BACKGROUND INFORMATION
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Use at Will

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Frequently Asked Questions
About the DRIcore® Engineered Wood Subfloor System

Q1. Why have a subfloor over concrete?

A1. A well-designed subfloor can make the floor more comfortable by warming it up, giving it a more resilient feel and managing the dampness that naturally occurs with many concrete floors.

All concrete floors, even those in new homes, will conduct cold from the ground underneath. In older homes, or any home not constructed with a vapor barrier *under* the concrete floor, moisture will naturally rise through porous concrete and condense on the surface. Compensating for the cold by covering the floor with an underpad and carpet creates a situation in which the concrete can't breathe. Moisture accumulates between the pad and the concrete and has no way to escape. This creates an environment in which mold can germinate, resulting in musty odors and poor indoor air quality.

Q2. Why is DRIcore the best subfloor system?

A2. DRIcore is engineered specifically for cold, damp basement environments. DRIcore panels are manufactured with a high-density polyethylene moisture barrier with molded-in "cleats" that raise the engineered wood core 1/4-inch off the concrete floor. The resulting space between the concrete and the DRIcore panels permits air to circulate, which helps to dry up condensation on the concrete and allows it to breathe. The airspace also keeps the wood from coming into contact with damp concrete and acts as a thermal break to prevent transmission of cold from concrete to subfloor. (DRIcore also recommends an appropriate, mechanical air-exchange system for better indoor air circulation and quality.)

Q3. Why is a conventional subfloor system flawed?

A3. A conventional subfloor system is time-consuming and awkward to install. The design (placing the 2 x 4's and insulation or a sheet of vapor barrier directly

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on top of the concrete) allows moisture to be trapped, which could cause mold growth. The resulting musty odors can creep into the floor system through the holes in the vapor barrier that are created when the subfloor is fastened to the concrete.

Q4. Why is DRIcore made with engineered wood panels?

A4. Engineered wood was selected as the core for DRIcore because of its unique expansion qualities. Temperature and humidity changes will cause the subfloor to expand or contract. The engineered wood panels will expand uniformly along all sides, which keeps the panels intact. Other wood products have a tendency to expand in only one direction, or have properties that will cause it to bend or cup when exposed to higher humidity levels.

Q5. Are DRIcore panels treated for moisture resistance?

A5. The top surface of each panel is treated with a waterproof acrylic sealant for added protection against humidity. The high-density polyethylene sheet bonded to the underside of the panel is the primary moisture barrier.

Q6. What is unique about the polyethylene sheet on the underside of the DRIcore panel?

A6. The high-density polyethylene sheet bonded to the underside of each panel is molded with tough, dual-wall cleats that function as a raised moisture barrier. Independent laboratory tests have confirmed that the polyethylene sheet does not support the growth of mold.

Q7. Are there any hazardous materials in DRIcore?

A7. No. DRIcore's engineered wood core does not contain any urea formaldehyde or other noxious chemicals. The polyethylene moisture barrier on the underside of each panel is a chemically inert and stable plastic used in many other home products.

Q8. What will happen to the DRIcore if the basement floods?

A8. DRIcore has been laboratory-tested and proven to remain intact and perform its moisture management function when subjected to sauna-like extremes of heat and humidity for extended periods of time. It is also unaffected by occasional spills that are wiped up promptly as one would for any other wood floor. However, like any other floor product, DRIcore will not withstand prolonged submersion.

Q9. What floor coverings can be installed over DRIcore subfloor panels?

A9. Carpet, vinyl sheets and tiles, laminates and engineered wood. Review the installation instructions provided by the floorcovering manufacturer prior to any installation.

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Q10. Can DRIcore panels support heavy objects?

A10. Yes. Independent laboratory tests have shown that DRIcore panels can support loads of over 5,500 lbs. per square foot, which means that it can handle the heaviest furniture, including pianos, pool tables and exercise equipment.

Q11. Does DRIcore work on uneven concrete floors?

A11. Yes. For sloping or uneven sections of the floor, DRIcore has small leveling squares of the same material used on the underside of the panels. These squares are stacked beneath the section of panel until the height is adjusted to level the panel -- up to 1/4-inch thick. For uneven floors with variances greater than 1/4-inch, the floor should be first leveled with a concrete patching compound.

Q12. Is fastening the DRIcore panels to the concrete floor required?

A12. In most cases it is not necessary to fasten the panels to the concrete floor. However, in high traffic areas, such as door entryways or at the base of stairs, it may be necessary to use minimal fastening to prevent the panels from shifting.

Q13. Should plastic sheeting be installed on the concrete before the DRIcore panels are installed and should the panels be glued together?

A13. No, because both these actions can diminish DRIcore's effectiveness. The polyethylene moisture barrier on the underside of each DRIcore panel is the only one required. The raised cleats on the polyethylene sheet were designed expressly to permit airflow that will dry up condensation on the concrete floor. It is also not necessary to apply paint or sealant to the concrete floor before laying DRIcore. Gluing or nailing the panels together is not recommended because DRIcore is designed to be a "floating" floor that expands and contracts with the fluctuations of temperature and humidity in the basement.

Q14. Is a floor drain necessary?

A14. No, but if there is a floor drain, it must be accessible. It is not recommended that the drain be covered because of the potential that the drain will dry up and allow noxious gases to escape. Consult with local building codes prior to beginning any flooring installation.

Q15. Can a radiant floor heating system be used with DRIcore?

A15. Installing a hydronic floor heating system in the concrete ***below*** the DRIcore subfloor panels is not recommended because it will impair DRIcore's function. However, a coil-type of radiant heating system installed ***over*** the DRIcore and under the finished floor material is acceptable.

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