CALGARY FLOOR INSTALLERS

Luxury Vinyl Plank

LVP, SPC, and WPC vinyl plank flooring — waterproof options ideal for Calgary basements and living spaces

23 Expert Answers from Floor IQ

calgaryfloorinstallers.com/construction-brain

Table of Contents

Q1

How much does LVP cost for a Calgary secondary suite with a separate entrance?

LVP (luxury vinyl plank) for a Calgary secondary suite typically costs $4-9 per square foot installed, with most secondary suites running $2,500-$6,500 total depending on size and product quality.

A typical Calgary secondary suite ranges from 500-800 square feet, making LVP an excellent choice for rental properties. Budget around $5-7 per square foot for mid-range LVP with professional installation, which includes the flooring, underlayment, and basic trim work. For a 600 square foot suite, expect to pay $3,000-$4,200 installed.

LVP is ideal for Calgary secondary suites because it handles the unique challenges these spaces face. Most secondary suites are basement or lower-level units where concrete slabs stay cold and moisture can be an issue. LVP is 100% waterproof, performs well over concrete with proper moisture barrier, and stays comfortable underfoot even on cold Calgary basement floors. Unlike laminate, LVP won't swell or buckle if tenants spill water or track in snow and slush during Calgary's long winters.

Material grades affect pricing significantly. Basic residential LVP runs $2-4 per square foot for the material alone, while commercial-grade SPC (stone polymer composite) with thicker wear layers costs $3-6 per square foot. For rental properties, invest in the commercial-grade product with a 20-mil or thicker wear layer - it costs 20-30% more upfront but handles tenant turnover and heavy traffic far better than residential-grade products.

Installation costs in Calgary run $2-4 per square foot for floating click-lock LVP over prepared subfloor. Add $1-2 per square foot if the concrete slab needs levelling compound or extensive prep work. Most Calgary basement suites need some subfloor preparation since concrete slabs are rarely perfectly flat. Factor in trim and transition costs at $3-8 per linear foot - secondary suites often need transitions at the entrance, between rooms, and where LVP meets existing flooring in shared areas.

Calgary's climate makes LVP particularly attractive for secondary suites. The extreme dry winters and chinook temperature swings that cause gapping in hardwood don't affect LVP at all. Tenants don't need to run humidifiers or worry about seasonal maintenance like they would with hardwood. The separate entrance means snow, salt, and moisture get tracked in regularly - LVP handles this abuse without damage, unlike laminate which would swell at the joints.

Additional costs to budget for include old flooring removal ($1-3 per square foot), moisture barrier over concrete ($0.50-1 per square foot), and basic trim replacement. Many secondary suite renovations also include new baseboards and door casings, adding $200-600 to the project depending on the suite size.

For Calgary secondary suites, SPC rigid core LVP is the best long-term investment. It costs slightly more than WPC (wood polymer composite) but handles temperature fluctuations better and won't compress under heavy furniture. Popular brands like COREtec, LifeProof, and Mohawk offer excellent commercial-grade options in the $4-6 per square foot range installed.

Need help finding a flooring installer? Calgary Floor Installers can match you with local contractors experienced in secondary suite renovations through the Calgary Construction Network.

Q2

How does the cost of glue-down LVP compare to click-lock for a Calgary commercial space?

Glue-down LVP typically costs $1-3 more per square foot installed than click-lock LVP in Calgary commercial spaces, with glue-down running $6-12/sqft installed versus click-lock at $5-9/sqft installed. However, glue-down is almost always the better choice for commercial applications despite the higher upfront cost.

Why Glue-Down Dominates Commercial Installations

The cost difference comes primarily from labor — glue-down installation takes significantly longer and requires more skill. The installer must trowel adhesive evenly, work within the adhesive's open time (typically 45-90 minutes), and ensure perfect subfloor preparation since any imperfections telegraph through permanently bonded flooring. Click-lock floating floors can be installed much faster and are more forgiving of minor subfloor irregularities.

However, glue-down LVP delivers superior performance in commercial environments. It creates a monolithic floor surface that won't shift, gap, or develop the hollow sound that floating floors can produce under heavy foot traffic. In Calgary's extreme humidity swings — especially during chinook events when humidity can fluctuate dramatically within hours — glue-down LVP remains completely stable while click-lock systems can develop micro-gaps at the joints over time under commercial use.

Calgary Climate Considerations for Commercial Spaces

Calgary's dry winters (often 15-20% indoor humidity) and chinook wind cycles create unique challenges for commercial flooring. Large commercial spaces often have minimal humidity control compared to residential homes, making dimensional stability crucial. Glue-down LVP performs identically whether the space is at 15% humidity in January or 50% humidity during a summer thunderstorm.

Commercial spaces also tend to have concrete slab subfloors, which stay cold in Calgary's harsh winters and can experience frost heave movement. Glue-down installation over concrete requires proper moisture testing (calcium chloride or RH probe testing) and often a moisture barrier, but once installed, it moves as one unit with the slab rather than floating independently like click-lock systems.

When Click-Lock Makes Sense Commercially

Click-lock LVP works well for smaller commercial spaces (under 1,000 sqft), temporary installations, or spaces where future access to utilities under the floor is important. It's also preferred when the installation timeline is critical — a retail space that needs to reopen quickly can benefit from click-lock's faster installation. Some Calgary commercial tenants prefer click-lock because it can potentially be removed and reinstalled if they relocate, though this rarely works practically due to damage during removal.

Professional Installation is Essential

Both systems require professional installation in commercial applications, but glue-down demands more expertise. The adhesive must be the correct type for the specific LVP product and subfloor conditions. Calgary's temperature extremes mean the adhesive and LVP must acclimate to job site conditions — typically 48-72 hours minimum. Rushed commercial installations that skip acclimation often fail within the first year as materials reach equilibrium with the building's environment.

Budget for the Total Project

Beyond the flooring itself, commercial glue-down installations typically require more subfloor preparation. Concrete grinding, self-leveling compound, and moisture mitigation add $2-5/sqft to the total project cost. Factor in old flooring removal ($1-4/sqft depending on existing material), and a complete commercial LVP installation often runs $10-18/sqft total.

Need help finding a commercial flooring contractor experienced with LVP installations? Calgary Floor Installers can match you with professionals who understand the specific requirements of Calgary's commercial market and climate conditions.

Q3

Does LVP off-gas in a Calgary home with the windows sealed shut all winter?

LVP does off-gas, but modern products have significantly lower emissions than older vinyl flooring, and Calgary's dry winter air actually helps dissipate VOCs faster than humid climates. The bigger concern in

sealed Calgary homes is maintaining adequate ventilation for overall indoor air quality during our long heating season.

Understanding LVP Off-Gassing

Luxury vinyl plank releases volatile organic compounds (VOCs), primarily from the vinyl wear layer, printed design layer, and adhesives used in manufacturing. However, modern LVP products have dramatically lower emissions than the vinyl flooring of the 1980s and 1990s. Look for products with **FloorScore certification** or **GREENGUARD Gold certification** — these third-party standards ensure emissions meet strict indoor air quality guidelines. Many major LVP brands including COREtec, LifeProof, and Shaw now carry these certifications.

The off-gassing is most noticeable in the first 30-60 days after installation, with emissions dropping significantly after the initial curing period. Calgary's extremely dry winter air (15-20% humidity) actually helps VOCs dissipate more readily than in humid climates where moisture can trap emissions. The "new floor smell" that some homeowners notice typically fades within 2-4 weeks in Calgary homes.

