INSTALLATION GUIDE

RESERVE VULCANIZED VIRGIN RUBBER TILES — INSTALLATION GUIDE

Applies to: Reserve Vulcanized Virgin Rubber Tiles (Studio Reserve / Strength Reserve)

SPORT PRO SURFACING

PRODUCT BASICS

Reserve Tiles are manufactured from vulcanized virgin rubber, with marbled or fine-speckle accent color options. Construction depends on the product:

- **Studio Reserve Tile:** a homogeneous, single-layer vulcanized tile, 6mm or 10mm thick.
- **Strength Reserve Tile:** a dual-layer tile — a colored virgin rubber wear layer (6mm) calendared and vulcanized to a recycled SBR rubber base layer (10mm or 12mm), for a total thickness of 16mm or 18mm.

Both products provide a slip-resistant, non-porous, durable wear surface.

- **Format:** Standard square tile, available glued-down or interlocking
- **Applications:** Gyms, hotels, arenas, schools, ski resorts, military bases, fitness centers, community centers, residential buildings
- **Interior use only** — not recommended for environments exposed to oils or petroleum-based materials

> **Before installation:** inspect all material for accuracy of the order, damage, defects, and color match (slight variation from samples is normal). Report any damage or irregularities immediately, before installation and before final adhesive application.

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INSTALLER QUALIFICATIONS

The flooring contractor should be experienced in this type of rubber tile installation, proficient with vulcanized rubber tile systems specifically (including the dual-layer construction used in Strength Reserve Tile), and should have completed at least three projects of similar scope and complexity.

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HANDLING & STORAGE

1. Receive tiles carefully to avoid damage. Keep adhesive and surface-prep containers unbroken and labeled until time of use.
2. Protect materials from water, moisture, freezing, excessive heat, and contamination.
3. Store tiles and adhesives on site for at least 48 hours prior to installation (extreme hot or cold conditions may require additional time).
4. Remove tiles from pallets and relieve any shipping/loading pressure so the material can acclimate to room conditions.
5. All other trades — especially overhead work — should be complete before installation begins.
6. **Never leave tiles bent, folded, stepped on, or crushed** — this can damage the material.

7. Rubber tiles are dimensionally sensitive to temperature and climate. Keep site conditions constant within the acceptable working range, and avoid direct sunlight exposure, which can alter the color of the tile surface over time.

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INSTALLATION MATERIALS

- **Adhesive:** A solvent-free, 1- or 2-part urethane adhesive rated for rubber tile flooring.
- **Trowel:** 1/16″ x 1/16″ x 1/16″ square-notch trowel.
- **Roller:** 75 lb (minimum) sectional roller.
- **Tape:** 2″ masking tape (to secure seams) — never duct tape or high-grab masking tape, which can chemically react with the flooring surface and leave a permanent residue.
- **Weighting:** Concrete utility blocks (for weighting seams) and kraft paper (to protect the flooring from the blocks).
- **Other tools:** Sharp utility knife with spare blades, carpenter square and straight edge, measuring tape, chalk line, markers for cut lines, protective gloves, safety glasses.

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SUBFLOOR PREPARATION

The quality of a glued-down rubber tile installation is only as good as the subfloor beneath it. Rough or uneven subfloors diminish appearance, cause uneven surfaces, and shorten the floor's service life.

> **Do not install over existing flooring.**

WOOD SUBFLOORS

- New wood subfloors should be CDX exterior plywood, installed smooth side up.
- Caulk and surface-seal all nails, staples, or screw fasteners with an epoxy sealant.
- Acclimate plywood for 48 hours prior to installing tile.
- Subfloor must be clean and dry, free of dust, dirt, and any previous floor finishes.
- Patch cracks, holes, and rough or uneven areas with an appropriate cement-based leveling compound, per that product's manufacturer instructions.

CONCRETE SUBFLOORS

- Subfloor must be smooth and level to a tolerance of 1/8″ in 10 ft.
- Concrete must have cured for a minimum of 6 weeks.
- **A moisture test is required before installation, regardless of slab age or grade** — moisture is the single most common cause of adhesive bonding failure.
  1. Test per ASTM F1869 (Calcium Chloride / Moisture Vapor Emission Rate). Conduct one test per 1,000 sq ft; results should not exceed 5 lbs per 1,000 sq ft in 24 hours.
  2. ASTM F2170 (Relative Humidity/in-situ probe) may be used as an alternate; slab should not exceed 75% RH.
  3. If results exceed these limits, or hydrostatic pressure is present, do not proceed until the issue is corrected or an approved vapor barrier/moisture mitigation system is installed.
  4. Keep all test results on file and available on request.
- **Do not use the F1869 (calcium chloride) test on lightweight concrete.** For poured-gypsum underlayment, check with that product's manufacturer on the correct dryness test — never use calcium chloride testing on gypsum underlayment.
- Confirm the subfloor is clean, dry, and smooth. Remove any wax, paint, varnish, adhesive residue, or other material that would prevent proper adhesive bonding.
- Repair low spots with a cementitious latex patch mix; fill and smooth any rough or porous areas before installing.

