

Subfloor and grout lines

! All subfloors require some degree of preparation to ensure a problem-free flooring experience. Even though flooring installation is more DIY-friendly than ever before, it's still vital that a professional prepares the subfloor. This is a cost that simply must be factored into any flooring purchase. If you can't afford the preparation, you can't afford the floor!

Levelling is key to maintaining long-term aesthetics and avoid irritating squeaks and other visual changes over time. It is also crucial in avoiding installation failure. Subfloors must be checked as uneven surfaces may have been concealed by existing floor coverings.

Always include self-levelling or grinding in installation plans, as costs can triple post-installation due to unforeseen issues.

Rising damp is one of the major causes of flooring failures. Subfloors must also be moisture checked and a barrier applied if needed prior to flooring installation.



Note: Flat and level are not the same. A concreter or chippy only needs to get a surface flat, it's up to a flooring installer to make it level.

Subfloor

Thicker, more stable flooring products offer an added advantage by accommodating greater subfloor height variations. Those thinner than 7.5mm manage up to 2mm over 2m, while 7.5mm or thicker products handle variations of 4mm over the same distance.

Product / Depth	Grout Line Width
=>7.5mm	4mm over 2m
<7.5mm	2mm over 2m



Note: Vinyl products cannot be installed over grout lines.

Tiling

A similar guideline can be applied when assessing a tiled subfloor. Thicker, more stable flooring products can be installed over larger grout lines up to 8mm, while thinner products can only be installed on grout lines up to 4mm.

Product / Depth	Grout Line Width
Floating / =>7.5mm	8mm
Floating / <7.5mm	4mm
Direct Stick - Vinyl	0mm

