



FREESTYLE™ INSTALLATION GUIDE

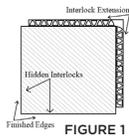
This Installation Guide applies to ALL FreeStyle interlocking floor tiles including FreeStyle Commercial, FreeStyle BioLock, FreeStyle ESD, FreeStyle ESD Plus and FreeStyle Designer Series. The method for grounding ESD versions of FreeStyle are at the bottom of this Guideline and apply to the ESD products only.

When Receiving and Installing FreeStyle

Please inspect your product carefully. If any of the tiles appear damaged when you open the box do not attempt to install it. IF YOU ENCOUNTER ANY CONDITION OR DEFECTS DURING INSTALLATION WHICH COULD JEOPARDIZE THE INSTALLATION OR AFFECT THE INSTALLATION PROCEDURE YOU SHOULD STOP IMMEDIATELY AND CONTACT SELECTECH'S CUSTOMER SERVICE DESK (508)583-3200

FreeStyle Basics

FreeStyle is an 18.5" x 18.5" interlocking floor tile. It is a free-lay tile system and does not require use of adhesives. FreeStyle's "built-in" subfloor permits installation over uneven surfaces with minimal preparation of the floor. FreeStyle can be installed directly over concrete, wood, tile or other standard floors as well as access floors. FreeStyle *may* be installed over some high density, commercial grade textured loop carpeting and other firm, resilient surfaces. If you are considering installing over this type of surface call our customer service desk to discuss whether going over your existing floor is an option.



The interlock systems uses two "Interlock Extensions" that are visible from the top of the tile, and two (2) "Hidden Interlocks" under the Finished Edges that are visible from the bottom of the tile. (See Figure 1) To install, you will mate the Hidden Interlocks on one tile with the Interlock Extensions on adjacent tiles.

Tile Flatness

FreeStyle utilizes a patented "zipper" interlock system, designed for adhesive free installation and providing tight seams, with a flexible, moisture proof base that is manufactured with recycled content. This design results in a slight dipping at the edges of the tile which is normal. Some amount of "cupping" may also be present when removed from the box and on initial installation. This will diminish over time as the floor "settles in" following installation, however, FreeStyle tile will maintain some characteristic shape throughout their lifetime.

Receiving and Storing FreeStyle

STORE TILES FLAT AND CONDITION THEM PROPERLY PRIOR TO INSTALLATION. Never store the tiles upright. Stack the boxes of tiles (or loose tiles) on a flat surface with the edges of the boxes flush to one another. Unconditioned tiles, improper storage or overhanging edges will distort the shape and size of the tiles and cause difficulty when installing. Tiles may vary up to 1/32" when conditioned. These variations will not negatively affect installation if conditioned tiles are installed in accordance with these instructions. Size variation can be much greater if the air temperature and slab temperature are not as specified.

Tools

NOTE: RUBBER MALLETS DO NOT WORK

- Dead-blow hammer (21 to 42 oz) available from SelecTech or at hardware stores
- Utility knife and straight edge. *(Required)*
- Carpenter's square. *(Required)*
- Chalk line *(Required)*
- Tape Measure *(Required)*
- Table saw or circular saw (for making multiple straight cuts).
- **(Safety devices must be in place and Manufacturer's instructions and safety precautions must be observed at all time while using power equipment)**
- Alternative for straight cuts: A 20" or larger, tile cutter (optional but highly recommended). These are cost effective on large jobs. Recommended brand is Bullet Tools, 20" or 26" cutter shear. www.bullettools.com
- Sharpie or similar marker to mark tile for cutting
- 1/4" Spacers
- Jig saw, orbital or similar cutting tool for irregular cuts. Use a medium tooth finishing blade *(Recommended)*

WARNING: Appropriate caution and procedures must be used if removing a preexisting resilient floor covering. Many older vinyl sheets, floor tile or asphaltic floor coverings contain asbestos that is not readily identifiable. Removal of these materials must comply with various federal, state and local regulations pertaining to the removal of in-place asbestos. Do not sand, dry sweep, dry scrape, drill, saw, bead blast or pulverize any such existing product(s) unless you are certain they do not contain asbestos.

Preparation

KEEP TEMPERATURE OF THE ROOM, SUBFLOOR, AND TILE AT A MINIMUM OF 65 °F (18°C) TO A MAXIMUM OF 85°F (29°C) FOR AT LEAST 48 HOURS PRIOR TO INSTALLATION. IF THE TILES HAVE BEEN SHIPPED IN EXTREME WEATHER CONDITIONS, UNDER 40°F (4°C) OR OVER 95°F THE CONDITIONING TIME SHOULD BE A MINIMUM OF 72 HOURS.

