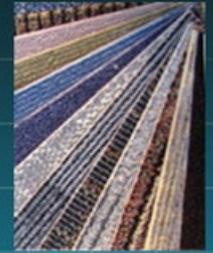


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ABN 40 143 451 177

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DIY VINYL LOOSE LAY PLANKS INSTALLATION GUIDE

Installing Vinyl Loose lay Planks yourself is not difficult and an average room can be completed in just a few hours after the necessary preparations have been completed. As with all DIY projects the end result depends upon using the right tools and methods from preparation to completion.

This Guide is intended to give you an understanding of the fundamentals of laying your Vinyl Loose Lay Planks and some tips on how to get it right the first time.

Depending upon what style of vinyl flooring you have purchased you will naturally have an idea of the

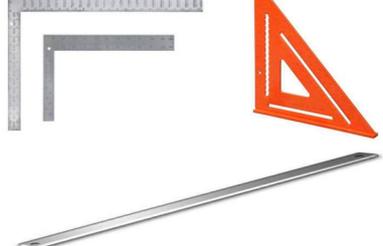


design you want to create, and a “mind’s eye” view of your finished project. These Loose Lay Planks are designed to be installed, using minimal or no adhesive and leaving a 5mm expansion gap around the edges. This allows the floor to expand and contract with weather. As such they are recommended for use in areas that maintain a fairly constant temperature and generally remain between 12°C and 29°C on a daily basis.

We will now attempt to explain to you the logical order for your project to proceed from start to finish.

Tools for the Job.

Installation is a lot easier when you have the right tools available to you to complete the job. What are the other essential items you should have on your shopping list? Consider this list:

 <p>A heavy duty utility knife or “Stanley knife” with extra brand new heavy duty blades.</p>	 <p>A solid scraper, heat gun and / or sanding equipment if you need to remove stubborn old glue.</p>	 <p>A metal straight edge to cut along (at least) or at best a straight metal edge with a right angle, like a “Try Square” or Carpenters square. This is ideal to make sure your cuts are all straight.</p>
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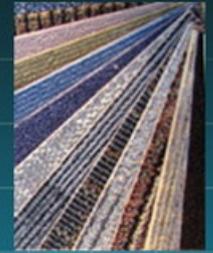
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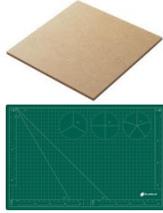
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A chalk line for finding and marking the centre of your room. (more on this later)



A marker pen.



A wooden surface or dedicated cutting mat to cut and trim down your vinyl planks if needed.



Prybar / Flathead Screwdriver / Hammer. Tools to remove and replace skirting-boards / kickboards, Architraves and Mouldings if required.

Surface Preparation.

Our loose lay vinyl flooring planks are 5mm thick and have a tolerance of up to 3mm over the 1.2metre length of the plank. In some if not most cases where the subfloor is in good condition, the planks can be laid straight onto the floor with only basic floor cleaning and removal of items such as nails or old carpet gripping strips being necessary. Bear in mind though that if there are major holes or the floor need extensive rectification then further steps will need to be taken in preparing the floor. See below for advice for cleaning and preparation methods in various scenarios. Whilst we can't anticipate every issue which may arise regarding floor preparation, we attempt to point out some more common situations.

Skirting Boards.

We recommend that a 5mm expansion gap be left at the perimeter of the installation, then that gap be filled with silicon. The removal and replacement of your skirting boards can be a tricky and sometimes expensive exercise if they become damaged and need replacing. It is personal preference as to whether you wish to remove skirting boards, cut to 5mm from the wall, fill the gap with coloured silicon and replace the skirting, or to cut in right up to within the 5mm of the skirting and leave your expansion gap there, then fill the 5mm gap with coloured silicon. We stock the Sikasil®PRO brand coloured silicon in a variety of colours to match our range of planks.

