

Laminate Glossary of Terms

This is not part of the ANSI/NALFA requirements for laminate flooring but is included for informational purposes only.

1. Acclimation: Adaptation of the laminate floor to its installation environment.
2. Acoustical Properties: Absorbance, reflection or transmission of sound waves.
3. Adhesion: A chemical process by which two materials can be joined together.
4. Antistatic: Ability to limit the accumulation of static electricity on a surface.
5. Backer: A material bonded to the back of the substrate.
6. Balanced Construction: A panel construction that has materials of similar properties bonded to both sides of the panel.
7. Bond: Adhesion.
8. Chemical Resistance: The degree to which a material resists visual or physical degradation from exposure to various household and/or industrial chemicals.
9. Colorfastness: The ability of a material to retain its original color upon exposure to light or other source of degradation (i.e., light resistance).
10. Compact Laminate: High Pressure Laminate greater than or equal to 2 mm (0.08 in) in thickness.
11. Continuous Press Laminate (CPL): A manufacturing process where the laminate is formed on a continuous double-belted press.
12. Continuous Laminate Flooring: A product created by permanently bonding a continuous press laminate to a core.
13. Core: The center of a panel (e.g., surface layer, core, and backer).
14. Crook: A specific type of warp when a panel has a curvature from end to end, edgewise, from a straight line (i.e., banana).
15. Crowning: A specific type of warp when a panel assumes the shape of an inverted "U" along the length or width dimensions of the face (i.e., convex).
16. Cupping: A specific type of warp where a panel assumes the shapes of a "U" along the length or width dimensions of the face (i.e. concave).
17. Décor Layer: The layer of laminate flooring providing visual aesthetic properties.
18. Deflection: The bending of a material between supports when a load is applied.

19. Delaminating: Separation of the panel's layer(s).
20. Density: Unit weight per volume of a panel expressed in lb/ft³ or kg/m³.
21. Depression: A dent in the surface of a panel.
22. Dimensional Stability: The ability of a material to resist changes in measured dimensions caused by environmental factors (e.g., moisture or temperature).
23. Direct Laminate Flooring: A product where resin impregnated material layer(s) is permanently bonded to the core.
24. Direct Press Laminate (DPL): A laminating process by which the wear layer and décor surface are bonded directly to the substrate in a single step.
25. Embossing: A process by which the surface of the panel is given a texture.
26. Equilibrium Moisture Content: The moisture content at which the material neither gains nor loses moisture at a given relative humidity.
27. Expansion Gap: A space necessary between fixed objects (i.e. walls of a room, pipes, and cabinets) and between the material itself to allow for the movement of the material.
28. Fiberboard: A core material primarily composed of cellulose fibers combined with synthetic resins or other suitable bonding systems under heat and pressure. The materials are usually designated as low, medium, or high density (e.g., MDF or HDF).
29. Flame Spread: Measurement of the flame propagation along the surface of a material.
30. Floating Floor: Installation method by which the flooring panels are connected together and not attached to the subfloor.
31. High Density Fiberboard (HDF): A fiberboard with density greater than 800 kg/m³ (50 lb/ft³).
32. High Pressure Laminate (HPL): A laminating process where materials are consolidated under heat and pressure exceeding 5.17 MPa (750 psi).
33. High-Pressure Laminate Flooring: A product created by permanently bonding high-pressure decorative laminate to a core.
34. Impact Resistance: Ability to resist fracture or damage from a falling object.
35. Inlay: A decorative effect used in flooring by combining elements of the same material but with different colors or patterns (e.g., borders or feature strips).
36. Laminate: A product made by bonding together two or more layers of material.

37. **Laminate Flooring:** A rigid floor covering with a surface layer consisting of one or more thin sheets of a fibrous material (usually paper), impregnated with aminoplastic thermosetting resins (usually melamine). These sheets are either pressed as such (HPL, CPL, Compact), and in the case of HPL or CPL bonded on a substrate, or in the case of DPL directly pressed on a substrate. The product is normally finished with a backing primarily used as a balancing material. Its performance values are set by the NALFA/ANSI Standard.
38. **Medium Density Fiberboard (MDF):** A type of core material primarily composed of lignocellulosic fibers combined with a synthetic resin or other suitable bonding system and bonded together under heat and pressure.
39. **Melamine Resin:** A thermosetting resin used in the impregnation process of materials used to make laminate flooring.
40. **Moisture Content:** The amount of water in the material, usually expressed as a percentage of the dry weight.
41. **Moisture Meter:** A tool used to measure moisture content.
42. **Overlay:** A product of paper, plastic, film, metal foil, or other material incorporated into the laminate flooring surface that provides the wear resistance and protection.
43. **Panels:** Finished sections of the laminate flooring (e.g. planks, tiles, and squares).
44. **Particleboard:** A core material primarily composed of cellulosic materials (usually wood), generally in the form of discrete pieces or particles, as distinguished from fibers. The cellulosic material is combined with a synthetic resin or other suitable bonding system by a process in which the interparticle bond is created by the bonding system under heat and pressure.
45. **Pattern End Matched:** When the ends of the flooring panels, typically similar patterns, are matched end to end to yield a continuous linear effect.
46. **Peaking:** Areas of the laminate flooring at adjoining panel seams that have risen above the intended horizontal plane of the flooring surface.
47. **Plank:** A tile approximately five or six times longer than wide.
48. **Pressing:** A manufacturing process by which material layers are consolidated using pressure.
49. **Residual Indentation:** The difference between the initial thickness and the final thickness after performing the static load test.
50. **Resins:** A polymeric material used for impregnating and bonding layers of laminate flooring.
51. **Seams:** A line or junction where panels are connected together.

52. Stain Resistance: The degree which a material resists permanent discoloration from exposure to household items and/or industrial chemicals.

53. Substrate: The core material of the laminate flooring.

54. Sub-floor: A pre-existing supporting surface in a structure.

55. Surface Layer: The outermost layer of laminate flooring designed to be the visible side when installed (i.e., wear layer).

56. Tile: A panel of geometric shapes (e.g., squares, rectangles, etc).

57. Thermofusing: A process where resins are consolidated under heat and pressure to create a permanent bond.

58. Thermosetting Resins: Resins that cure by chemical reaction to form bonds and do not melt when exposed to heat.

59. Underlayment: A material used between the laminate flooring and the subfloor (e.g., foam padding).

60. Warp: Crowning, cupping, or crook.

61. Wear Resistance: Ability of the laminate flooring surface to resist wear through its décor layer.

62. Wear Layer: Surface layer