- Remove all debris. Sweep and vacuum as necessary.
- Scrape off old adhesive. The surface does not have to be perfect but do remove large clumps of adhesive (> 1/16" high) (See WARNING above concerning asbestos containing products)
- Remove moldings or cove base. You will reinstall old moldings/cove base or install new ones over the floor after completion.
- Repair any major surface imperfections (cracks over 3/8") sharp height transitions, or voids in the subfloor.
- If necessary undercut door frames to allow tiles to fit underneath. (Instructions below)

Tile Orientation

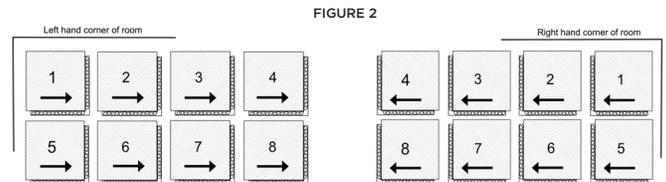
The hidden interlock design of **FreeStyle** requires that the tiles *must always* be installed in the same rotational direction and with edges and corners in line with each other. Trying to install otherwise will damage the tiles.

Interlocking Tiles

Prior to interlocking a tile, make sure it is properly aligned with the adjoining tile(s) and that the interlocks and the floor are free of debris. Align the corners and interlocks of each tile, placing a "Finished Edge" over the "Interlock Extension". Push down on the tile with the heel of your hand until you feel and see the tile has seated on the adjacent tile at the corner. Gradually work along the edge of the interlock tapping firmly with the dead-blow hammer until the edge is fully interlocked.

IF TILES ARE NOT INTERLOCKING WITH RELATIVE EASE RECHECK FOR PROPER ROTATION AND ALIGNMENT BY REMOVING THE TILE AND STARTING THE INTERLOCK ENGAGEMENT WITH THE HEEL OF YOUR HAND AGAIN BEFORE TAPPING JOINT TOGETHER.

CONTINUING TO HIT IMPROPERLY ALIGNED TILES WILL DAMAGE THE LIE

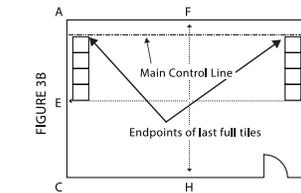
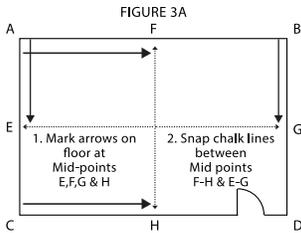


Planning Your Tile Layout

Like all tile products, layout planning begins by finding the center of the room or area to be covered and establishing lines to guide your layout. Unlike ceramic or vinyl tile products, for much easier and efficient installation FreeStyle should be installed starting in a corner of the room with the Finished Edges (See Figure 1) facing the walls. Use the steps outlined below to establish Control Lines and the Starting Point for your installation. Using these methods will provide an installation with balanced cut rows along each wall. Start the process along your longest straightest wall. Determine which corner will be your starting point. Do not start in a corner with a doorway. **FAILURE TO CAREFULLY MAINTAIN A STRAIGHT LINE ON THE FIRST ROW OF THE INSTALLATION WILL CAUSE DIFFICULTY IN THE INSTALLATION, PARTICULARLY IN LARGE AREAS.**

Establish Midlines and Midpoint of Room (FIGURE 3A)

- Measure from point A to B. Record that measurement and divide it by 2
- Starting at Point A, measure to find the halfway point on wall AB.
- Mark that Midpoint with an arrow, as accurately as possible. (See Point F)
- Repeat Steps 1 & 2 along wall CD.
- Snap a chalk line between these points, shown as line FH.
- Repeat the process to find the midpoints on wall AC and wall BD.
- Snap a chalk line between these points, shown as line EG in Figure 2

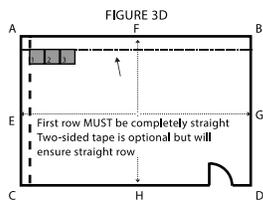


Establish Control Lines and Starting Point (FIGURE 3B & 3C)

- Starting at Midline EG along Wall AC lay full tiles as shown to the point where a full tile will not fit.
- Carefully mark a the point at the Finished Edge of the last tile. Note: You must mark that line at the Finished Edge of the tile, not at the edge of the Interlock Extensions. (See FIGURE 1)
- You may either repeat the process, laying tiles along the opposite wall or multiply the number of full tiles by 18.5. Measure that length from the Midline to the wall and mark that point along the opposite wall.
- Snap a chalk line between these two points. This is the Main Control Line for your installation.
- Repeat the process along the other walls to determine the number of full tiles. That chalk line will be your Second Control Line.
- The corner formed where the Main and Second Control Lines meet is the Start Point for your installation.

