



## Stretch-In Installation Procedures for Carpets with Synthetic Backing

Synthetic secondary backed carpet such as ActionBac can be installed by stretching in over cushion with tack strip. It must be stretched 1% to 1-1/2% in the width and length, with a power stretcher. Knee kickers are for positioning carpet and not intended for stretching carpet. Forth Surfaces does not recommend the use of the stretcher hook, stinger or spike to be used in any way during the stretching process.

### FLOOR PREPARATION

The floor must be clean, dry, and free of dirt and debris. All indentations or projection in the subfloor that may telegraph through the cushion should be repaired. Any damaged or missing boards on wood subfloors should be repaired. A minimum of 18" of ventilated air space is needed between the floor joists and the ground. Existing resilient tile or sheet vinyl should be fastened securely to the floor. Any loose ceramic, terrazzo or marble, should be re-adhered. All broken or missing tiles should be replaced or filled using a Portland based patching compound, and all grout lines should be leveled.

### CONDITIONING

Dry lay the carpet and allow to condition, the temperature must be maintained between 65 F and 95 F, and the humidity between 10% and 65% for at least 48 hours prior to, and 48 hours after the installation.

### TACK STRIP

For commercial installation, architectural or commercial grade tackless strip (3 rows of pins) must be used. Double strips of type "C" tackless can be used. The gully between the wall and tackless strip should be slightly less than the thickness of the carpet. Tack strip can be nailed into wooden subfloors, however concrete surfaces may require that the holes be drilled and anchors or screws be used to secure the strips to the floor.

### CUSHION

The proper type of cushion is key to achieving a proper installation. An improper cushion can result in buckling and wrinkling of the installed carpet over time. The cushion selected should meet all requirements for the specific carpet used to prevent voiding applicable warranties. The thickness of the cushion should not exceed 3/8 of an inch. The density of the cushion should be a minimum of 16 lbs. Synthetic fiber underlay should be 40 to 60 oz in weight per square yard.



Cushion seams should be installed at right angles to the carpet seams or staggered at least six inches from the carpet seams. The cushion should be glued or stapled around the perimeter of all tack strips and along all seams.

## **CARPET LAYOUT**

When cutting the carpet into sufficient lengths cover the area to be carpeted, allow enough material to properly match the patterns. Examine each breath for pattern size, repeat and any visual concerns before starting the installation. All full width PermaLoc and ActionBac carpets have a directional arrow on the back approximately two feet from the selvage, along one side of the carpet. The arrow indicates the pile direction. All carpet being seamed together should have the pile running in the same direction.

## **CUTTING SEAMS**

Use a screwdriver or awl to separate the rows of yarn and cut with a cushion back or loop pile cutter. The cutter should be inserted so that the blade is close to the seam edge, with the exception of carpet with a side sweep. "Side sweep" is if the face pile sweeps down and to the side. On the seam edge with the face pile sweeping into the seam, insert the cutter so the blade is on the opposite side of the cutter than the pile. On the seam edge where the pile sweeps away from the seam edge, insert the cutter so the blade is close to the seam edge. This procedure will help prevent cutting the tips of the pile off. The same procedure can be used for cutting across the breath of carpet, being careful to not cut the face yarns. Always make sure to trim each side so that you will achieve a pattern match when installing a patterned carpet.

## **SEALING**

After the seam edges are trimmed properly, a latex or thermoplastic type seam sealer must be applied to both cut seam edges of the backing materials and allowed to dry before adhering the two carpet edges together. Edges placed up to and into transitional moldings or thresholds will require sealing to prevent raveling.

## **TRANSITIONS**

All carpet products must be properly protected when transitioning to other floor covering or exposed stopping points. The use of transition molding to protect the edge is required when the carpet is higher than the hard surface. If the adjacent flooring is slightly taller than the carpet, seam sealer along the edge may be used to prevent edge ravel over time.



## SEAMING

A premium heat tape with a low melting point is recommended. A seam iron with a heat shield should be used. Use a power stretcher to align pattern. Construct the seam on a firm surface and run the iron in the same direction as the face pile, and never run the iron against the face pile.

## PATTERN MATCHING

It should be understood carpet is a textile and cannot be made to exact specifications. All pattern carpet is subject to certain manufacturing tolerances, therefore a perfect pattern

match cannot be guaranteed. Patterned carpet must be cut with the row cut method, dry laid and checked for side-match and any visual defects. Tolerances for patterned carpet are: • Bow: One percent of the width of the carpet 1.5 inches across the 12 foot width. • Skew (Bias): 1.5 inches across the 12 foot width • Pattern Elongation: 2 inches in 12 feet in the length. If you are having trouble matching a pattern, stop and call the mill at once.

## STRETCHING

All carpet must be stretched in with a power stretcher. A carpet kicker is not a stretching tool it is a positioning tool. Tufted carpet should be stretched 1 to 1-1/2 percent of the length and width. Failure to apply the proper stretch can result in buckling and wrinkling of the installed carpet.

## Suggested Tools and Materials

- Razor Blade Knife
- Top cutter
- Seam sealer
- Premium seaming tape (3" or 6")
- Seaming iron with heat shield
- Knee kicker (to position carpet only)
- Power stretcher & crab stretch

## PROTECTING INSTALLED CARPET

Use plywood over carpet when heavy objects are moved within 48 hours after installation. Protective chair mats under chairs with casters are recommended, to protect face yarns from excessive wear. A non-staining building material paper should be placed over the carpet to protect it during construction activity to prevent staining and soiling. **DO NOT USE PLASTIC SHEETING AS IT WILL TRAP MOISTURE UNDER THE CARPET.**



## GENERAL COMMENTS

It is common industry knowledge that occasionally carpet may have to be re-stretched. This is especially true in environments where significant changes in humidity occur. Should buckling, wrinkling or some similar condition occur which affects the lay of the carpet, the problem can be remedied if handled in the proper way. The following Re-Stretching procedures should be followed.

## RE STRETCHING

It is recommended that all moveable furniture, fixtures, etc. be removed from the problem area, so that the carpet be released from the tackless strips, and that the carpet be

reinstalled according to the guidelines set forward in theses installation procedures, incorporating the correct tackless strips, pad, and the use of a power stretcher, as detailed. Forth Surfaces will not be responsible for any costs and the use of a power stretcher, as detailed.