

**Ask Jon Eakes**

# **PolyStyl -- Thick, glueless, DIY vinyl floors.**

Last Updated: Friday, August 16th, 2013, Created: Monday, February 9th, 2004

I went into a flooring store in Quebec recently to buy some vinyl flooring for my own home and stumbled across a display of patterns and colours that blew me away. Then I took a closer look and realized that this was like no vinyl flooring I had ever seen before. This stuff was quite thick and is intended to be installed without any glue, it floats. So I put it into my own house, and then we took the cameras out and helped a viewer who wanted to install it herself in her kitchen.

Generally I don't recommend DIY installation of vinyl floors because the gluing requirements are quite critical and it is so easy to accidentally tear the material while trying to cut it to fit. However, PolyStyl was designed for DIY applications.

Installing vinyl flooring of any kind is quite a chore if you have counters and doorways in the way. One way to do it is to make a paper template of the entire floor and then copy it to the vinyl, but few of us have the room to lay it out like that.

Just a couple of tips if you are installing trying to cut to fit any vinyl flooring, glued down or not. Lean the scrap up the wall and cut down towards the corners. Be careful to cut in that part of the material that will be scrap and will be removed. In an inside corner we can simply cut down into the corner. In an outside corner, like through the doorway or around a counter, be careful not to cut to the corner through the part of the material that will end up flat on the floor. Work carefully and keep your eye on the vinyl behind you so to be sure you are not pulling it away from the first perfectly fitted joints. Some of this is really not easy as you crawl under overhang that you don't want to just cut away -- especially if you need to keep all that extra material for a hallway or closet. Use a metal straight edge to hold the vinyl into the floor/wall joint and run your knife safely on the wall side of the joint.

Hopefully you won't need to make a joint in the middle of the floor, although you will commonly need a joint where you extend out into hallways or closets. There is a special vinyl welding solvent that doesn't glue, but melts the vinyl together. When the vinyl is glued to the floor, you will glue both sides of a joint and weld the top material. With the PolyStyl, because this is a floating floor, you can use duct tape, sticky side up on the floor, to tape the two pieces together. The tape is basically there to insure that you have a perfect no-gaps joint before applying the solvent.

The pattern we used presented a unique problem, the tile pattern was at 45 degrees to the room, so a straight cut for the hallway would never allow us to match up half tiles. Instead, I overlapped the two pieces and matched up only the grout lines. Then I carefully cut through both pieces at the same time, right down the centre of the grout line in the pattern. This meant that I was not cutting through any pieces of "tile" and had absolutely no pattern matching problems. My joint was a zig zag, but that probably made it even stronger.

One other detail about patterns. If you need to join a hallway or closet or another room to the material in the primary room, always over purchase by one full pattern. In this case, that means one diagonal of a tile extra. That will allow you to line up the patterns properly. You don't need this extra if you do not extend off of the main floor with more vinyl.

The only thing you need to be careful of with this rich thick floating flooring is to not drag the refrigerator across the floor or it can bunch it up a bit. The texture, look and ease of application quickly overcomes it higher price tag. These people have set a new standard in style and technique for vinyl floors.

It is called PolyStyl and it is from France. In 2004 I wrote that it was becoming available in quality flooring stores across the country but in 2007 it was hard to find. In 2012 I can again find this thick no glue vinyl easily in the renovation stores. Products do come and go -- and come back again.

**Keywords:**

Vinyl, Floors, Types, Tiles, Innovations, Alternative, Techniques