Calgary Winter Ventilation Challenges

The real issue isn't LVP-specific off-gassing — it's that Calgary homes are sealed tight from October through March to conserve energy during our brutal winters. Without adequate fresh air exchange, ANY indoor pollutants (cooking odours, cleaning products, furniture off-gassing, even human respiration) can build up to uncomfortable levels. Modern Calgary homes should have an **HRV (Heat Recovery Ventilator)** or **ERV (Energy Recovery Ventilator)** system that brings in fresh outdoor air while recovering heat from the outgoing stale air.

If your home doesn't have mechanical ventilation, crack a window for 10-15 minutes daily even in winter, or run bathroom exhaust fans periodically to create air exchange. This is especially important in the first month after LVP installation when emissions are highest.

Minimizing LVP Emissions

Choose **rigid core SPC (Stone Polymer Composite)** over WPC (Wood Polymer Composite) — SPC typically has lower VOC emissions and performs better in Calgary's temperature swings from chinook winds. Allow the flooring to acclimate in your home for 48-72 hours before installation, which helps some initial off-gassing occur before the planks are locked together. If you're particularly sensitive to odours, consider installing LVP in spring or fall when you can open windows for better ventilation during the initial curing period.

When to Be Concerned

If you or family members experience persistent headaches, respiratory irritation, or strong chemical odours weeks after installation, the flooring may not meet quality standards. Cheap, uncertified LVP from overseas manufacturers can have significantly higher emissions than North American products meeting FloorScore standards.

Professional Installation Matters

Proper installation with appropriate underlayment and moisture barriers also affects air quality. Poor installation that traps moisture can lead to mould growth, which is a far more serious indoor air quality concern than normal LVP off-gassing.

Need help finding a flooring installer experienced with low-emission products? Calgary Floor Installers can match you with contractors familiar with certified LVP options for better indoor air quality.

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- Eshine Cleaning Services
- Dealtwith.
- Turnbull masonry
- Ardco Construction

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Q4

How much does luxury vinyl plank flooring cost in Calgary?

Luxury vinyl plank flooring in Calgary typically costs between $4 and $9 per square foot fully installed, depending on the product quality, wear layer thickness, and the complexity of your installation. This makes LVP one of the best value propositions in Calgary's flooring market — delivering waterproof performance, excellent durability, and realistic wood-look aesthetics at a fraction of what you would pay for real hardwood.

Breaking down the costs in today's Calgary market, **budget-friendly LVP** runs $4 to $5.50 per square foot installed. These products typically have a thinner wear layer (6-12 mil), a basic click-lock system, and may not include attached underlayment. They are perfectly suitable for rental properties, basement developments, or secondary bedrooms where you want a clean look without a premium price tag. **Mid-range LVP** — which is where most Calgary homeowners land — costs $5.50 to $7.50 per square foot installed. At this price point you get a 20-mil wear layer, rigid SPC core for better stability during Calgary's chinook-driven temperature swings, and often an attached cork or foam backing that adds warmth and sound dampening. **Premium LVP** runs $7.50 to $9 per square foot installed and features a 22-mil or thicker wear layer, enhanced embossed-in-register textures that closely mimic real hardwood grain, and superior locking mechanisms designed for heavy residential traffic.

For a typical Calgary home with **1,200 to 1,500 square feet of living space**, you are looking at a total project cost of roughly **$4,800 to $13,500** depending on the product tier you choose. That estimate includes the flooring material, underlayment if not attached, standard installation, and basic trim and transitions. It does not include old flooring removal, which adds $1 to $2 per square foot for most existing floors, or subfloor levelling, which can run $2 to $6 per square foot where needed. Moving furniture typically adds $200 to $500 to the total.

Calgary's LVP pricing sits in a moderate range by Canadian standards — roughly **10 to 15 percent below what you would pay in Toronto or Vancouver** for the same products, and comparable to Edmonton. The local market benefits from strong competition among flooring retailers and installers, and material costs have stabilized after the supply chain disruptions of recent years. One factor unique to Calgary is that the oil and gas sector's activity level affects skilled trades availability — when the energy industry is booming, installer schedules fill up faster and labour rates can creep up.

If you are comparing LVP to other options, keep in mind that engineered hardwood runs $7 to $14 per square foot installed and solid hardwood $6 to $15 per square foot — both without the waterproof advantage that LVP provides. For Calgary basements especially, LVP is the clear winner on both performance and price. Browse flooring contractors in the Calgary Construction Network directory at calgaryconstructionnetwork.com/directory?trade=flooring to get quotes specific to your project.

Q5

Is LVP a good choice for Calgary basements prone to moisture from clay soil?

LVP is arguably the single best flooring choice for Calgary basements dealing with moisture from the region's heavy clay soil. Calgary sits on expansive clay that swells when wet and shrinks when dry, creating ongoing moisture vapour migration through basement concrete slabs — and luxury vinyl plank is engineered to handle exactly this environment.

Calgary's clay soil creates a unique challenge for basement flooring. During spring thaw and heavy rainfall, the clay swells and pushes moisture laterally against foundation walls and upward through the concrete slab. Even homes with functioning weeping tile and sump pumps will experience elevated humidity at the slab level for much of the year. This is why solid hardwood is never appropriate for a Calgary basement and why even engineered hardwood requires extreme caution below grade. **LVP's core — whether SPC (stone polymer composite) or WPC (wood polymer composite) — is completely inorganic.** It will not swell, rot, warp, or grow mould when exposed to moisture vapour or even direct water contact. This makes it fundamentally different from any wood-based product.

For basements in clay-heavy Calgary neighbourhoods — which includes most of the city from established communities like Varsity and Lake Bonavista to newer developments in Cranston and Seton — I would specifically recommend **SPC rigid core LVP over WPC**. SPC has a denser stone-polymer core that is more dimensionally stable in the temperature swings common in Calgary basements, where temperatures can fluctuate as cold air from the concrete slab meets warm air from the furnace. WPC products, while still waterproof, have a slightly softer core that can be more susceptible to expansion under extreme temperature changes.

Proper installation over a moisture-prone basement slab still requires preparation. Before any LVP goes down, a **moisture test on the concrete is non-negotiable**. A calcium chloride test should show moisture vapour emission below 3 pounds per 1,000 square feet per 24 hours, or a relative humidity probe test should read below 75% RH. If the slab fails these tests, a moisture mitigation system or vapour barrier must be installed first. Even if moisture levels test acceptable, most LVP manufacturers recommend a **6-mil polyethylene vapour barrier** over bare concrete — and in Calgary's clay-soil conditions, this is a step you should never skip. Many quality SPC products come with an attached underlayment that includes a built-in moisture barrier, which simplifies installation.

One important caveat: **LVP is waterproof, but your basement is not.** If you have had actual water intrusion — standing water on the slab from a foundation leak or sump pump failure — you need to address the source of the water before installing any flooring. LVP will survive a minor incident beautifully, but persistent water intrusion will eventually degrade the subfloor underneath, create mould behind baseboards, and damage the walls even if the flooring itself is unharmed. Get matched with a flooring professional through Calgary Floor Installers for a free assessment of your basement's moisture conditions before choosing your product.

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- Jk Stucco
- Ardco Construction
- WestAim Construction Ltd.
- New Earth Waste Services Ltd

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Q6

What thickness LVP should I buy for a Calgary home with pets and kids?

