



Waterproof flooring has been around for many years. As with most products in the industry, this category is constantly evolving. These evolutions have changed how the product is constructed, features, benefits, and applications among many other things. Due to the many evolutions in the waterproof flooring category, it has become somewhat confusing to consumers and even retail sales people. It has become difficult to determine the difference from one type of Waterproof Floor to another. What is the difference between an LVT, Rigid, WPC, or an SPC?

We would like to show you the difference between the three most popular: Flexible LVT, WPC and SPC. We will explain applications, constructions, and features of each. We will also discuss marketing terms often used for this category. By the time you are done reading this, you will be an EXPERT!

First Let's begin with some important terms to help you navigate the descriptions and explanations, don't worry there won't be a quiz later.....

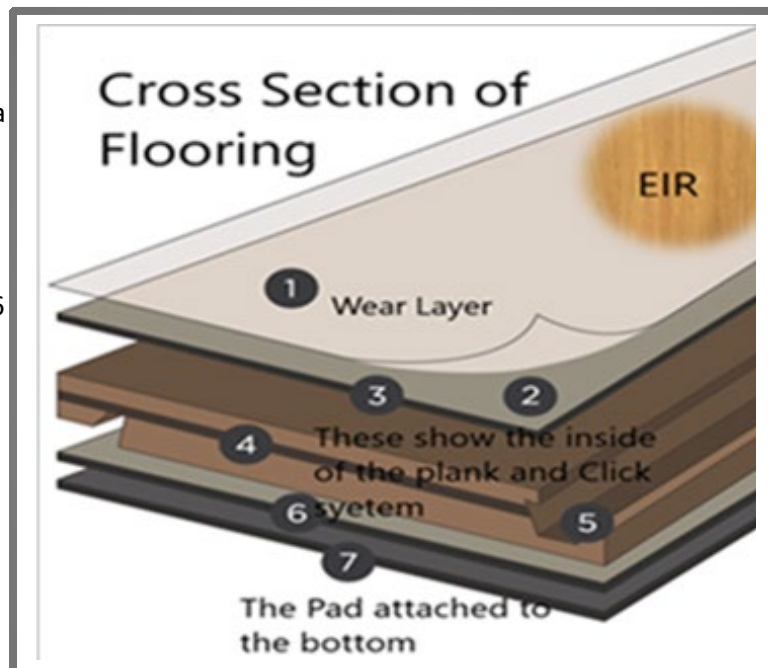


Direct Print- A direct print product simply means that the pattern is printed directly onto the core, instead of an actual print film.



ABA Construction- This method of construction uses balancing layers of vinyl above and below the core. This is the most dimensionally stable product available in the market.

Wear Layer: All waterproof floors have a wear layer. Typically, it will be either a 20 mil or 12mil. However, some very low price point products can have 8 or 6 mil wear layer. The higher the number the thicker the wear layer and the more wear and tear your floor can take.



EIR – Embossed In Register means that the flooring will have a texture in the wear layer to mimic that of real wood or stone. We showed here using a Wood grain.

Rigid – This is a marketing term created when WPC was invented. This term simply meant that the product was rigid in comparison to Flexible LVT. The term now is used for nearly anything other than Flexible LVT. It is recommended that you investigate the construction of your waterproof flooring to determine what construction the waterproof flooring you are selecting is, and what is best for your application. Looking at the diagram 2-6 are the construction to consider

Pad Attached – Indicates that there is a pad attached to the core. This pad will increase sound deadening and make the product softer under foot. Pad thickness will vary along with type of pad will vary.

Waterproof flooring began as what many know as Luxury Vinyl or LVT/LVP. LVT is simply an acronym for Luxury Vinyl Tile or LVP, Luxury Vinyl Plank. The term LVT or Luxury Vinyl now encompasses almost the entire category for some. However, flexible vinyl is very different from other waterproof floors. Flexible LVT is manufactured with layers and PVC, fiberglass, a print film, and a wear layer. It can come in a glue down or a click installation. The glue down products are mainly used in commercial applications to handle rolling loads, and excessive weight. The click version is primarily used residentially as a floating floor. The down side of Flexible LVT is that it will conform to the subfloor and show any imperfections. It also shrinks and swells more than most products in the category thereby limiting its applications. Because of its flexibility pad cannot be attached to these products making the sound and feel of these products very hollow.