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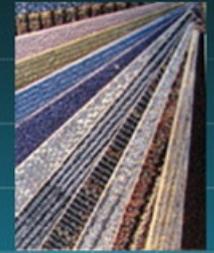
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Adhesive:

Although successful installation can be achieved without adhesive, we recommend sticking down the first (foundation) row, perimeter and the last row to provide an extra level of security so that your installation will not move over time. For this we use a semi permanent adhesive.

❖ ***Whatever the subfloor surface you are laying on, all traces of old carpet, carpet gripping, nails or screws, old glue, dirt and grime should be removed completely.***

Just like painting, spending time properly preparing the surface that will be under your planks will ensure the best end result. Take the extra time at this stage to ensure that your installation comes up to the best possible.



❖ ***The floor surface should then be swept, mopped then vacuumed.***



❖ ***Fill any major holes and seal the surface of your floor if you will be applying floor leveller. This should be completed at this stage so you end up with the optimal fresh clean flat and level surface to begin your job.***

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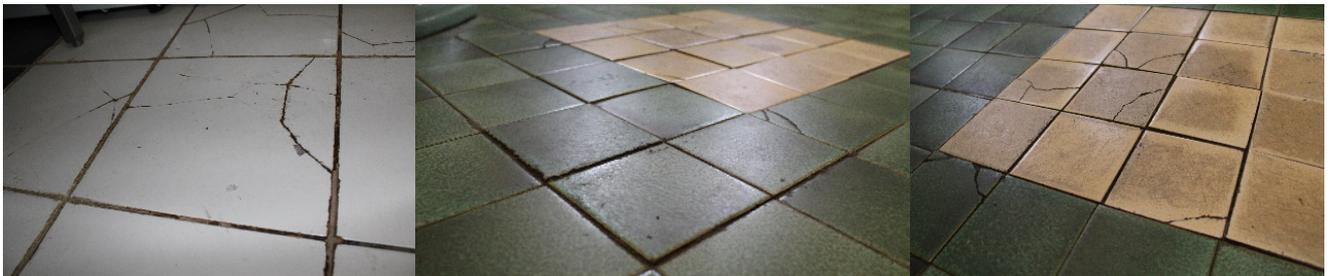
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❖ *Laying new Vinyl Loose Lay Planks over the top of old badly damaged Ceramic Tiles.*

Vinyl Loose Lay Planks are an easy way to re-cover your floors and freshen up a room. Often they can go right over the top of existing floors. In the case of ceramic tiles, it depends on how damaged they may be. It may be necessary to use hammer and chisel to chip out any damaged or uneven tiles. These should then be filled in with levelling compound or mortar.



Once you have removed the imperfections, if you intend to apply a floor levelling compound, use a good quality ceramic tile sealer as this prepares the tiles for accepting a new layer above, and seals them to ensure they don't leach the Levelling compound into the ceramic tile, starving it from water and preventing it from setting correctly.

❖ *Laying new Vinyl Loose Lay Planks over the top of old sheet Vinyl or old Vinyl Tiles.*

Similar to laying over Ceramic tiles above, it is essential to remove any damaged tiles, infill any holes, and level the surface. Make sure you seal the old flooring if you intend using a levelling compound.



Again, it depends on the condition of the sub floor, if major damage is present, infill the major gaps and holes and level with floor leveller to get your final subfloor surface prepared for laying your new planks as outlined in the below steps.

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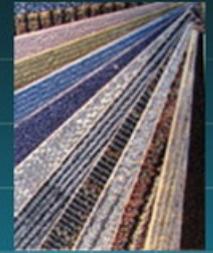
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- ❖ **Fill any major imperfections. We do stock self-leveller if you need it to help level and fill faults with your under-floor surface.**

Such a leveller will fill any seams between panels or planks, screw heads, nail holes or any other variance in the surface. Similarly if you are laying over concrete, ceramic tile or other subfloor surface, make sure you fill and level all of the floor where significant damage is present.

We carry a range of floor preparation solutions manufactured by Sika®

To provide a superior surface ready for you to install your Vinyl Loose Lay Planks over if need be.