For a Calgary home with pets and kids, you want LVP with a minimum overall thickness of 5mm and — more importantly — a wear layer of at least 20 mil (0.5mm). The wear layer is the transparent top coating that protects against scratches, scuffs, and staining, and it matters far more than overall plank thickness when it comes to standing up to the daily punishment that pets and children dish out.

Let me break down what those numbers mean in practice. **The wear layer** is your first line of defence against dog nails, toy cars, dropped sippy cups, and everything else that hits the floor in a busy household. LVP wear layers typically range from 6 mil on the low end to 28 mil on the high end. A **6 to 12 mil** wear layer is considered residential-light — fine for a guest bedroom or a home office, but it will show scratches from dog nails within a year or two. A **20 mil** wear layer is the sweet spot for active families — it provides enough material to resist most pet scratches and household impacts, and it will look good for 15 to 20 years under normal use. A **22 to 28 mil** wear layer is commercial-grade and virtually bulletproof — worth considering if you have multiple large dogs or expect exceptionally heavy traffic.

Overall plank thickness — which includes the wear layer, print layer, core, and attached underlayment — ranges from about 3mm to 8mm. For a family home, I recommend **5.5mm to 6.5mm SPC rigid core** as the minimum. Thicker planks feel more solid underfoot, absorb more impact noise (important in a two-storey Calgary home where kids are running around upstairs), and resist denting from heavy furniture or dropped toys better than thinner products. An **attached cork or IXPE foam backing** adds another 1 to 1.5mm and provides additional sound dampening and thermal warmth, which is particularly welcome on Calgary's cold basement slabs from October

through April.

For **pets specifically**, look for products with an enhanced **ceramic bead or aluminium oxide finish** in the wear layer — these textured coatings provide significantly better scratch resistance than standard urethane finishes. Many manufacturers now market specific "pet-proof" lines that combine a 20-mil-plus wear layer with these hardened top coats. Also look for products with a **textured or embossed surface** rather than a smooth gloss finish — textures hide minor scratches better and provide better traction for pets on slippery floors.

In Calgary's market, a quality 20-mil, 5.5mm SPC product suitable for a pet-and-kid household runs **$5.50 to $7.50 per square foot installed**. Stepping up to a 22-mil commercial-rated product adds roughly $1 to $1.50 per square foot. For a typical Calgary home at 1,200 to 1,500 square feet, you are looking at **$6,600 to $11,250** for a mid-range to premium pet-friendly LVP installation. That investment pays for itself in longevity and peace of mind. Need help finding an installer experienced with pet-friendly flooring? Calgary Floor Installers can match you with local flooring contractors for free through the Calgary Construction Network.

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- Mike’s Restoration Service
- The Original Workshop
- Greenstone landscaping solutions

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Q7

Does luxury vinyl plank expand or contract during Calgary chinook temperature changes?

Yes, luxury vinyl plank does expand and contract during Calgary's chinook events — but significantly less than hardwood, laminate, or most other flooring materials. This is one of the key reasons LVP has become the dominant flooring choice in Calgary over the past decade. Chinook-driven temperature swings that can shift 20 to 30 degrees Celsius in a matter of hours are genuinely hard on flooring, and LVP handles them better than almost any alternative.

Here is what actually happens during a chinook. When a warm Pacific air mass rolls over the Rockies and pushes Calgary's outdoor temperature from -25 to +10 in an afternoon, two things change inside your home: the temperature near exterior walls and windows shifts, and indoor humidity rises as warmer air holds more moisture. Both of these changes cause LVP to expand slightly. Vinyl is a thermoplastic material — it softens and expands with heat and contracts with cold. In a standard Calgary living room, the temperature change during a chinook event might cause LVP to expand by roughly **0.5 to 1mm per 3 metres of continuous run**. That sounds small, and it is — but over a large open-concept main floor spanning 8 to 10 metres, it adds up enough to matter if expansion gaps were not left during installation.

SPC (stone polymer composite) rigid core LVP is significantly more stable than WPC or flexible vinyl during chinook events. The stone-powder filler in the SPC core resists thermal expansion far better than the foamed polymer core in WPC products. If you are installing LVP in a Calgary home, SPC is the recommended core type specifically because of chinook cycling. The difference in dimensional stability is measurable — SPC products typically expand less than half as much as WPC products under the same temperature change.

Proper installation is the real key to preventing chinook-related problems. Every LVP installation in Calgary must include a minimum **6 to 8mm expansion gap** at all walls, door frames, islands, fireplaces, and any other fixed objects. These gaps get hidden by baseboards and quarter-round trim, so they are invisible — but they are absolutely essential. Without them, expanding LVP has nowhere to go, and the floor will buckle, tent, or peak in the middle of the room. Calgary flooring installers see this problem regularly in DIY installations where the homeowner skipped or undersized the expansion gaps. Transition strips at doorways between rooms are equally important — they allow adjacent floor sections to move independently.

One additional consideration for Calgary homes: **avoid placing LVP in direct contact with large south- or west-facing windows where direct sunlight can heat the floor surface well above room temperature.** On a sunny chinook day in February, the floor surface near a window can reach 40 degrees Celsius or more while the rest of the room sits at 21 degrees. This localized heating causes far more expansion than the general room temperature change. Area rugs or UV window film in these zones protect both the colour and dimensional stability of the LVP. If

you want expert installation that accounts for Calgary's unique chinook conditions, browse flooring contractors through the Calgary Construction Network directory at calgaryconstructionnetwork.com/directory?trade=flooring.

Q8

How much does it cost to install LVP in a full Calgary basement development?

A full LVP installation in a Calgary basement development typically costs between $2,500 and $7,500 for the flooring portion alone, depending on basement size, product quality, and how much subfloor preparation is needed. Most developed Calgary basements range from 500 to 1,000 square feet of finished floor area, and at current Calgary market rates of **$4 to $9 per square foot installed** for LVP, the math is straightforward — but there are several additional costs that can push the total higher.

For a **typical 700 to 800 square foot Calgary basement** — which is common in the two-storey homes that dominate communities from Evergreen and Cranston in the south to Evanston and Nolan Hill in the north — here is a realistic budget breakdown. **Mid-range SPC rigid core LVP** at $5.50 to $7 per square foot installed comes to roughly **$3,850 to $5,600** for the flooring material, underlayment, and standard installation. On top of that, you should budget for **old flooring removal** if applicable — pulling up existing carpet runs $1 to $1.50 per square foot, while removing old vinyl tile (especially the 9x9-inch tiles common in pre-1980s Calgary homes, which may contain asbestos and require professional abatement testing) can cost $2 to $4 per square foot. **Subfloor preparation** is the wildcard cost in any basement installation. Calgary basement slabs are notorious for being uneven, cracked, or showing signs of moisture migration from the clay soil. Grinding down high spots or applying self-levelling compound over low areas adds **$2 to $5 per square foot** in the affected areas — and in older Calgary homes, a significant portion of the slab may need attention.

Moisture testing is mandatory before any basement LVP installation in Calgary. A professional calcium chloride or relative humidity probe test costs $100 to $300 and must show acceptable moisture levels before installation proceeds. If the slab fails — which is not uncommon in Calgary's clay-heavy soil conditions — moisture mitigation adds another $1 to $3 per square foot for a vapour barrier system or epoxy moisture seal. This is money well spent; skipping moisture testing and mitigation is the fastest way to ruin a new basement floor.

