URBAN
COLLECTION

COMMERCIAL MODULAR FLOORING

# Professional Carpet Tile Installation Guide - New Zealand

This guide outlines the minimum requirements and recommended installation practices for Urban Collection modular carpet tiles.

Correct installation is essential to support product performance, appearance retention and serviceability, and to preserve applicable product warranties.

It applies to commercial square and plank formats with standard PVC and integrated cushion backings.

Read this guide with the current product technical specification, carton markings and the approved adhesive manufacturer's written instructions.

## Successful installation sequence

1 **VERIFY**
Product, colour, batch, format and layout

2 **TEST**
Site conditions, moisture and substrate

3 **PREPARE**
A clean, sound, smooth, flat and dry surface

4 **SET OUT**
Square working lines and balanced perimeter cuts

5 **INSTALL**
Approved adhesive, arrows and stepped placement

6 **PROTECT**
Keep the floor clear until ready for service

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# 1. Scope and responsibilities

This guideline applies to Urban Collection modular carpet tiles used in interior commercial installations. It is written to accommodate square tiles, plank formats, PVC backings and integrated cushion backings without tying the installation method to a particular range name.

Installation must be completed by a suitably trained flooring professional in accordance with the relevant editions of AS/NZS 2455.1 and AS/NZS 2455.2, Floor NZ best practice, the project specification, the current product technical specification and the approved adhesive system.

> **i** **ORDER OF PRECEDENCE** If this general guide differs from the current product technical specification or the approved adhesive manufacturer's written instructions, stop and obtain written clarification from Urban Flooring before proceeding.

# 2. Before materials reach the floor

### 2.1 Confirm the site is ready

- The building is enclosed, weather-tight and free from active leaks or rising damp.
- Permanent heating, ventilation and air-conditioning systems are operational where applicable, and conditions are stable.
- Wet trades, sanding, painting and overhead work are complete. The area is clean, well lit and unavailable to other trades during installation.
- Door clearances, edge trims, access panels, floor outlets, stairs, ramps and transitions have been coordinated before set-out.
- The installer has reviewed site access, manual-handling requirements, dust control and the safety data sheets for all installation products.

### 2.2 Receive, store and condition the tiles

- Check the delivered product code, colour, format, backing, quantity and carton labels against the order before opening cartons.
- Keep cartons dry and supported on a flat surface. Do not lean tiles against walls or stack cartons more than 10 high.
- Condition the tiles in the installation area for at least 48 hours at 15-30°C. Keep relative humidity within the adhesive manufacturer's limits and not above 65% unless the current product instructions state a tighter range.
- Open or loosen cartons sufficiently for the product to reach room conditions while keeping all tiles flat and protected.
- Use one manufacturing batch within each continuous area. If more than one batch is unavoidable, agree the transition location before installation and keep batches clearly separated.

> **!** **DO NOT INSTALL** Stop if the product, colour, batch, backing, dimensions or visual appearance is not as expected. Keep all labels and contact Urban Flooring before adhesive is applied. Installed material is substantially harder to assess or replace.

# 3. Substrate assessment and preparation

The finished surface must be clean, sound, smooth, flat and dry. Preparation is not complete until each of these conditions has been verified and recorded.

| | |
|---|---|
| **Clean** | Mechanically remove dust, laitance, curing compounds, paint, sealers, oil, polish, loose adhesive and other contaminants that could weaken the bond. Vacuum thoroughly. |
| **Sound** | Repair cracks, weak screed, loose boards, movement and friable material. The substrate must support normal service loads without crumbling, flexing or releasing. |
| **Smooth** | Remove ridges, trowel marks and abrupt changes. Fill joints, holes and depressions with a compatible repair or smoothing system. |
| **Flat** | Check with a straightedge. Use the current product tolerance where supplied; otherwise aim for no more than 3 mm deviation beneath a 3 m straightedge for modular tile work. |
| **Dry** | Test the substrate with an appropriate calibrated method. Visible dryness is not a moisture test. |