But bear in mind this type of major floor preparation is only needed for the loose lay when major rectification is required. Most customers who have a clean subfloor in good condition do not require these steps.



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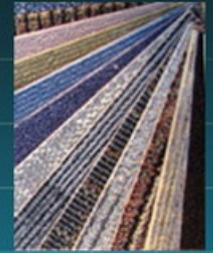
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❖ At this point :

Carefully Pre-Plan out your installation

It is worth giving serious planning and consideration when laying your planks. Take a number of loose planks, and lay them loose on a section of floor. This will help you determine what works best in your situation, and what looks best to your design taste and your individual application for the planks.

There are several schools of thought as to which direction planks should run in a room. These include laying the long side parallel to larger windows, running them lengthways down hallways and joining in to other rooms.

In every instance the solution will be different, so it is worth taking the time to determine what looks best visually, and what will work best when crossing thresholds from room to room.

Plan out your installation so that when you reach the end of a row, at least 20cm of Plank is at the end of the row. Make sure that the end of any plank is also at least 20cm from the end of the surrounding planks. Lengths shorter can be problematic and move over time. Also plan the width of your rooms that the last plank row is at least half a plank wide (9cm).

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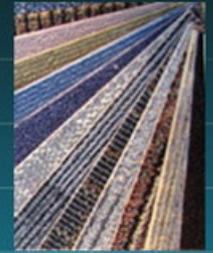
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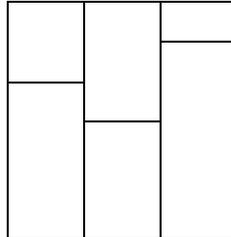
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“Plank Method” –

Lay each row of planks to ensure that the joints do not match previous rows nearby. The idea here is to create a random pattern where planks join at random places

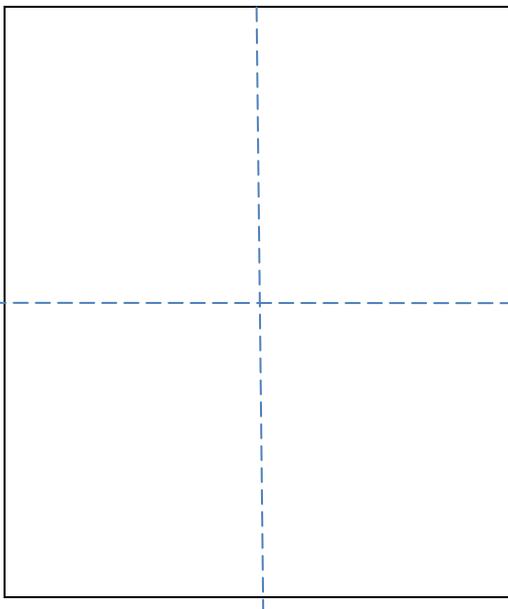


just like normal wood planks. Offset by at least 20cm to create a stepped or staggered look. Where a room is not perfectly square, this method is also great to disguise the problem.

Planks can be offset by varying amounts to create different looks, for example offset by half, a third, or a quarter of a plank. The whole point is to mimic the look of floorboards. Just remember to always have at least 20cm of plank at each end of each row, 20 cm from joints surrounding your current plank joint, and plan out the width of your room so that both sides of the room have at least 9cm of plank width along the walls. This is to add stability to cut rows and planks and also to provide a more visually pleasing look to the room.



❖ Find and Mark the middle of the room.



Using your chalk line its time to work out the centre of the room.

Measure along the length of your walls and mark the centre point of each of the walls.

It is important to measure each wall as often rooms are not exactly square and can be slightly out.

Position your chalk line and mark lines across the floor from side to side.

Doing this across all walls should end up with a cross point in the centre of the room. It is important that these lines are square as they will be the guide for all your future efforts. Take a moment and determine if they are square using the following methods.