Additional costs to factor in: **trim and transitions** at $3 to $6 per linear foot installed (you will need transitions at every doorway and where the LVP meets other flooring types, plus new baseboards or quarter-round around the perimeter), **stair nosing** if your basement includes stairs at $25 to $50 per tread, and **furniture moving** at $150 to $400 depending on how much is down there. All told, a complete basement LVP project in Calgary — from old flooring removal through finished installation with trim — typically runs **$4,000 to $10,000** for a standard-sized

basement.

One cost-saving tip: if you are developing an unfinished basement as part of a larger renovation, having the flooring installed at the same time as the rest of the development saves on mobilization costs and often earns you a better per-square-foot rate from the installer. Get matched with a flooring professional for a free estimate on your basement project through Calgary Floor Installers.

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Q9

Can I install luxury vinyl plank over existing tile in my Calgary kitchen?

Yes, you can install LVP directly over existing tile in most Calgary kitchens, and it is actually one of the most common renovation scenarios local flooring installers handle. Installing over tile saves the significant cost and mess of tile demolition — but there are specific conditions that must be met for it to work properly.

The critical factor is grout line depth. If your existing tile has deep grout lines — anything more than about 2 to 3mm below the tile surface — those voids can telegraph through the LVP over time, creating visible depressions and causing the click-lock joints to flex and eventually fail. Shallow grout lines on larger format tiles (12x12 or bigger) are generally not a problem, especially with a rigid SPC core LVP that bridges minor imperfections well. However, if you have small mosaic tiles, deeply recessed grout, or cracked and crumbling grout, you will need to either **fill the grout lines with a floor patch compound** or apply a **thin skim coat of self-levelling compound** over the entire tile surface before installing the LVP. This adds roughly $1.50 to $3 per square foot but ensures a perfectly smooth substrate.

Check that the tile surface is flat and level. The standard requirement for floating LVP installation is a subfloor flat to within 3mm over a 1.8-metre span. Lay a long straightedge or level across the tile in multiple directions and look for humps, dips, or lippage between tiles. Any tile that is cracked, loose, or rocking must be repaired — either re-adhered with thinset or removed and filled. A single loose tile under LVP will create a hollow spot that clicks annoyingly with every step.

Clean the tile thoroughly before installation. Kitchen tile accumulates years of grease, cooking residue, and cleaning product buildup that can affect adhesion of glue-down LVP or create a slippery surface under floating LVP. A good scrub with TSP (trisodium phosphate) solution followed by thorough drying is the standard preparation.

Height transition is the main practical concern. Adding LVP over existing tile raises your kitchen floor by the thickness of the new product — typically 4 to 6mm. This means you will need transition strips at every doorway where the kitchen meets adjacent rooms, and you may need to undercut door casings and trim the bottoms of doors. In older Calgary homes where the kitchen tile already sits slightly higher than the adjoining hallway or living room floor, this added height can create an awkward step-up. Measure carefully before committing.

One important note for pre-1980s Calgary homes: if your existing tile is the old 9x9-inch format or sits on black mastic adhesive, **do not remove it without testing for asbestos first.** This is actually a scenario where installing LVP over the tile is the safest and most cost-effective approach — encapsulating the old tile rather than disturbing it. Alberta Occupational Health and Safety regulations govern asbestos handling, and professional abatement if needed can cost $5 to $15 per square foot.

Installing LVP over tile in a standard Calgary kitchen of 100 to 150 square feet typically runs **$500 to $1,200 installed**, not including any grout filling or levelling work. Browse flooring installers experienced with over-tile installations through the Calgary Construction Network directory at calgaryconstructionnetwork.com/directory?trade=flooring.

Q10

What is the price difference between rigid core and flexible LVP in Calgary?

Rigid core LVP (SPC and WPC) costs roughly $1.50 to $3 more per square foot than flexible (glue-down) LVP in Calgary's market, with rigid core products running $4 to $9 per square foot installed and flexible vinyl running $3 to $6 per square foot installed. But the price difference only tells part of the story — for Calgary homes specifically, rigid core is almost always the better investment.

Let me explain the two types and why the distinction matters in Calgary's climate. **Flexible LVP** is the older technology — thin vinyl planks (typically 2 to 3mm thick) that are either glued directly to the subfloor with full-spread adhesive or installed as peel-and-stick. The material itself is less expensive, but professional glue-down installation is labour-intensive, which narrows the installed-cost gap. Flexible LVP conforms to the subfloor beneath it, which means every imperfection, crack, and bump in the concrete shows through. This is a significant problem in Calgary basements where slab cracking from frost heave is common.

Rigid core LVP — available as either **SPC (stone polymer composite)** or **WPC (wood polymer composite)** — has a stiff structural core that clicks together like a floating floor. It bridges minor subfloor imperfections, does not require adhesive, and installs much faster. In Calgary's market, the cost breakdown looks like this: **SPC rigid core** runs $4.50 to $8 per square foot installed and is the most popular choice because its dense stone-powder core handles Calgary's chinook-driven temperature swings with minimal expansion and contraction. **WPC rigid core** runs $5 to $9 per square foot installed — it is slightly warmer and softer underfoot than SPC thanks to its foamed core, but it is also slightly more susceptible to dimensional changes in extreme temperature shifts.

For a typical 1,200 square foot Calgary home, the total project cost difference between flexible and rigid core LVP works out to roughly **$1,800 to $3,600**. That may seem like a meaningful savings in favour of flexible vinyl, but consider what you give up. Flexible LVP requires a **perfectly smooth, perfectly level subfloor** — any imperfection telegraphs through immediately. In Calgary homes, achieving that perfect substrate often requires extensive levelling compound or floor patching that eats into the material savings. Flexible vinyl also has **no integrated click-lock system**, so the edges between planks rely entirely on adhesive bond or friction, making repairs and replacements far more difficult. And in Calgary's dry winter climate, where indoor humidity can drop to 15 to 20 percent, flexible LVP edges can curl and lift if the adhesive bond weakens.

My recommendation for Calgary homeowners is SPC rigid core in nearly every scenario. The moderate price premium over flexible vinyl pays for itself in easier installation, better performance over imperfect subfloors, superior dimensional stability during chinook events, and simpler future repairs. The only scenario where flexible glue-down vinyl makes strong sense in Calgary is in commercial applications or condos where sound transmission requirements favour a thin profile over a thick floating floor. Need help choosing the right product for your home?

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Q11

Should I choose LVP or engineered hardwood for my Mahogany community new build?

For a new build in Mahogany — one of Calgary's premier lake communities in the southeast — the choice between LVP and engineered hardwood comes down to your budget, lifestyle, and which floors you are choosing for. Both are excellent options for Calgary homes, but they serve different needs and price points, and each has advantages that matter specifically in a new-build context.

Engineered hardwood is the premium choice and runs **$7 to $14 per square foot installed** in Calgary. It gives you a real wood surface — oak, maple, hickory, or walnut — with the warmth, grain variation, and natural beauty that no synthetic product can perfectly replicate. In a Mahogany new build, where homes are typically higher-end with open-concept main floors, engineered hardwood makes a strong design statement and adds measurable resale value. Engineered hardwood handles Calgary's dry winters and chinook humidity swings far better than solid hardwood because its cross-layered plywood core resists expansion and contraction. It can be refinished one to three times depending on wear layer thickness, extending its lifespan to 30 years or more.