### 3.1 Moisture and alkalinity

- Concrete: as a general New Zealand benchmark, readings should not exceed 75% relative humidity unless a higher-moisture installation system has been specifically approved in writing for the substrate, backing and adhesive.
- Timber: moisture content should generally be 16% or less and sufficiently close to the expected in-service condition to avoid later movement.
- Test at enough locations to represent the whole project, including perimeter zones, repaired areas and known moisture risks. Record the instrument, method, date and readings.
- Check concrete surface alkalinity where required by the adhesive supplier. The result must fall within the approved adhesive and preparation system limits.
- Where results exceed the approved limits, stop. Do not rely on extended adhesive open time or a heavier application to manage moisture. Use a documented moisture-control system or allow further drying.

### 3.2 Substrate-specific notes

- Concrete and screeds: allow adequate curing, remove weak surface material and use compatible primers, repairs and smoothing compounds as required.
- Timber and sheet substrates: secure movement, replace damaged panels, sand high joints and overlay where necessary to provide a stable, smooth surface. Do not bridge unsupported joints.
- Raised access floors: keep carpet-tile joints offset from panel joints where practicable, prevent preparation products or adhesive entering panel joints, and preserve future panel access.
- Existing resilient finishes: remove loose, cushioned, damaged or contaminated coverings. Retention of any existing finish requires written approval of the complete substrate and adhesive system.

! **LEGACY MATERIALS** Do not grind, sand or mechanically disturb suspect old flooring, backing or adhesive until asbestos and other hazardous-material risks have been assessed by a competent person.

### 3.3 Underfloor heating

Obtain confirmation that the product and adhesive system are suitable. Switch the system off at least 48 hours before installation while maintaining the room by other means. After the adhesive has cured, restart gradually and do not allow the floor surface to exceed 28°C or any lower limit stated for the approved system.

# 4. Adhesive and fixing system

Use only a pressure-sensitive or tackifier adhesive currently approved by Urban Flooring for the tile backing, substrate, site conditions and intended use. Approval of one adhesive for one backing does not make it suitable for every modular carpet product.

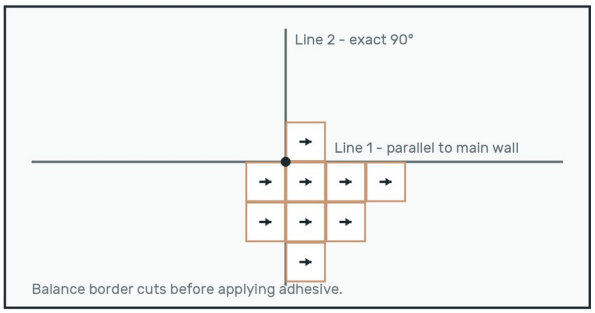
1. **Confirm the system.** Identify the backing and obtain the current written recommendation for adhesive, primer, moisture treatment, smoothing compound and cleaning method.
2. **Prepare exactly as specified.** Prime porous or absorbent surfaces where required and allow primers or smoothing compounds to dry fully.
3. **Apply a uniform coat.** Use the specified roller or trowel and spread rate. Cover the complete installation area, including perimeter cuts; avoid puddles, ridges and missed zones.
4. **Observe open time.** Install only at the adhesive stage stated for the approved backing. Depending on the system, this may be a fully aired tacky film or an earlier partially aired stage.
5. **Work within limits.** Spread only an area that can be covered inside the adhesive working time. Keep traffic, dust and debris out of the coated zone.
6. **Secure contact.** Press tiles evenly and roll the installation in the direction, sequence and roller weight required by the adhesive system. Re-roll if instructed.

! **ADHESIVE IS SYSTEM-SPECIFIC** Do not choose application tool, open time or roller weight from a different project. Standard and cushion backings can require different placement conditions even when both are described as carpet tiles.