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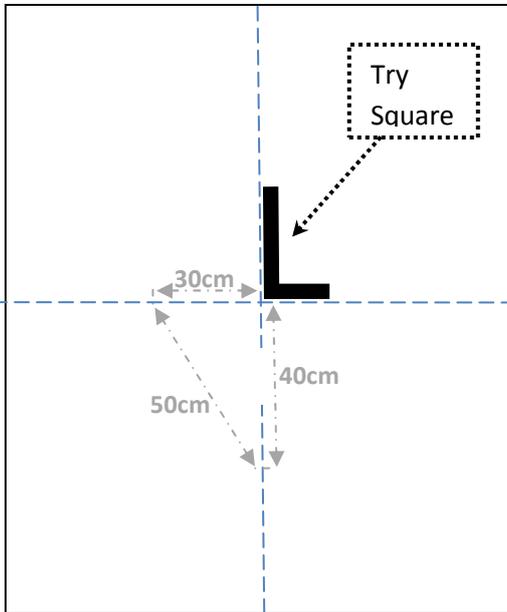
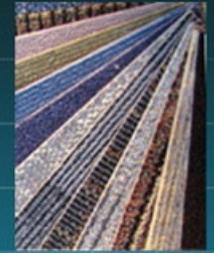
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If you do have a "Try Square" available, use it to place along the lines and make sure they line up square.

If you do not have a Try Square, it is not a problem as there is a simple way to work out if your lines are square.

Using a tape or ruler, measure and mark from the cross point out 40 centimetres. Now measure and mark along the other line out from the cross point out 30 centimetres.

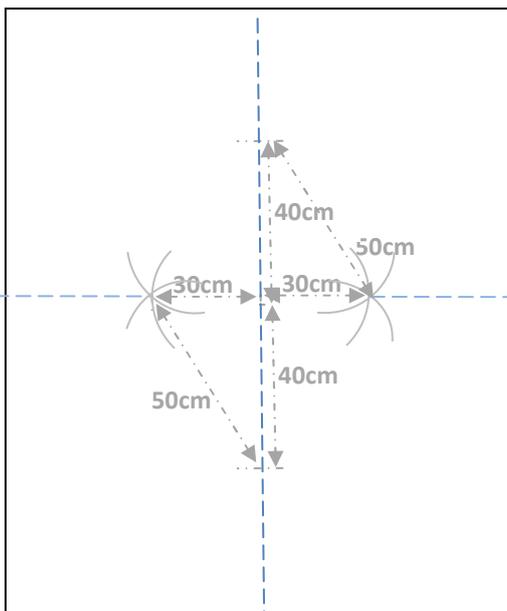
Finally measure from one mark to the other mark. The distance between the two should be 50cm.

If it is not 50cm or your try square does not line up with your lines on both sides, your lines and room are not square and your planks will not line up exactly with the walls. It is very common for rooms to be slightly out from square so do not worry if this is the case.

Assuming that your room is not square, there are several techniques you can use to mark your start lines square.

Following on from above we will use the same techniques described above to measure out points and mark lines that are square.

❖ *Squaring up your guide lines.*



Without a try Square:

Pick the opposite walls where the length of the walls is the closest, and use the chalk line from the centre of those walls to be your starting point.

Now that we know the centre point of that line (from the step above) measure back up that line 40cm on each side of the centre point.

From each of these points 40cm off centre, measure out 50cm and mark a small curve at 50cm from each of these points.

Next measure 30cm each side of the centre point and mark a small curve at 30cm from the centre point.

Finally line your chalk line to mark a straight line from one wall through the point where the three arcs meet, then through the centre point on the middle line, then through the other meeting point of the arcs on the other side, and finally out to the wall on the other side. If done correctly, these lines will now be square and you are ready to progress to the next step.