LVP (luxury vinyl plank) runs **$4 to $9 per square foot installed** and delivers 100 percent waterproof performance, exceptional scratch resistance, and remarkably realistic wood-look aesthetics. For a new Mahogany home where you may have young children, pets, or simply want worry-free floors, LVP is hard to beat on a practical level. Modern premium LVP with embossed-in-register textures is genuinely difficult to distinguish from real wood at

a glance — and it will not gap, cup, or scratch as readily as hardwood.

Here is what I recommend for most Mahogany new builds: Consider a **split approach**. Install **engineered hardwood on the main floor** — the living room, dining area, hallway, and any other high-visibility spaces where you want that authentic wood feel and where visitors and potential future buyers will notice the quality. Then install **quality SPC rigid core LVP in the basement**, bathrooms, laundry room, and mudroom — the moisture-prone areas where hardwood is either unsuitable or requires extra caution. This combination gives you the best of both worlds: premium aesthetics where it counts and bulletproof performance where it is needed.

For the **full cost picture in a typical 2,500 to 3,000 square foot Mahogany home**: if you go all LVP at a mid-range product, you are looking at roughly **$12,500 to $22,500** for the whole home. If you go engineered hardwood on the main floor (approximately 1,000 to 1,200 square feet) and LVP in the basement and wet areas (approximately 800 to 1,000 square feet), budget roughly **$11,000 to $18,000** for the hardwood and **$4,000 to $7,500** for the LVP — a total of **$15,000 to $25,500**.

One new-build-specific tip: **do not accept builder-grade flooring without inspecting it first.** Many Calgary builders offer LVP or laminate as a standard inclusion, but the quality varies enormously. Ask about wear layer thickness, core type, and warranty. If the builder's standard product has a wear layer under 12 mil, it is worth the upgrade fee to move to a 20-mil product or to have the builder credit you for flooring and hire your own installer. Browse flooring contractors through the Calgary Construction Network directory at calgaryconstructionnetwork.com/directory?trade=flooring to compare options for your new build.

Q12

How waterproof is luxury vinyl plank really for a Calgary basement with past flooding?

The LVP planks themselves are genuinely 100 percent waterproof — water will not damage, swell, warp, or degrade the vinyl material even with prolonged exposure. However, waterproof flooring does not mean a waterproof basement, and this distinction is critically important for any Calgary homeowner who has experienced past flooding.

Let me be specific about what "waterproof" means and does not mean for LVP. The vinyl planks — whether SPC or WPC core — contain no organic material. They will not absorb water, swell, grow mould, or break down from moisture exposure. If water sits on the surface, it will not penetrate the plank. You can literally submerge an LVP plank in water for weeks and it will come out unchanged. This is a genuine, tested property — not marketing hype. **This makes LVP vastly superior to laminate, solid hardwood, and engineered hardwood for any space with**

water risk. Laminate will swell and delaminate permanently if water reaches the HDF core. Solid and engineered hardwood will cup, warp, and potentially grow mould.

Here is where it gets more nuanced for a basement with a flooding history. When water comes up through a basement slab or enters through a foundation wall, it goes everywhere — under the flooring, behind baseboards, into the subfloor cavity between the slab and the finished floor. The LVP planks will be fine, but **everything around and under them is at risk.** Water trapped beneath a floating LVP floor will sit on the concrete slab, soak into any underlayment that is not waterproof rated, migrate into drywall at the base of walls, and create the perfect conditions for mould growth in the dark, warm space between the slab and the flooring.

For a Calgary basement with past flooding, my recommendation is a **layered waterproof approach**. First, **address the water source** — this might mean sump pump repair or installation, weeping tile maintenance, foundation crack injection, or grading corrections around the home's exterior. Calgary's clay soil and high water table in many communities make basement water intrusion a chronic problem rather than a one-time event. Second, **use only waterproof underlayment** — standard foam underlay will absorb water and become a mould factory. Use a closed-cell foam or dimpled membrane underlayment specifically rated as waterproof. Many SPC products come with an attached waterproof IXPE foam backing, which is ideal. Third, **install the LVP as a floating floor** rather than glue-down. A floating installation allows you to pull up sections quickly if water does enter, dry the slab thoroughly, and reinstall the same planks. Glue-down LVP over a flood-prone slab is much harder to remove and dry out.

If your basement has flooded before, it will likely experience water again at some point. LVP gives you the best possible outcome in that scenario — the flooring survives, cleanup is manageable, and you are not facing a complete replacement like you would with carpet or hardwood. Budget roughly **$4 to $8 per square foot installed** for quality waterproof SPC with appropriate underlayment, and make sure moisture testing is done before installation. Find local flooring contractors experienced with Calgary basement conditions through the Calgary Construction Network at calgaryconstructionnetwork.com.

Looking for experienced contractors? The Calgary Construction Network connects homeowners with qualified professionals:

- Mayken Hazmat Solutions LTD
- Makki Abatement
- One OAK Flooring
- Royland Stucco
- Universal Slate International Inc.

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Q13

What brand of LVP do Calgary flooring installers recommend most?

Rather than recommending a specific brand, Calgary flooring installers consistently advise homeowners to focus on three measurable product specifications that matter far more than the name on the box: wear layer thickness, core type, and warranty terms. Brand preferences vary from installer to installer, and new products enter the market constantly — but the specs that make LVP perform well in Calgary's demanding climate are universal.

That said, there are several **product categories and characteristics** that experienced Calgary installers gravitate toward, and understanding these will help you evaluate any brand you are considering.

SPC rigid core is the preferred core type for Calgary homes. The stone polymer composite core handles Calgary's chinook-driven temperature swings, basement slab cold, and dry winter conditions better than WPC or flexible vinyl. When shopping, look for products with an SPC core and a density around 1,900 to 2,100 kg per cubic metre — this indicates a well-made rigid core that will resist denting and maintain dimensional stability through Calgary's extreme seasonal cycling.

A 20-mil or thicker wear layer is the standard recommendation for Calgary residential use. This is the single most important number to compare across brands. A 20-mil wear layer provides 15 to 25 years of attractive performance under normal residential traffic, resists most pet scratches, and withstands the grit and gravel that Calgary homeowners inevitably track in from winter streets. Some premium lines offer 22 to 28 mil for heavy-traffic or pet-heavy households. Below 12 mil, you are in light-commercial or builder-grade territory that will show wear within a few years in a busy home.

Attached underlayment with a built-in moisture barrier is highly valued by Calgary installers because it simplifies basement installations and eliminates the risk of a homeowner buying a cheap separate underlay that allows moisture migration. Products with attached IXPE foam or cork backing generally cost $0.50 to $1.50 more per square foot than bare-back products, but they reduce overall installation time and ensure consistent moisture protection across the entire floor.

Warranty terms are where brands differentiate themselves, and they matter. Look for a **lifetime residential warranty** that specifically covers wear-through, staining, and fading. Pay close attention to what voids the warranty — many manufacturers require professional installation, specific underlayment, and humidity or temperature ranges that are relevant in Calgary's extreme climate. A brand that offers a robust warranty without unreasonable conditions is generally a brand that stands behind its product.