# 5. Set-out

- Measure the actual space and compare it with the quantity and design plan before applying adhesive.
- Establish the primary line parallel to the longest or most visually important wall. Form a second line at exactly 90° using a laser, large square or the 3-4-5 method; do not assume walls are square.
- Dry-lay modules from the intersection toward the perimeter. Adjust the grid to balance opposing cuts and avoid narrow pieces; perimeter cuts should be at least half a module where practical.
- Coordinate lines through doorways, corridors and around fixed objects so that separated areas rejoin without stepping or misalignment.
- Agree any unavoidable compromises caused by out-of-square walls before installation begins.

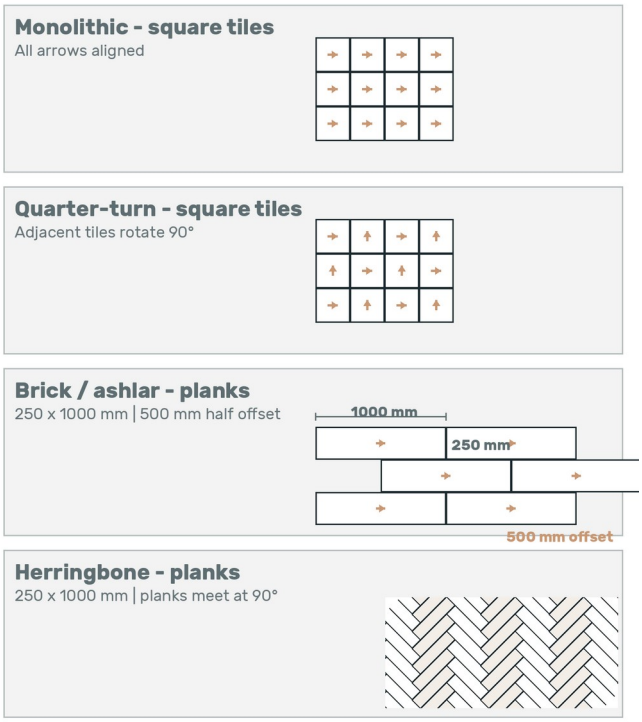
## Set-out and stepped placement



# 6. Direction and layout

Directional arrows on the back of each module control the finished appearance. Before adhesive is applied, confirm the approved layout from the current technical specification, carton or project schedule and dry-lay a representative area under normal lighting.

## Common layout principles




**ARROWS OVERRIDE ASSUMPTIONS** The diagrams explain common principles only. Use the approved direction for the product being installed. Alternative patterns require written confirmation before work begins.

### 6.1 Brick / ashlar layout - 250 x 1000 mm planks

- Run the long edge of each plank parallel to the primary working line and dry-lay from the starting point to the perimeter before applying adhesive.
- For a regular brick layout, offset each alternate row by 500 mm - exactly half a plank length.
- Mark an additional control line 500 mm from and parallel to the starting line so the half-plank stagger can be checked as work progresses.
- Where a random ashlar layout is specified, agree the offset sequence during the dry lay and maintain it consistently. Do not change the sequence after adhesion begins.
- Install the first complete row accurately, add parallel control lines across larger areas and check plank ends and long joints regularly for drift.

### 6.2 Herringbone layout - 250 x 1000 mm planks

Herringbone requires more detailed set-out than straight or offset layouts. Confirm that the pattern is approved for the product and allow for the additional perimeter cutting and material required before installation begins.