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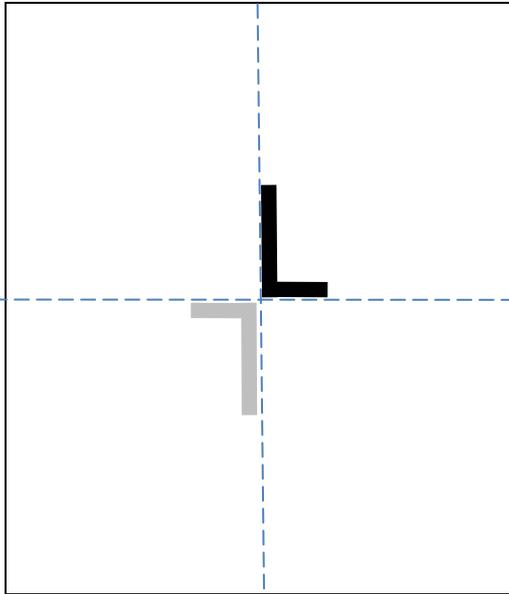
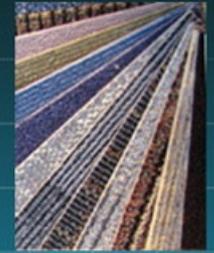
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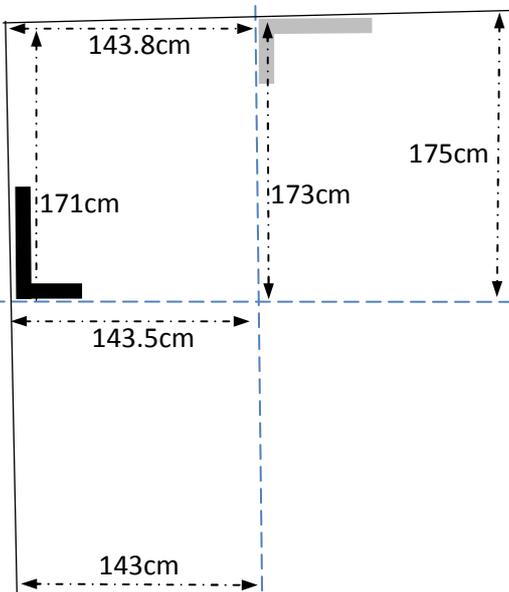
With a try Square:

If you have your try square, place the point of it at the centre point where the lines cross. Mark out the points each side from the end of the other arm of the try square. Do the same measuring the other side of the centre line.

Using your chalk line to then mark lines that go straight through the centre point where the lines cross and through the point where your points each side were marked using the try square and extend the new chalk line out to the walls each side.

If done correctly, these lines will now be square and you are ready to progress to the next step.

❖ What to do when your room is not Square.



If you have measured and laid out the centre lines mentioned above, you can easily determine how square your room is by measuring from the centre of the room along the chalk lines to the centre of each wall, and then comparing this distance to measuring from the centre point of a wall out to its corners.

Additionally if you line up the chalk lines with your try-square you will be able to see the difference when you place one side along the chalk line and the corner of the try-square against the centre point of the wall.

Now you have confirmed that your walls are not square, it is important we place a guideline to the first row along one of the walls. With Vinyl Loose Lay Planks it is important to start in one corner and work your way along the length of the wall to lay your first row. This will be the foundation for all the rows following so it is crucial that you get this row straight.

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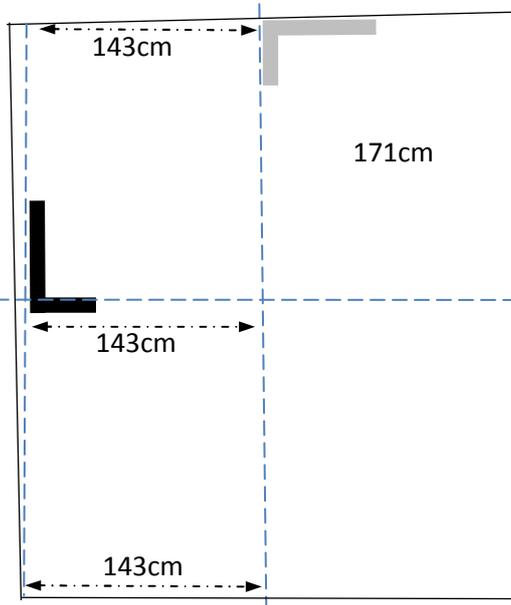
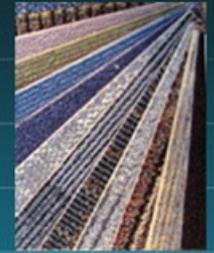
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Get the shortest measurement from centre point on wall to corner. In the example to the left we are using 143.5cm as the shortest.