- If concrete sealers, curing compounds, or floor hardeners were previously applied, treat the surface before adhesive application to ensure a proper bond.

CONCRETE SUBFLOORS WITH RADIANT HEATING

- Confirm the slab has cured appropriately.
- Prior to installation, run the radiant heating system between 70°F and 85°F for a minimum of 7 days to dissipate slab moisture and confirm proper bonding conditions.
- Turn the system off 48 hours before installation, and keep it off until at least 48 hours after installation is complete.
- After installation, bring the system back up gradually over a 48-hour period.
- Maximum radiant system set temperature: 85°F.

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CUTTING

Reserve Tiles can be cut with a utility knife using a straight edge or square as a guide. Round holes can be cut with a hole saw or a fine-tooth jigsaw at low speed.

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INSTALLATION CONDITIONS

Before starting, examine the installation area and report any flaws or adverse conditions before proceeding. Do not install until the subfloor and site conditions meet the requirements above.

- Maintain room temperature between 60°F and 75°F, and relative humidity at 65% or below, for at least 48 hours before installation.
- These conditions must hold 24 hours a day throughout the installation, and for a minimum of 72 hours after installation is complete.

LAYOUT

1. Dry-lay the entire floor, including all cut trim, before applying any adhesive — then review it under normal, occupied lighting.
2. Lay tiles in a running-bond (staggered) pattern, with accent-color marbling/speckle oriented the same direction throughout. Each tile has a directional arrow on the underside; install so all arrows point the same way.
3. Blend color variance across the layout to minimize the number of seams. Each box and tile is numbered by production sequence — for the best color consistency, group similarly numbered tiles together rather than placing widely different sequence numbers side by side.
4. Border widths should be a minimum of 1/3 the width of a full tile.
5. Adjoin factory edge to factory edge where possible; place cut edges along walls or vertical surfaces.
6. Square the layout from the room's midpoint: chalk a start line down the center of the room, then a second line 90 degrees to the first. Begin installation where the two lines intersect.
7. Inspect the dry-laid floor and flag any imperfections or irregularities before proceeding to final adhesive installation.

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GLUED-DOWN INSTALLATION

1. Begin spreading adhesive from the intersection of the chalk lines, continuing in one direction — spread only enough to install one starting row of tiles.
2. Apply adhesive uniformly at the recommended trowel size and application rate, ensuring a minimum 85% transfer from the floor to the tile backing.
3. Don't spread more adhesive than can be covered before initial set begins.

4. Keep all joints tight. Secure every joint with masking tape across the seam onto adjoining tiles until the adhesive cures (roughly 12″ long strips at 16″ centers is a reasonable starting point). Never use duct tape or high-grab masking tape.
5. Continue spreading adhesive and installing tiles outward in each direction from the first row.
6. Lay tiles into fresh adhesive in small sections and roll with at least a 75 lb sectional roller — a minimum of 3 passes in multiple directions, within 15 minutes of laying, to ensure proper adhesive transfer.
7. **Weight every seam after taping and rolling.** Use gray concrete utility blocks (2″ x 4″ x 8″) only, two layers deep, in continuous rows over all seams for a minimum of 24 hours. Photographing the completed weighting is good practice to document proper installation. Never substitute wood, boxes, sandbags, or cinder blocks for the weighting.
8. Wipe any excess adhesive on the tile surface immediately with a soft rag and denatured alcohol — hardened adhesive is very difficult to remove without damaging the finish.
9. Cut tiles neatly around fixed objects and irregular spaces with a sharp utility knife, making repeated passes for straight cuts.
10. Weight flooring installed around irregular or sloped surfaces (e.g., drains) with bricks to ensure proper bonding, and brick the full perimeter and all edges (doors, walls, columns, sleeves, etc.).
11. Continue flooring through areas with movable partitions without interrupting the pattern. Terminate flooring at the centerline of door openings where the adjacent floor finish or color differs. Install edge strips at any unprotected or exposed edges.
12. Keep foot traffic off the floor for a minimum of 24 hours after installation. If heavy equipment must cross the finished floor, use plywood or Masonite as a protective layer.

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INTERLOCKING INSTALLATION

1. Interlocking tiles have a tab detail on the outer edges that must fit together securely, so the finished floor becomes a unitary, monolithic surface independent of the subfloor beneath it. Install in a running-bond pattern.
2. Ensure tiles fit tightly against adjoining tiles to prevent seam gaps. If peaking occurs at a seam, apply double-sided tape to the floor to hold the tile edge down.