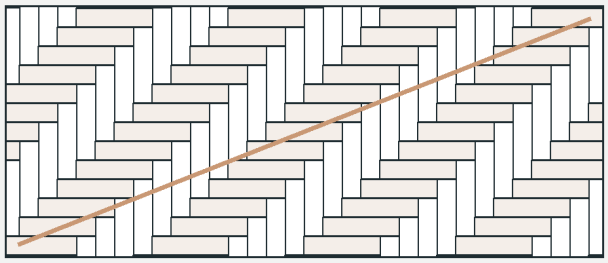
- Locate the room centre and establish a primary datum parallel to the longest or most visually important wall, with an exact perpendicular line through the starting point.
- Confirm whether the design calls for diagonal herringbone, with plank edges parallel and perpendicular to the room walls, or a 45° herringbone with the complete V pattern rotated across the room.
- For diagonal herringbone, establish a 45° set-out line through corresponding repeat points. For 45° herringbone, pass the room centreline through the repeating V tips. Every short-to-long plank junction remains exactly 90°.
- Dry-lay several complete pattern repeats toward each perimeter. Shift the complete set-out where necessary to maximise cut sizes, avoid narrow pieces and balance the pattern on opposing sides.
- Begin from the approved room datum and use full planks to establish the selected pattern. Maintain alignment to the control lines rather than using an out-of-square wall as the pattern datum.
- Maintain a consistent two-direction backing-arrow sequence created by the right-angle layout. If the approved arrow direction is incompatible with herringbone, stop and select an approved layout.
- Add parallel control lines through matching pattern points as the installation expands, and repeatedly check the centreline, plank ends and right-angle intersections for drift.

## Herringbone pattern set-out

250 x 1000 mm planks | confirm the specified orientation before installation

**A Diagonal herringbone**

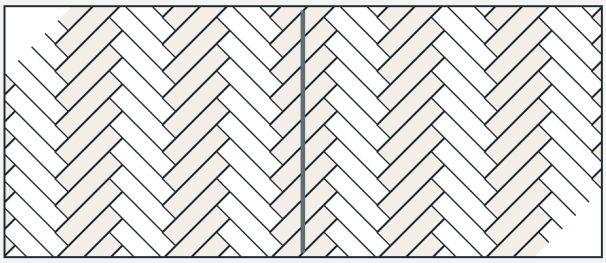
Plank edges remain square to the room



45° set-out line through corresponding repeat points
Dry lay complete repeats toward every perimeter.

**B 45° herringbone**

Continuous V pattern centred on the room datum



Room centreline through the repeated V tips
Every short-to-long junction remains exactly 90°.

WEBSITE DIRECTION SYMBOL Arrows show the two perpendicular plank directions. Follow the approved backing-arrow sequence.

! **VERIFY THE COMPLETE SET-OUT** Do not apply adhesive until several full pattern repeats have been dry laid, the selected control line passes through the correct repeat points and the perimeter cuts are balanced. Small set-out errors become increasingly visible across the installation.

### 6.3 Appearance at tile joints

Carpet tiles are modular products, so joints may remain visible, particularly in plain colours, level loop textures and strong side lighting. Correct arrow direction, balanced set-out, careful edge handling and consistent hand pressure reduce unnecessary contrast but do not make the floor seamless.

## 7. Placing the tiles

- Begin at the intersection of the working lines, not with a full tile against a wall.
- Lay outward in a stepped or pyramid formation so each new module is checked against two established edges.
- Fit edges neatly by hand using light, even pressure. Do not use a knee kicker or force modules together; compression can cause peaking, distortion or gradual loss of alignment.
- Keep face yarn clear of the joint. Lift and reposition a module if yarn is trapped rather than pushing the edges harder.
- Check squareness and module alignment frequently against the grid. Run fingers across joints and inspect corner points. Correct any drift immediately before it compounds across the area.
- If a module is lifted, ensure its backing returns flat, remains clean and is reset into adhesive that still meets the approved bonding requirements. Reapply adhesive where instructed.

### 7.1 Cutting and perimeter work

- Mark accurately and cut from the backing with a sharp, suitable blade and straightedge. Protect hands, finished surfaces and face yarn.
- Fit cuts neatly without forcing them into place. Apply adhesive fully beneath perimeter pieces to prevent movement during vacuuming.
- Use approved transition profiles at exposed edges, changes in level and interfaces with other finishes.
- Do not bridge structural or movement joints. Continue the joint through the floor covering and use the specified joint-cover system.