Subtracting 5mm as space for expansion gaps, use that as your starting measurement. Thus in this example 143cm.

Measure the same distance at the centre line and then draw your chalk-line between the two points.

Extend your chalk-line along the same line to the opposite wall.

You should now have a chalk-line guide that is parallel to the centreline, and that allows a 5mm expansion gap at the narrowest end.

If the gap will be underneath your Skirting or Scotia you can use spacers and lay your first row parallel to your chalk line, otherwise you will need to cut your first row of planks so they follow the wall and

Square your first row up parallel to the chalk line. ***It is very important to use this first row to adjust and square up to the chalk line as it provides the guide for all following rows, we recommend running the first row of planks as full planks parallel to the straight chalk line and use adhesive in that row, this will provide the best starting point for the job. The section closest to the wall which is not square can be in filled last.***

DO NOT FORGET – THESE VINYL LOOSE LAY PLANKS REQUIRE A

5 mm EXPANSION SPACE

**AROUND THE OUTSIDE OF THE FLOOR TO ALLOW
FOR EXPANSION IN WARMER TEMPERATURES.**

When we are installing the flooring, make sure you use spacers between the walls and the edge of the planks, and that any trimmed planks allow for this space.

If you do not have off the shelf spacers, you can use off cuts of the Loose Lay Vinyl Planks as they are 5mm thick.

Cutting an off cut piece of plank into small rectangular strips approximately 3cm X 5cm will give you perfect spacer strips to ensure adequate expansion joints between walls/Skirtings and your Planks.

