the floor covering. The adhesive must be spread evenly over the entire floor area with particular attention to perimeter edges. Porous substrates may require priming with a diluted application of the adhesive.

**Note:** In most applications Forbo Eurocol 542 tackifier adhesive will be sufficient in heavy commercial usage areas, however, where tiles or planks are liable to be subject to heavy static or dynamic loads it is advised to fully adhere the floor. Always prevent the use of excessive moisture on the floor. In case exposure to the use of excessive moisture it is advised to full adhere the tiles.



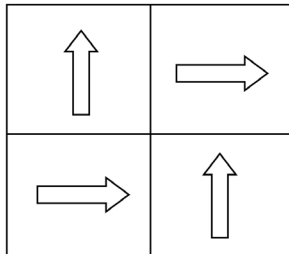
## Installation

Tiles and planks do not require shuffling prior to installation, the tiles and planks can be directly installed from the box, but dry laying will identify best use of design. Like the natural material, some designs will vary in tone and colour. This is intentional and gives the floor a more authentic appearance.

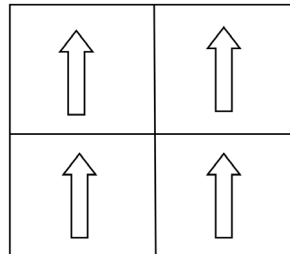
For the installation direction of Allura Flex tiles please note the following:

Stone, concrete and cement tiles may be laid either in bond (monolithic or tessellated) or brick pattern.

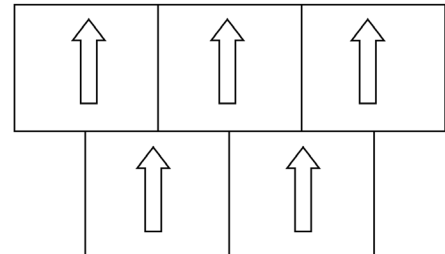
An arrow on the back helps to identify how to install the tiles in the preferred pattern in order to prevent gloss differences.



**Tessellated**



**Monolithic**  
(fully loose laid, max. 50 sqm)



**Brick**

## Setting out

Forbo tile products are installed using conventional tile installation techniques.

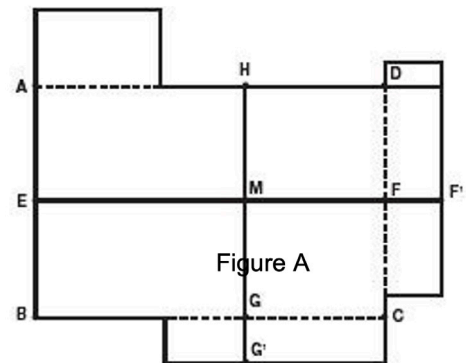
The correct starting point for setting out a tiled floor is traditionally the centre of the area - although this may not be the final starting point when tile laying begins. Some adjustment of the starting point may be required, for example, to avoid small perimeter cuts, where the tiles are to be laid with a border.

In corridors and small spaces, it may be simpler to work lengthwise from one end, using the centre line as a guide.

The centre line is drawn as follows: a chalk line is snapped from centre of wall A-B (=E) to the centre of wall C-D (=F). The centre of line E-F is found (M).

Draw a perpendicular line through M using the 3:4:5 method to establish G-H (Figure A).

Starting at centre point M, measure out lengthwise and width wise to the walls. Wherever possible, cuts of less than 60mm or so should be avoided as these are more likely to come loose at some stage in the life of the installation. Adjust the position of lines E-F and G-H if necessary.



## Laying tiles or planks

Begin laying tiles at the starting point, ensuring that the tile is laid exactly along the layout lines. If the first few tiles are not installed accurately, the entire installation will be affected. Lightly roll each row of planks with a hand roller to ensure a firm adhesive bond.

Note: In a large area, two or more fitters may be placing tiles at the same time. As finger pressure in butting the tiles or planks together may be slightly different, we suggest to start from a common point and work away from it to avoid tiles or planks going out of bond.

## On completion of the installation

First impressions may have more impact on the client than hours of skilled fitting.

The completed installation should be cleared of scrap material and debris, the floor swept or vacuumed, and any traces of adhesive residues removed from the floor and skirtings.

If the floor covering is to be protected from other trades or site traffic prior to project completion, a protection product should be chosen that is appropriate for the type and level of traffic likely to be experienced and the potential for impact, scratching or indentation damage.



In many cases it is customary for the initial floor preparation to be left, or subcontracted, to a professional cleaning and maintenance contractor who will have the staff and equipment to do the job thoroughly.

If the optimum performance of any new floor covering is to be achieved, it is important that the correct cleaning and maintenance procedures are used from day one. Cleaning and maintenance guides for all Forbo Flooring products are available for download at: [Forbo Allura Flex floor care guide](#).

**Cleaning and maintenance guides should be passed onto the main contractor, client or end user as appropriate on completion of the installation, and before any hand over clean is started.**

Important note: the use of excessive moisture, either through use or cleaning, on the floor needs to be prevented. In case of potential exposure to the use of excessive moisture it is advised to either use an alternative flooring solution; preferably a sheet product like Forbo Eternal, or in case alternative solutions are not possible to full adhere the tiles.

### **Use Entrance Systems**

As much as 80% of dirt entering a building is brought in by foot traffic. Entrance flooring systems of an appropriate size (ideally more than 6lm) and quality should be used. Forbo Coral or Nuway entrance flooring systems, are independently proven to remove and retain up to 94% of all dirt and moisture entering a building by foot traffic; reducing maintenance costs and maximising appearance retention of adjacent flooring products as well as reducing slip risk. As with any dirt removal system all entrance flooring systems should be regularly cleaned to release the dirt which has been removed.

If in any doubt contact us:

Forbo Flooring UK Ltd  
Tel: **0800 0282 162**  
**Info.flooring.uk@forbo.com**  
**www.forbo-flooring.co.uk**

Additional Reference documents and information:

- Forbo Floor Coverings Installation Guide: [www.forbo-flooring.co.uk](http://www.forbo-flooring.co.uk)
- BS8203:2017 installation of resilient floor coverings - Code of practice
- The CFA Guide to Contract Flooring [www.cfa.org.uk](http://www.cfa.org.uk) (Tel: 01159 411126)