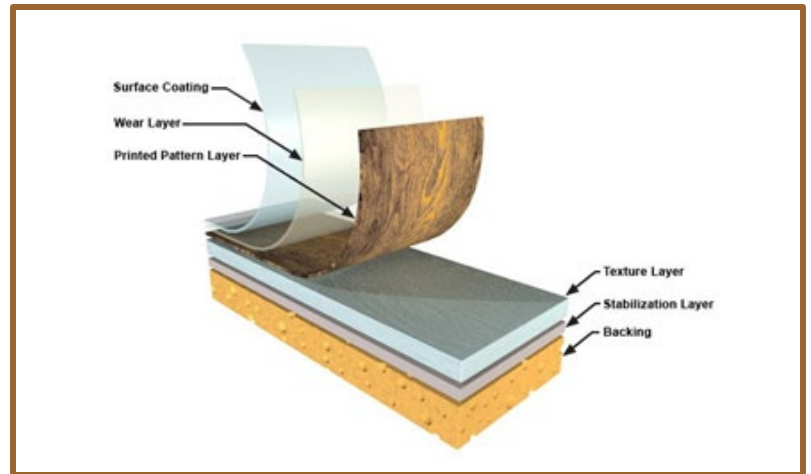


WPC

The second generation of Waterproof flooring is what we call WPC. It originally stood for Wood Polymer

Composite since it was constructed of vinyl and what was essentially sawdust. However, these days very few if any manufacturers are using sawdust. WPC is constructed using vinyl and air to produce the core. The print films, pad and balancing layers are then glued to backer to make up the product thickness. Using air to thicken the vinyl gives the product better sound, more inherent value, and more rigidity than Flexible LVT.

Because it is more rigid than LVT, often times these products can come with or without a pad attached. The downside of WPC is that it is not as dense as LVT or SPC. Since it has pockets throughout the core, it tends to shrink and swell with temperature changes. These products can be produced in both ABA and Direct Print.

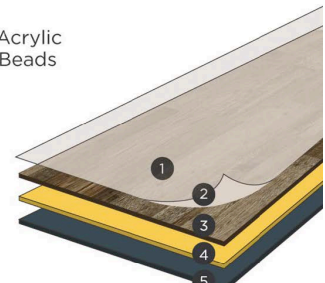


SPC

SPC is the third and latest generation of waterproof flooring. SPC stands for Stone Polymer Composite. During the manufacturing process the vinyl is mixed with stones to create its core. This core then is fused using very high heat to the balancing layers, print film, and wear layer.

High Density SPC Core

- 1 Two Coats of UV Cured Acrylic Enhanced with Ceramic Beads
- 2 Transparent Wear Layer with Deep Embossing
- 3 High Resolution Image Film
- 4 SPC Core
- 5 IXPE Foam Insulation Backing



By using a stone and vinyl combination in the core the end result is the most rigid product in the category. SPC's are also the densest products in the category often times exceeding 3000 psi. Because stone does not shrink and swell with temperature SPC is the most dimensionally stable product in the category as well. It can be used in cabins, 3 season rooms, and areas where you could only put tile or carpet in before. These products can be produced in both ABA and Direct Print.

Now that you are an expert, we would like to show you the Global GEM collection. You can see that they are the highest quality and built beautiful to last!



Our three collections of Coastal, Farmstead and the newest addition Heartland, have all the features and benefits a person could want. They even have great benefits that you may have not considered yet!



They are all manufactured with a 20 mill wearlayer, have EIR embossing. They are SPC that is ABA constructed and have an IXPE pad. This pad is a closed cell product that is completely waterproof and will not let mold grow on it, all the while, cushion your sounds from above and below.



Carolina Coastal is a value Global GEM product with a 12 mil Wearlayer, direct print SPC construction. It has the same great IXPE pad that you will demand on any floor that you buy with a beautiful array of colors inspired by the coast it is named after.



Now who is the expert? If you have any questions about what you read or would like to find a great retailer to look at our products you can email using the contact form on this website or info@globalgemflooring.com.

You can also call us at 833.436.3571