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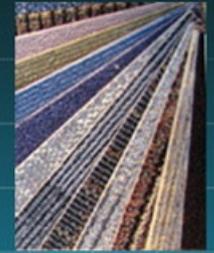
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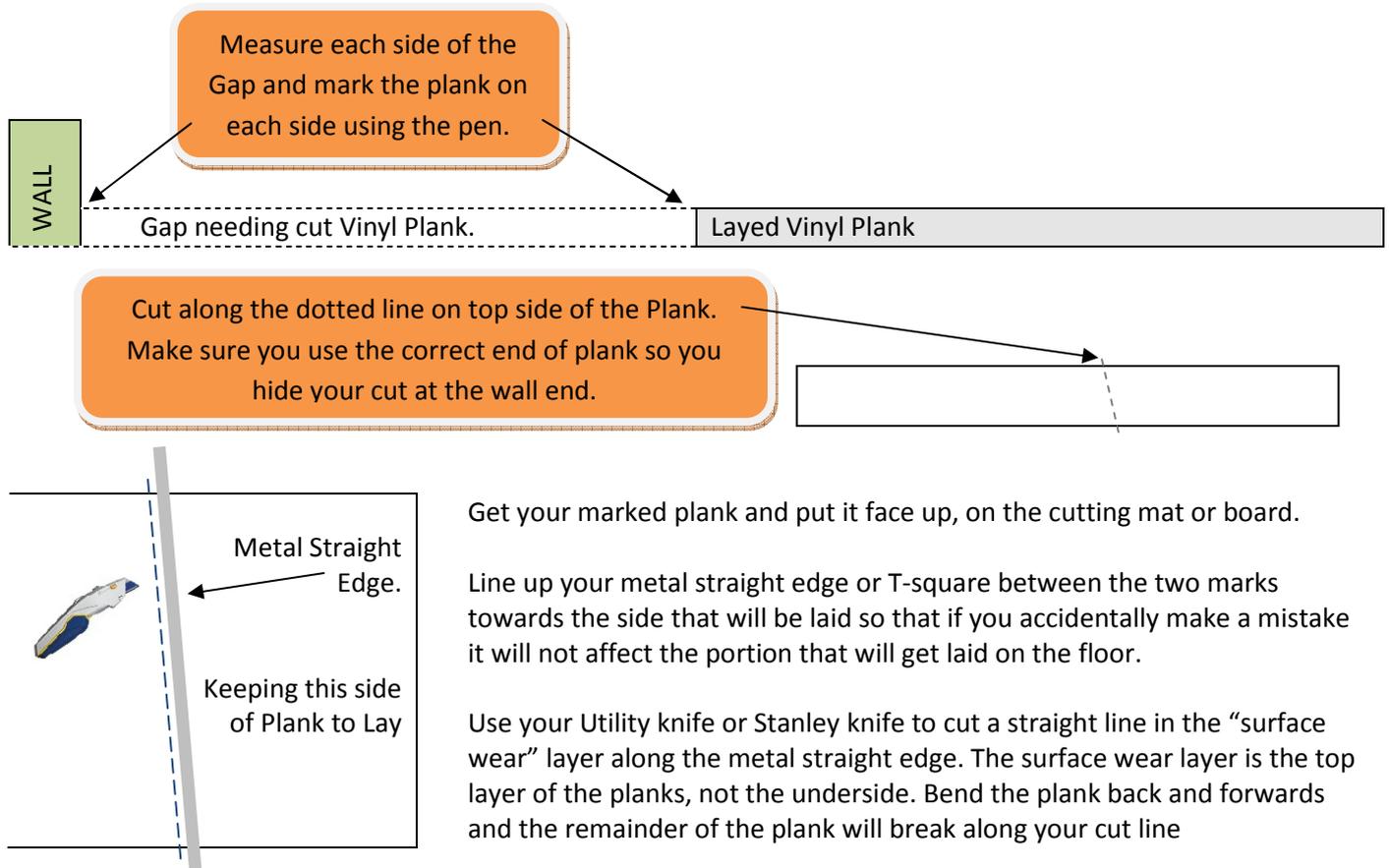


❖ *Finishing up.*

Now you have your floor down, carefully remove the spacers from one wall, and then apply your coloured silicon to the wall filling the expansion gap. Where you need to join between your new flooring, and existing floor in different room, or over an expansion gap, use metal Cover strips to make the transition. If you have stairs that leave off from your Vinyl Loose Lay Planks, attach stair nosing to the leading edge of the stairs to provide protection and ensure appropriate grip on your stairs.

❖ *Cutting your planks to walls and obstacles.*

Where you need to cut your planks to fit between walls and the remaining planks, or around obstacles in the room it is best to “measure twice cut once”. Remember to make sure that you take care to ensure you allow space for expansion, so always allow 5mm between the edge of the planks and any wall or obstacle.



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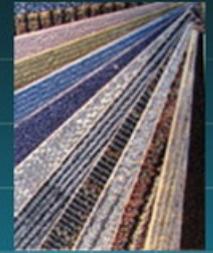
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Be very careful to take it slow so that your knife does not wander away from the straight edge. Cut and fit your plank, then move on to repeat the process for the remaining planks.

Where you have poles, pillars and other obstacles, measure out where you need to cut your plank including 5mm for the expansion gap, and then follow the above instructions. Always remember it is better to cut out less plank than more, as you can always trim it down to fit in better. If you cut out too much you will then have a gap too large or have to cut other slivers of plank to infill the mistake.

Carpet Tiles 1 are always happy to answer any questions you may have about installing your Vinyl Loose Lay Planks, to ensure you get the best installation possible for your room. If you have any questions give us a call on 02 9519 8785 or 0414 266267 and we will gladly answer your questions.

Vince Perry.

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