In Calgary's market, quality LVP meeting all of the above specifications — SPC core, 20-mil wear layer, attached underlayment with moisture barrier, and strong warranty — runs **$5.50 to $8 per square foot installed**. You will find these specs across a range of brands available through Calgary flooring retailers and distributors. The best approach is to identify two or three products in your budget range that meet the specs, then ask your installer which ones they have the most experience installing and the fewest callback issues with. An experienced installer's field knowledge of how a product performs in Calgary homes over time is worth more than any marketing claim. Get matched with a local flooring professional through Calgary Floor Installers for guidance specific to your project and budget.

Looking for experienced contractors? The Calgary Construction Network connects homeowners with qualified professionals:

- Premium Built Structures
- Amar Homes Inc
- Home Style Supplies
- Mayken Hazmat Solutions LTD
- Venkor Group Inc

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Q14

How much does it cost to replace builder-grade vinyl with quality LVP in Calgary?

Replacing builder-grade vinyl or sheet vinyl with quality LVP in a Calgary home typically costs $5 to $10 per square foot all-in, including removal of the old flooring, subfloor preparation, new LVP material, and installation. For a standard Calgary home with 1,200 to 1,500 square feet of floor area, that puts the total project in the **$6,000 to $15,000 range** depending on the quality of LVP you choose and how much work the subfloor needs.

Here is how the costs break down for a typical Calgary builder-grade vinyl replacement. **Removal of the existing vinyl** runs $1 to $2.50 per square foot. Sheet vinyl that was glued down with full-spread adhesive is the most labour-intensive to remove — the adhesive often leaves a rough, uneven residue that requires scraping or grinding. Builder-grade click-lock vinyl or peel-and-stick tiles come up faster and cheaper. **One critical warning for older Calgary homes:** if the existing vinyl is the old 9x9-inch tile format or sits on black mastic adhesive, especially in

homes built before 1985, **you must test for asbestos before removal.** Asbestos abatement, if needed, adds $5 to $15 per square foot and must be performed by a certified contractor following Alberta Occupational Health and Safety regulations.

Subfloor preparation after removing builder-grade vinyl typically runs $1 to $4 per square foot where needed. In newer Calgary homes — the mass-built developments in communities like Legacy, Cornerstone, and Redstone — the subfloor under builder-grade vinyl is usually plywood on the main floor and concrete in the basement. Plywood subfloors may need spot repairs, screw-down to eliminate squeaks, and levelling compound on low spots. Concrete slabs need moisture testing (mandatory in Calgary's clay-soil environment) and may need grinding or skim-coating to achieve the 3mm-over-1.8-metre flatness standard.

The LVP material and installation itself runs $4 to $9 per square foot for quality product. For a builder-grade replacement, I strongly recommend spending at least $5.50 to $7 per square foot installed to get an **SPC rigid core product with a 20-mil wear layer and attached underlayment.** Going from cheap builder vinyl to cheap replacement vinyl is not worth the disruption — invest in a product that will perform well for 15 to 20 years in Calgary's climate. This is also the right time to upgrade transitions, baseboards, and trim, which adds $3 to $6 per linear foot.

Here is a realistic budget for common scenarios: **A 1,200 sqft main floor replacement** (removal + subfloor prep + mid-range SPC LVP + trim) runs approximately **$8,000 to $12,500**. **A 700 sqft basement replacement** comes in at roughly **$4,500 to $7,500** including moisture barrier and vapour testing. **A full home** (main floor + basement, approximately 1,800 to 2,000 square feet total) ranges from **$11,000 to $18,000** all-in.

Many Calgary homeowners tackle builder-grade vinyl replacement within the first two to five years of owning a new-build home, once the initial excitement fades and the limitations of the cheap original flooring become apparent. It is one of the highest-impact renovations you can do for both daily livability and resale value. Need help finding a flooring installer? Calgary Floor Installers can match you with local contractors for free through the Calgary Construction Network.

Looking for experienced contractors? The Calgary Construction Network connects homeowners with qualified professionals:

- Canadian Closet
- Amar Homes Inc
- Royland Stucco
- Besademolition
- Eshine Cleaning Services

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Q15

Can LVP be installed directly on concrete in a Calgary home without a subfloor?

Yes, LVP can absolutely be installed directly over concrete in a Calgary home — no plywood subfloor needed. In fact, this is one of LVP's greatest advantages over hardwood and one of the main reasons it dominates Calgary's basement flooring market. However, "directly on concrete" still requires specific preparation steps that are non-negotiable in Calgary's climate conditions.

Moisture testing comes first — always. Calgary sits on heavy clay soil that holds water and pushes moisture laterally and upward through concrete slabs, especially during spring thaw and after heavy summer rains. Before any LVP goes over bare concrete, you need a **calcium chloride moisture test** (acceptable reading: below 3 pounds per 1,000 square feet per 24 hours) or a **relative humidity probe test** (acceptable: below 75 percent RH within the slab). These tests cost $100 to $300 when done professionally and take 24 to 72 hours to complete. If the slab fails, moisture mitigation — either an epoxy moisture sealer or a dedicated vapour barrier system — must be applied before installation. Skipping moisture testing on a Calgary concrete slab is one of the most common and most costly mistakes in basement flooring.

A vapour barrier is required even if moisture tests pass. Most LVP manufacturers require a **6-mil polyethylene vapour barrier** between bare concrete and the flooring as a condition of their warranty. In Calgary's clay-soil environment, this is not just a warranty requirement — it is essential protection. Many quality SPC products include an attached underlayment with a built-in moisture barrier, which satisfies this requirement and simplifies installation. If your chosen LVP does not have an attached barrier, a separate **2-in-1 underlayment with integrated vapour barrier** runs $0.50 to $1 per square foot.

The concrete surface must be flat, clean, and free of major defects. The flatness standard for floating LVP is **3mm variation over a 1.8-metre span**. Calgary concrete slabs — especially in homes built in the 1970s through 1990s — frequently have high spots near control joints, trowel ridges, or dips that exceed this tolerance. **Self-levelling compound** can correct low areas at a cost of $2 to $5 per square foot where needed, and **grinding** takes down high spots for $1 to $3 per square foot. Cracks in the slab should be filled with a flexible repair compound, though SPC rigid core LVP bridges hairline cracks effectively without telegraphing them through.

Cold concrete in a Calgary winter is a real comfort concern. From October through April, basement slabs in Calgary stay cold — often 12 to 15 degrees Celsius, sometimes colder near exterior walls. LVP directly over cold concrete, even with underlayment, will feel cool underfoot. A thicker attached cork backing (1.5mm or more) helps,

and **in-floor electric radiant heat** is an increasingly popular upgrade that adds $5 to $10 per square foot but transforms a cold Calgary basement into genuinely comfortable living space. If you are considering heated floors under LVP, confirm that your specific product is rated for radiant heat — most quality SPC products are approved for surface temperatures up to 28 to 30 degrees Celsius.

For a bare-concrete basement installation including moisture testing, vapour barrier, and quality SPC LVP, budget **$5 to $9 per square foot installed** — roughly $3,500 to $7,200 for a typical 700 square foot Calgary basement. Find local flooring contractors through the Calgary Construction Network at calgaryconstructionnetwork.com.

Looking for experienced contractors? The Calgary Construction Network connects homeowners with qualified professionals:

- Upper Cut Landscaping LTD
- Radon Lab
- PLATINUM Pool & Spa Services Ltd
- Amar Homes Inc
- True North Overhead Doors

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Q16

Is SPC or WPC luxury vinyl better for Calgary homes with in-floor heating?

