

Standard practice in the U.K. is to use a carpet underlay although many of our ranges have been developed to perform well without an underlay.

There are two methods of fitting a carpet if you have an underlay

1) Traditionally

This method is used in small areas, such as apartments and bedrooms, and a carpet is stretched over the top of the underlay and “tucked” into a space between the gripper, (often called the tackless gripper, not because it does not have “tacks”, but because you do not tack the carpet into the subfloor, or prepared holes in the sub floor which used to be filled with lead to anchor the tack)“this is a 5mm high strip of plywood and has sharp pins protruding through it which are pointing toward the skirting, (these pins can be of a different length (short: medium: long) the gap between the gripper should be the same as



the carpet thickness

If the gap is too big then with a soft underlay the carpet is compressed when walked on and it pulls out of the space. If the top of the underlay is higher than the top of the gripper, and especially if the underlay is soft and luxurious, the compression when walking on the underlay will tend to lift the carpet out from between the gripper and skirting.

Care must be taken not to increase the length of the pins, unless the construction of the carpet allows them to be used (Axminster or a hard twist pile.) A velvet finish in soft plush pile carpet will be an issue as the pins will not just be visible through the carpet, they will be felt if you walk on the carpet.

As illustrated above, the height of the underlay should match the height of the gripper, if this is not the case and the underlay is 11mm for instance you have to use a strip of plywood underneath to raise the gripper, This may also be necessary with doorbars. A firmer underlay is less of a problem and often the integrity of the firmer underlay lasts the life of the underlay.

2) **Double Stuck**

This method of installing was pioneered by Interfloor who make Durafit, and is used in corridors and large areas such as conference rooms.

Here a pressure sensitive adhesive (not a tackifier) is applied to the subfloor and allowed to dry.

The underlay is placed on top and it holds the underlay in place, it turns this lamination of the underlay gives better dimensional stability than a conventional installation, but allows you to peel back the underlay in the future.

Carpet

Ideal for border work designs.

**Double Stick Adhesive
STK900/400/300**

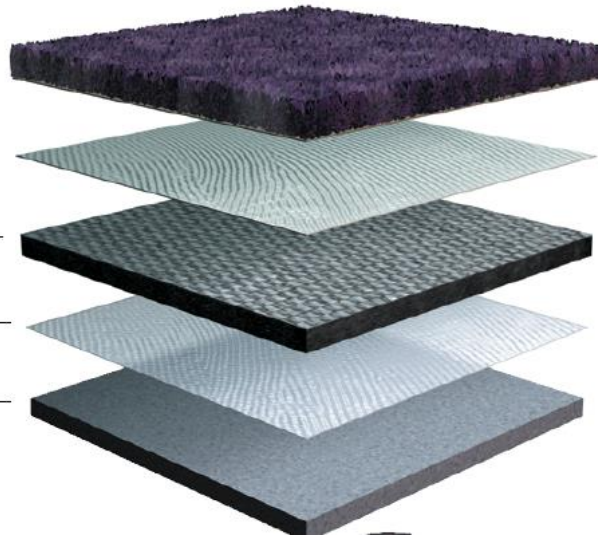
Permanently bonds carpet to underlay.

Durafit 650/500

STK 950 Tackifier Adhesive

High tack release adhesive.

Subfloor



The carpet is then permanently bonded to the top of the underlay and a glider is used to ensure that the carpet and the adhesive, is evenly spread and in contact with the back of the carpet.

Lano recommend that gripper is still fixed around the edge of the room.

The coating of a pressure sensitive adhesive on the subfloor is done with a roller, similar to applying an adhesive for the installation of carpet tiles.

Lano recommend a pressure sensitive adhesive to be used, such as F Ball's F 40. It is important that sufficient time is given to allow the adhesive to dry before the underlay is positioned. The carpet is then permanently bonded using F Ball's F 3, the size of the trowel and notches selected to match the profile of the back of the carpet. Please note that small print on the tub advises that gliding is repeated some 30 minutes/45 minutes later if impervious material is used. This should always be done especially when backing materials are non absorbent, not just with an impervious backing but also when man made fibres are used in an Action Bac (secondary backing) and the warp and Weft of a woven Axminster is polypropylene and polyester not jute.

N.B. Polypropylene is 0.04% moisture absorbent, jute is capable of absorbing 720% of it's weight.

Underlay types

Low Tog Rate (used with underfloor heating)

This gives you very few options as you need a combined tog rating of carpet and underlay around about 2.4 (this varies so check with your heating engineers)

Luxurious feel under foot

Specifiers tend to use a 11mm urethane foam underlay in apartments.

I would ask that a maximum of 9mm is used as this does not tend to give problems with the installation.

The softer the underlay then the higher the underlay is above the tackless gripper around the perimeter of the room.

This gripper is used to hold the carpet after "stretching the carpet" and it is important to create a "smooth edge" finish next to the skirting.

How-ever when trying to stretch a carpet when the height of the top of the plywood strip is well below that of the underlay, it becomes difficult to secure the carpet.

It is better to add an additional 5mm thick plain strip of plywood, placed under the 5mm gripper, ensuring that the bottom of the carpet matches the same level as the top of the pre-nailed plywood strip.

If the underlay is 11mm thick then the pins do not penetrate the back of the carpet correctly then the carpet could lift off the gripper.

Double Stuck

For many years I always used the thickest and most luxurious underlay when selling a carpet, and I often had to send my fitter back to re-stretch the carpet.

Constant walking on a soft underlay tends over the long term to stretch any carpet (or it pops off the pins).

I then started using a firmer underlay, made out of recycled car tyres (crumb rubber) The integrity of the underlay matched the life of the carpet, and no more call outs to re-stretch carpet.

The waffled rubber, with a luxurious feel flattened, and did not feel so luxurious after several years of use.

The double stuck method was introduced using a crumb rubber underlay, and, many long- term issues on the dimensional stability of the installation were cured. (carpet re-stretching and rucking)