Install The Control Row (FIGURE 3D)

- It is essential to keep the first row straight on the Control Line. This will keep the installation square and ensure easy installation. Failure to do so may cause gapped or excessively tight seams as you add rows.
- Install ROW 1 carefully along the Main Control Line. Before starting ROW 2, CLOSELY check ROW 1 and adjust as needed to keep it on the Main Control line
- Install a 2nd row.

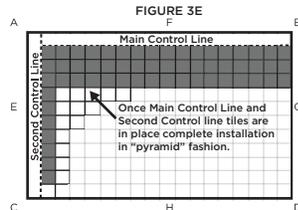
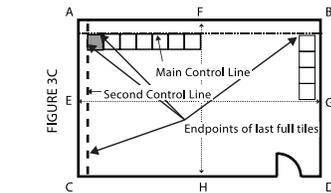


Complete Field Tile Installation (FIGURE 3E)

Once you have installed 2 or 3 rows assemble a number of tiles along the Second Control Line, perpendicular to the Main Control Line. Check for squareness of the assembled tiles. Then complete installation of the field tiles in a "pyramid" pattern as shown in Figure 3E. This will help maintain square during the installation. Continue to add tiles along the Second Control Line and then fill field tiles until field tile installation is complete.

Simpler Installation

Edge cuts should not be smaller than six inches. Once you have established your Control Lines, if you find that the distance between either of the Control Lines to the wall is less than 6" you may want to begin with a full tile close the wall. In this case, or if you simply prefer the simpler installation with less cutting, follow all of the steps above.



You will still establish two Control Lines but one or both of them will be close to the wall (leaving at least a 1/8" gap between the tile edge and the wall for expansion). In this case measure from each of the points marking the end of the last full tile to the wall. Snap a chalk line along the wall. This is your starting line.

Measuring, Cutting, and Laying Cut Tiles Around Perimeter



Create a Template to Cut Edge Tiles

- Create an End Cut Template by cleanly removing the interlock extension from one tile.
- Beginning in a corner, place a loose tile over the installed corner tile.
- Line up the edges precisely.
- **Be sure the interlocks are oriented the same way as the installed tile.**
- Lay the End Cut Template over the loose tile

to be cut. Butt the template against the wall, placing 1/4" spacers near the corners (you may use a "slice" of a tile to achieve a 5/16" space). Line up the other edges and mark a line where the template meets the loose tile.

- Remove the marked tile and cut along the drawn line.
- If required, gently lift the edge of the "field tile" and slide the cut tile Interlock Extension under the "field tile". Butt tiles together and align corners. Seat the tile corner with the heel of your hand. Use a dead blow hammer to finish seating the edges. Check to ensure minimum expansion space along the wall.
- Continue using this method around the perimeter of the room until all tiles are installed.

Door Jamb

For the best finish you will need to cut the door jamb moldings so the tiles fit freely under them. This is easily done with a "door jamb" or "undercut" saw available at most hardware stores. Cut the jamb using a tile to establish the proper cutting height. Note: In some cases you will also have to cut the door bottom due to inadequate clearance. Your door should not rub anywhere on the tile when it is open and shut.

Detail Cuts

The thickness of FreeStyle makes it difficult to cut by hand. A jigsaw is recommended for more detailed cuts. Heating the tile with a heat gun also makes it easier to cut.

Settling Seams

Due to the tight seam design, tiles may initially pop up during installation. For best interlock joint seating, roll over all joints with a roller, applying pressure to the joints as you roll across them. You may repeat this process after the floor has had a chance to "settle in" for a few days. You may also go back over the floor re-tapping any high points with the dead-blow hammer.

Transitions and Relief Joints

To transition to the sub-floor or to adjacent flooring install a transition piece. SelecTech has a number of transitions and edge piece accessories available for most situations. See [FreeStyle Technical Bulletin O60114-FreeStyle Standard Reducers and Transitions](#) for recommended options.

Rolling Loads

Heavy rolling loads in commercial environments can cause the tiles to compress and creep, and come unsnapped along traffic areas and particularly at turning or pivot points. To prevent this apply a releasable adhesive (Parabond M5080, or equal) in these areas only. Follow adhesive manufacturer's instructions for application. Alternatively, apply a grid of a 2-sided tape such as 1" Ultrastik (available from SelecTech) or equal in the high traffic areas.

Grounding FreeStyle ESD

It is recommended that a copper grounding wire be placed at least every 1,000 square feet throughout the installation. FreeStyle Grounding kits can be ordered from SelecTech. For additional information on grounding: visit www.staticstop.com

Care, Maintenance, and Additional Information

For detailed care and maintenance, warranty information, grounding instructions for ESD tiles, and other technical guidelines, visit the tech documents page on our websites:

- For Freestyle and FreeStyle Bioblock visit www.freestyleflooring.com
- For FreeStyle ESD, ESD Plus and Designer Series visit www.staticstop.com

For unusual conditions or extraordinary installations contact SelecTech for guidance (877-738-4537)