SPC (stone polymer composite) is the better choice for Calgary homes with in-floor heating systems, and most radiant heat system manufacturers and flooring manufacturers agree. SPC's dense, rigid core conducts heat more efficiently than WPC's foamed core, and it handles the constant heating and cooling cycles with less dimensional movement — both critical factors in Calgary where heated floors often run from October through April.

Here is why the core composition matters so much over a radiant heat system. **SPC has a solid stone-powder and polymer core** with a density of roughly 1,900 to 2,100 kg per cubic metre. This dense, thermally conductive material transfers heat from the radiant system through the plank surface into the room efficiently, meaning you get more warmth at the floor surface for the same energy input. **WPC has a foamed polymer core** that is lighter and softer underfoot but also acts as a mild thermal insulator — it slows heat transfer rather than facilitating it. In a Calgary winter where you are running heated floors for five to six months straight, that difference in thermal conductivity translates into measurable energy costs and noticeably different foot-feel warmth.

Dimensional stability under heat is the other major advantage of SPC. In-floor heating creates a constant cycle of warming and cooling at the flooring interface. Every time the thermostat calls for heat, the floor surface warms; when it cycles off, the surface cools. Over a Calgary heating season, this cycle repeats thousands of times. SPC's rigid stone-based core expands and contracts minimally through these cycles. WPC's softer foamed core is more susceptible to gradual dimensional creep — slight permanent expansion that can cause the floor to push against walls or buckle over time. This effect is amplified in Calgary by chinook events that add additional thermal stress on top of the radiant heating cycle.

Maximum surface temperature compatibility is critical. Most LVP products — both SPC and WPC — are rated for a maximum floor surface temperature of **27 to 30 degrees Celsius (80 to 85 degrees Fahrenheit)**. Your radiant heat system must have a floor sensor thermostat (not just an air temperature thermostat) that limits the surface temperature to the flooring manufacturer's specification. This is particularly important in Calgary where homeowners may be tempted to crank the floor heat during a -30 cold snap. Exceeding the maximum surface temperature voids the flooring warranty and can cause permanent warping or discolouration.

For electric radiant heat mats under LVP in Calgary, the installation requires an **electrical permit and inspection by a Safety Codes Officer**. The electrical connections must be made by a licensed electrician — this is not a DIY project regardless of how handy you are. The heat mats themselves are typically embedded in a thin layer of self-levelling compound over the concrete slab, with the LVP floating over top with appropriate underlayment. Budget **$5 to $10 per square foot** for the radiant heat system on top of the LVP installation cost of **$4 to $9 per square foot**. A typical 200 square foot Calgary bathroom with heated floors under SPC LVP runs

$2,000 to $3,800 total for both the heating system and flooring.

My bottom-line recommendation for Calgary homes with in-floor heating: choose SPC rigid core, confirm the product is rated for radiant heat at your system's maximum surface temperature, and ensure a floor-sensing thermostat is installed. Get matched with a flooring professional experienced with heated floor installations through Calgary Floor Installers — the radiant heat system and flooring installation should ideally be coordinated by the same team or at least between communicating contractors. Browse flooring installers through the Calgary Construction Network directory at calgaryconstructionnetwork.com/directory?trade=flooring.

Q17

How long does professional LVP installation take for a 1200 square foot Calgary home?

A professional LVP installation covering 1,200 square feet in a Calgary home typically takes 2 to 4 days from start to finish, including furniture moving, old flooring removal, subfloor preparation, LVP installation, and trim work. A straightforward installation with minimal subfloor issues can be completed in as little as 2 days, while homes requiring significant prep work may take up to 5 days.

Here is a realistic day-by-day breakdown for a typical Calgary whole-home LVP project. **Day one** usually covers furniture moving, old flooring removal, and subfloor assessment and preparation. Pulling up existing carpet over 1,200 square feet takes a two-person crew about half a day. Removing old vinyl, laminate, or hardwood takes longer — typically a full day for the removal alone, plus any adhesive scraping. Once the old floor is out, the crew assesses the subfloor for flatness, damage, and moisture. In Calgary homes, this assessment often reveals the need for some levelling compound, screw-down of loose plywood subfloor panels, or spot repairs — adding time to the prep phase.

Day two and three are the main installation days. An experienced two-person crew installing click-lock SPC rigid core LVP over a properly prepared subfloor can lay approximately **400 to 600 square feet per day**, depending on the layout complexity. Open-concept main floors with minimal cuts and obstacles go faster; kitchens with island cutouts, multiple doorway transitions, and complex room shapes go slower. Hallways and closets are surprisingly time-consuming relative to their square footage because of the many cuts required. At 400 to 600 square feet per day, 1,200 square feet of installation takes roughly 2 to 3 working days.

The final half-day to full day covers trim installation — baseboards, quarter-round, transition strips at doorways, stair nosing if applicable, and any final touch-ups. Trim work is detailed and takes longer than most homeowners expect, especially if the old baseboards were removed and new ones are being installed and painted.

Factors that add time in Calgary specifically: Subfloor levelling is common in Calgary homes and can add a full day if the self-levelling compound needs to cure before the LVP can go down — most products require 12 to 24 hours of cure time. In Calgary's dry winter months, this curing can take longer if humidity is extremely low, and some installers will set up humidifiers in the work area to ensure proper compound cure. Basement installations over concrete typically require moisture testing (24 to 72 hours for calcium chloride tests), which should be done in advance of the installation date so it does not add to the on-site timeline. **Acclimation of the LVP is another time factor** — while LVP requires less acclimation than hardwood, most manufacturers recommend having the product in the home for 24 to 48 hours before installation so it reaches room temperature. Have it delivered a couple of days before your scheduled installation date.

A practical timeline for planning purposes: schedule the moisture test (if needed) one week before installation, have the LVP delivered 2 to 3 days before the crew arrives, and plan for the crew to be in your home for 2 to 4 full working days. If you need to be out of the house during installation, most of the work is manageable for the household — it is dusty but not toxic, and rooms can often be done in phases so you still have living space. Get matched with a flooring professional for a timeline estimate specific to your home through Calgary Floor Installers.

Looking for experienced contractors? The Calgary Construction Network connects homeowners with qualified professionals:

- Keystone Exteriors
- Amar Homes Inc
- Dealtwith.
- Calgary Custom Concepts
- Quality count construction Ltd.

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Q18

What wear layer thickness LVP do I need for a Calgary rental property?

For a Calgary rental property, the minimum wear layer you should consider is 12 mil, but 20 mil is the smart investment that most experienced Calgary landlords settle on. The wear layer is the top protective coating that takes all the abuse — foot traffic, furniture movement, pet scratches, dropped objects — and in a rental where you cannot control how tenants treat the floor, a thicker wear layer directly translates to more years before replacement.

Here is the practical math for Calgary rental properties. A **6 to 8 mil wear layer** — common in the cheapest builder-grade LVP — will show noticeable wear paths and scratches within 2 to 4 years under typical tenant use. With turnovers, furniture dragging, and the grit and road salt that Calgary tenants track in during winter, cheap wear layers deteriorate fast. At $3 to $4.50 per square foot installed, it seems like a bargain — until you are replacing it again in 3 to 5 years at the same cost plus another round of tenant disruption.

