

Suggested Adhesives for Direct Glue Down Installations

Many factors can contribute to the success (or failure) of a direct-glue down installation, such as site conditions (temperature, humidity, surface alkalinity, moisture, porosity, cleanliness, trowel size, adhesive open time, spread rate and transfer). Problems associated with any or all of these concerns which are addressed in the Carpet and Rug Institute's (CRI) Installation Standard, can manifest themselves into bubbles, edge curl, carpet shrinkage (or expansion), etc... In fact, lack of adhesive transfer, which can result from incorrect trowel size or spread rate, is considered to be two of the three leading causes of direct glue down failures.

Although proper processes and procedures cannot be overemphasized, of equal importance to the success of a direct-glue down installation (and the third leading cause of direct glue-down failures), is improper choice of the adhesive used. Here the CRI provides a limiting and simplifying guideline for inquiry and explanation, advocating parsimony over complexity by referring to "Latex" as the type of adhesive to use for the most common carpet backing systems. Unfortunately, you can mix an uninformed installer with a carpet backing system like unitary or enhancer, with the right amount of the wrong latex adhesive and you have the potential for a statistic. At some point during or immediately after this scenario the once secure installer's psyche can become skewed by the applied stress of a carpet that doesn't seem to want to stick to his favorite base grade adhesive, and a consumer who by then has reached an emotional state they may not ever recover from.

Fortunately, there are specialized grades of carpet adhesives that provide the necessary grab and hold properties required by the various backing systems now available in our industry. Considering this, the choice of adhesive to be used in any direct-glue down installation should be selected only after careful consideration has been given to the carpet backing system used and the intended end-use application.

There are many adhesive manufacturers who make a wide range of adhesives and other installation sundries for specific needs. Listed below are some examples of various grades of carpet adhesives suitable for the most common backings (including recommended trowel notch size and adhesive spread rates). Beaulieu recommends the use of carpet adhesives that have obtained The Carpet and Rug Institute's Green Label certification for low VOC emissions. It is important to provide necessary considerations regarding site conditions, and to be certain both carpet and adhesive are properly acclimated prior to installation.

Beaulieu recommends the use of carpet adhesives that have obtained The Carpet and Rug Institute's Green Label certification for indoor air quality or those adhesives that are identified by the manufacturer as a low-level VOC indoor air emission contributor.

WOVEN POLYPROPYLENE BACK (over all recommended indoor surfaces) premium grade multi purpose latex based adhesive. Trowel size: 1/8 x 1/8 x 1/8 V or U. Spread rate: 8-10 sq. yd. per one gallon.

AAT #275
Henry #356
Parabond #4099

Roberts #3300
XL Iron Stix and Life Span 800

OMNI LOC UNITARY & OMNI LOC GRAPHIC BACKING SYSTEM (UNITARY WITH WOVEN POLYPROPYLENE) (over all recommended indoor surfaces) ultra high, premium grade multi-purpose latex adhesive. Trowel size: 1/8 x 1/8 x 1/8 V or U. Spread rate: 8-10 sq yd per one gallon.

AAT #275
Henry #256
Parabond #4099

XL Platinum Stix and Titan
Roberts #3050

OMNI LOC LAMINATE & OMNI LOC ATTACHED CUSHION (over all recommended indoor surfaces) high premium grade multi-purpose latex adhesive. Trowel size: 3/32 x 3/32 x 3/32 V. Spread rate: 10-12 sq. yd. per one gallon.

AAT # 260, #275
Henry #256
Parabond #4099

XL Platinum Stix and Titan
Roberts #4099

HANDY BACK, KANGA BACK, NON SKID BACK (over all recommended indoor surfaces) high premium grade multi-purpose latex adhesive. Trowel size: 3/32 x 3/32 x 3/32 V. Spread rate: 10-12 sq. yd. per one gallon.

AAT #275
Henry #256
Parachem #4099 solvent free

XL Gold Stix Iron Stix
Roberts #3050

MARINE BACK, OUTDOOR UNITARY & OUTDOOR WOVEN POLYPROPYLENE (over all common outdoor surfaces) flammable or non-flammable solvent based or less tenacious water based latex adhesive. Marine Back Trowel size: 3/32 x 3/32 x 3/32 V. Spread rate: 10-12 sq. yd. Per one gallon. Unitary and Woven polypropylene: 1/8 x 1/8 x 1/8 V or U. Spread rate: 6-10 sq. yd. per one gallon.

AAT #383
Henry #263 solvent based
Henry 663 water based

Parabond #M-2850
Roberts # 6700 solvent free
XL Lifespan 1100

PRESSURE SENSITIVE "RELEASABLE" (for carpet cushion to subfloor double stick installations). Trowel size: 1/8 x 1/8 x 1/16 V. Spread rate: 10-12 sq. yd per one gal.

AAT #335
XL Stix 2230

Parabond #5080

WET SET ADHESIVES (commercial). Trowel size and spread rate based on carpet backing type.

AAT #295
Henry #451

Roberts #3300

WET LAID ADHESIVES (for working with patterned carpet). Trowel size and spread rate based on carpet backing type.

AAT #260
XL Platinum

Henry #451

SEAM SEALERS

AAT #125 Solvent based-direct glue down
AAT #181 Universal water based (direct glue down and tackless)
Henry #248 All commercial backings
Parabond #M-163 glue down-solvent based

Parabond #M-4263 solvent free glue down
Roberts #8502 latex based
Roberts #8415 glue down solvent
XL #6900 solvent free
Orcon – Weld lock for direct glue down latex

Mark Johnston