

Introduction:

The product that Taraca Pacific sells is graded to have a smooth face and back. The core is sound with no holes. The glue line is moisture resistant. If a product in the store does not meet these criteria, do not attempt to use it for underlayment.

We strongly urge every consumer to inspect the plywood prior to purchase and installation. A sheet of underlayment that meets quality requirements will perform well. Because most new vinyl floor installations require very few sheets of underlayment, the inspection process will take only a few minutes.

Look at the face and back for any obvious defect. Look at the edge of the underlayment for any holes in the core. Stand the sheet on its long edge and give it a twist. Any delamination will be seen when this is done.

Materials for the Job:

1. Calculating Underlayment - One panel covers 32 square feet. Measure the floor and add another 5% to 10% to allow for cuts and scrap material.
2. Selecting the Fasteners - Tight Fastening is extremely important to help prevent panels from lifting loose. Two methods are approved. Fastener must recess 1/16" below the surface and penetrate 75% to 90% of the sub floor assembly but not to protrude through the bottom. *Select a coated fastener known not to stain vinyl, stone or marble floor covering.



Nails: Ring shank or annular-grooved, galvanized flooring nails with a 3/16" diameter head. Recess 1/16" and patch over.

3. Using Patch/Fillers - It is Taraca's experience that filling or flashing joints between panels with patch may increase the risk of tunneling and/or ridging over these joints.



We recommend all normal panel joints be sanded and not patched. If gaps, chips, etc... Occur, use a cement-based high-solid, non-shrinking acrylic patching compound approved by the manufacturer for flooring underlayment applications, DO NOT use gypsum based patching compounds. Use a brand name product and manufacturer's acrylic latex additive for improved results versus mixing with water.



Avoid excess use of patching compound and adhesive material and DO NOT flood underlayment surface with a self leveling compound.

4. Safety Equipment - WARNING: Wood dust can cause eye and breathing problems; wear protective gear: dust mask, safety glasses or eye goggles, kneepads.



Before You Install:

Acclimation

Acclimate the panels in the room for 48 hours or more in extreme conditions. Floor joints and subfloors expand and contract with changes in humidity and temperature therefore underlayment and the subfloor assemblies must be adjusted to the surrounding room that conditions will exist during occupancy. Use Caution when carrying and storing underlayment in extreme conditions. Separate and store panels vertically around the room or flat with a space between each panel to allow air passage on all sides. Avoid storing near hot or cold spots such as windows, air registers and exterior doors. The room must be kept dry and ventilated and a constant temperature of 70 degrees F during and at least 48 hours before and after installation.

Seam “Telegraphing”

CAUTION: Seam telegraphing problems are not the result of defective underlayment panels but can usually be traced to two main causes. Improper installation including failure to sand all seams level, using excessive patching compound. Changing site conditions including expansion from moisture entrapment or movement in the subfloor.

Fastener Pattern

Nailing patterns printed in the plywood underlayment panel show the installer where fasteners should be placed in the panel and are useful aides in installations. However, some vinyl manufacturers have expressed concern that the inks used to print nailing patterns on plywood underlayment may contribute to vinyl discoloration and they recommend that only unprinted underlayment panels be used. In addition, nailing patterns that are in straight rows can telegraph through the face of the vinyl. A unique fan shaped pattern and small 4 dot fastener target prevents the nail pattern from being visible from the surface.

Installation:

Step 1 – Set the First Panel

- Start at one corner of the room along the longest line and install one panel at time.
- Set panel grain at right angles to the floor joists with the grain running in the same direction.
- Offset panel edges from the subfloor edges by a minimum of 12".
- Maintain a minimum 1/4" gap along all walls and vertical surfaces for the expansion.
- DO NOT four-corner fasten panel first. Start from a panel corner and fasten row by row to the opposite side.
- Use full body weight over the area with the subfloor.
- Fasten panels every 2" along the edges and 4" across the field.
- Position fasteners 3/8" to 1/2" in from the edges.
- If using staples (not recommended), apply staples across the grain.

Step 2 – Set All Other Panels

- Offset rows of panels 12" minimum – ensure four panel corners never meet at an intersection.
- Lay all panels with the grain running in the same direction.
- Cut panels to size with a trim saw.
- Keep factory edges together and use hand cut edges against walls, etc...
- DO NOT jam panels together. Gently butt together without leaving a gap.
- Recess fastener heads 1/16" and assure 75% to 90% penetration into the subfloor.
- Avoid using panel pieces less than 12" except when cutting in to allow for floor fixtures.

Step 3 – Patching

It has been the industry experience patching and flashing joints between panels increases the risk of seam telegraphing, tunneling and ridging. With careful installation patching can be avoided.

CAUTION: DO NOT use an electric fan to speed up the drying time. This creates a “surface cure” that, while dry enough to sand, traps water below the surface and prevents a proper cure. The panel edges absorb the moisture, expand slightly and force the patch out of the joint as a bead that can be seen through the vinyl.

Step 4 – Final Check

Take time to thoroughly check all surfaces and seams for smoothness. Run a straight edge or hand over all seams and assure all fasteners are set. Correct any irregularities.

Keep the flooring underlayment panels clean and dry until the new floor covering is installed.

Avoid Installation Mistakes - DO NOT...

- Install panels without acclimating them first
- Fasten a panel down by the four corners first then go back to “fill the field” later
- Lay more than that one panel at a time
- Place panel seams directly over subfloor seams
- Allow the corner of panels to meet in an intersection
- Leave gaps between panels (except general purpose panels – leave a 1/8" gap)
- Patch normal edge joints where there are no gaps
- Fail to sand all seams
- Work without wearing safety equipment