## 8. Special installation details

### 8.1 Stairs

Install on stairs only when the current technical specification confirms suitability and the project detail provides a compliant stair-nosing system. Cut separate pieces for the tread and riser; do not bend a stiff modular backing around the nosing. Fully adhere each piece and finish exposed edges with a suitable profile.

### 8.2 Raised access floors

Maintain access-panel function. Avoid locating carpet-tile joints directly over panel joints where practical, use a controlled adhesive application and record the tile orientation before panels are lifted. Refit uplifted modules only when they lie flat and can be secured in accordance with the approved adhesive system.

## 9. Completion and protection

- Complete the required rolling and inspect the entire area under good lighting. Correct loose edges, trapped yarn, pattern errors, adhesive contamination and alignment issues before handover.
- Remove installation waste and vacuum with equipment suitable for commercial carpet tiles. Do not wet-clean a newly installed floor.
- Keep foot traffic, wheeled loads, heavy furniture and other trades off the floor for the period specified by the adhesive manufacturer; where no longer period is stated, allow at least 24 hours.
- Protect the finished floor with a clean, breathable, non-staining material. Do not place self-adhesive film directly on the carpet or trap moisture beneath impervious protection.
- Use suitable boards to distribute loads when moving heavy furniture after cure. Do not drag items across the floor.
- Restart underfloor heating gradually only after the approved waiting period and adhesive cure.
- Store spare modules flat, dry and clearly labelled with product, colour and batch information.

## 10. Handover and ongoing use

Provide the client with the current Urban Collection Care & Maintenance guidance. Use chair mats wherever the current product technical specification requires them; they are strongly recommended beneath chairs with castors to preserve appearance. Establish an entry-matting, vacuuming, spot-cleaning and periodic maintenance programme appropriate to the traffic level.

> **i** **NEED CLARIFICATION?** Pause the installation and contact Urban Flooring at info@urbancollection.co.nz before proceeding. Retain carton labels, site readings and photographs of the affected area.

# 11. Installer checklist and project record

| | INSTALLER COMPLETION CHECK |
|---|---|
| ☐ | Product, colour, format, backing, quantity and carton labels checked. |
| ☐ | One batch allocated to each continuous area, or batch transition agreed and recorded. |
| ☐ | Tiles conditioned flat for at least 48 hours within the required site conditions. |
| ☐ | Substrate is clean, sound, smooth, flat and dry; preparation is complete. |
| ☐ | Concrete or timber moisture results recorded and within the approved system limits. |
| ☐ | Concrete alkalinity checked where required by the adhesive supplier. |
| ☐ | Approved adhesive, primer and preparation products confirmed for the backing and substrate. |
| ☐ | Primary and perpendicular working lines verified; perimeter cuts balanced. |
| ☐ | Approved layout and backing-arrow direction confirmed by dry lay. |
| ☐ | For plank layouts, the 500 mm brick offset or herringbone orientation, control line and two-direction arrow sequence were verified. |
| ☐ | Tiles installed in stepped formation without force; alignment checked throughout. |
| ☐ | Perimeter cuts, transitions, movement joints, access panels and stairs completed correctly. |
| ☐ | Required rolling completed; adhesive contamination and visible defects corrected. |
| ☐ | Floor protected and traffic restrictions communicated to the client and other trades. |
| ☐ | Care, maintenance, spare-tile and chair-mat requirements handed over. |

## Project record

| | |
|---|---|
| **Project / site** | |
| **Installation area** | |
| **Product code / colour** | |
| **Batch / dye lot** | |
| **Substrate and moisture results** | |
| **Adhesive / primer / smoothing system** | |
| **Layout and arrow direction** | |
| **Installer / company** | |
| **Completion date** | |

## Technical framework

*This guideline should be read with the relevant editions of AS/NZS 2455.1 and AS/NZS 2455.2, Floor NZ Best Practice Guidelines for Carpet Floor Coverings - Planning and Installation, the current Urban Collection technical and care information, the project specification, and the installation-product manufacturers' current data sheets.*