A **12 mil wear layer** is the minimum for rental use and runs roughly $4 to $5.50 per square foot installed. It will handle moderate residential traffic for 7 to 10 years and resists most casual scratches. This is a reasonable choice for a **lower-rent Calgary property** — a basement suite, a starter rental in a community like Forest Lawn or Penbrooke, or a property where you are keeping material costs tight and accepting more frequent replacement cycles.

A **20 mil wear layer** is the sweet spot for most Calgary rentals and costs $5.50 to $7.50 per square foot installed. At this thickness, the floor handles heavy residential traffic for **15 to 20 years**, resists pet scratches from medium and large dogs (extremely common in Calgary rental households), and still looks presentable through multiple tenant turnovers. For a standard Calgary rental at 800 to 1,000 square feet of living space, the total installed cost runs **$4,400 to $7,500** — and that floor will likely last through 4 to 6 tenant turnovers before showing enough wear to warrant replacement.

Beyond wear layer, here are the specs that matter for Calgary rental LVP. Choose **SPC rigid core** over WPC — it is harder to dent, more dimensionally stable through Calgary's temperature extremes, and handles the rough treatment that comes with tenant move-ins and move-outs. Go with a **textured or embossed surface** rather than smooth gloss — textures hide minor scratches and scuffs that tenants inevitably cause. Avoid very light colours like blonde oak or whitewash — they show dirt, scuffs, and damage more readily than medium-toned greys, warm browns, or hickory-look patterns. And choose a product with an **attached underlayment** to simplify installation and ensure consistent moisture protection, especially for basement suites.

One landlord-specific tip for Calgary: waterproof LVP in a rental property is effectively insurance against tenant-caused water damage. A tenant who overflows a bathtub, forgets about a running dishwasher, or has a washing machine leak will destroy laminate or hardwood flooring — but LVP survives and only needs drying. Given Calgary's extremely dry indoor air in winter, you are less likely to develop mould from water incidents than you would in a humid climate, but prompt drying is still important. For help finding an installer experienced with rental property flooring, browse the Calgary Construction Network directory at calgaryconstructionnetwork.com/directory?trade=flooring.

Q19

Does LVP look cheap compared to real hardwood in a Calgary home for resale?

Premium LVP installed well does not look cheap to most Calgary homebuyers — and in many cases, it is actually the smarter flooring choice for resale in this market. The perception gap between LVP and real hardwood has narrowed dramatically over the past five years as product quality has improved, and Calgary's real estate market increasingly values practicality alongside aesthetics.

Let me give you the honest picture from both sides. **Real hardwood undeniably carries prestige.** When a potential buyer walks into a Calgary home and sees wide-plank white oak or hand-scraped hickory, they notice. Hardwood signals quality construction and premium finishes, and real estate agents consistently report that hardwood floors are a top-three feature buyers look for. In higher-end Calgary communities like Aspen Woods, Elbow Park, Altadore, or Mount Royal, buyers expect real wood and may view LVP as a downgrade regardless of quality.

However, Calgary is not Toronto or Vancouver when it comes to buyer expectations across the broader market. In the communities where most Calgary homes sell — the $400,000 to $700,000 range in areas like McKenzie Towne, Coventry Hills, Panorama Hills, Auburn Bay, and Cranston — buyers are primarily looking for **clean, modern, well-maintained floors** rather than specifically requiring real hardwood. A quality LVP installation with consistent colour, proper transitions, and professional trim work reads as "updated and move-in ready" to the vast majority of these buyers. Many younger Calgary buyers actually prefer LVP because they understand its durability and water resistance and plan to have pets and children.

What makes LVP look cheap is cheap LVP and poor installation — not the material itself. The factors that scream "vinyl" to a discerning eye include: thin planks that feel hollow and click underfoot, repetitive patterns where the same printed plank appears every three or four rows, a glossy plastic sheen instead of a matte or semi-matte finish, cheap-looking transitions and trim, gaps at walls, and uneven seams. All of these are avoidable. **Premium SPC products with embossed-in-register textures** — where the surface texture follows the printed wood grain — are genuinely difficult to distinguish from real wood unless you get on your hands and knees. Products with longer, wider planks (7 to 9 inches wide, 48 to 60 inches long), matte or low-sheen finishes, and varied plank patterns with multiple unique designs look substantially more authentic than narrow, short, repetitive budget products.

For resale-focused Calgary renovations, here is the practical calculus. Engineered hardwood on the main floor costs $7 to $14 per square foot installed. Premium LVP costs $6 to $9 per square foot installed. For a 1,000 square foot main floor, the difference is roughly $1,000 to $5,000. If you are selling in a premium neighbourhood, that difference is worth paying — hardwood adds more than its cost differential in perceived value. If you are in a mid-range community, premium LVP delivers 90 percent of the visual impact at 60 percent of the cost and adds the

bonus of waterproof, worry-free living that appeals to a large segment of Calgary buyers. The strongest resale strategy is often the split approach: **engineered hardwood on the main floor, quality LVP in the basement and wet areas**. This gives buyers the premium feel where they notice it most while providing practical performance everywhere else. Need help choosing the right product for your resale renovation? Get matched with a flooring professional through Calgary Floor Installers for a free consultation.

Looking for experienced contractors? The Calgary Construction Network connects homeowners with qualified professionals:

- Royland Stucco
- Quality count construction Ltd.
- Mike’s Restoration Service
- Radon Lab
- True North Overhead Doors

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Q20

How much should I budget for LVP flooring in a Calgary duplex top and bottom?

For a complete LVP installation in both units of a Calgary duplex — top and bottom — budget between $12,000 and $25,000 total, depending on product quality, the condition of the existing subfloors, and whether you are doing both units simultaneously or in phases. Doing both units at once typically saves 10 to 15 percent on labour compared to two separate projects.

Let me break down the numbers for a typical Calgary duplex. Most Calgary side-by-side or up-down duplexes have approximately **700 to 1,000 square feet per unit**, putting total flooring area at **1,400 to 2,000 square feet** across both units. At current Calgary market rates for quality mid-range SPC rigid core LVP, here is the realistic cost structure.

Materials and standard installation at $5.50 to $7.50 per square foot for mid-range product: **$7,700 to $15,000** for 1,400 to 2,000 square feet. This includes the LVP planks, underlayment (or attached backing), and standard floating installation. **Old flooring removal** at $1 to $2.50 per square foot adds **$1,400 to $5,000** depending on what is currently down — carpet is cheapest to remove, glued-down vinyl or tile is most expensive. **Subfloor preparation** varies widely but averages $1 to $3 per square foot in the areas that need it. For a duplex, budget

roughly **$1,000 to $4,000** for levelling compound, plywood repairs, and moisture mitigation where needed. **Trim and transitions** — baseboards, quarter-round, T-moldings at doorways, stair nosing — run $3 to $6 per linear foot installed and typically add **$1,500 to $3,500** for both units combined. **Furniture moving** adds $300 to $600 per unit.

For a Calgary duplex specifically, there are several factors that affect your budget and planning. **If the duplex is a rental property**, a 20-mil wear layer SPC product in the $5.50 to $7 per square foot range is the smart choice — durable enough for tenant use, waterproof for protection against tenant-caused water incidents, and available in neutral colours that appeal to a broad range of renters. **If it is an owner-occupied duplex** where you live in one unit and rent the other, you might choose a premium product for your unit ($7 to $9 per square foot) and a solid mid-range for the rental unit ($5 to $6.50 per square foot) to balance quality with budget.

Sound transmission is a major consideration for up-down duplexes. The Alberta Building Code and many municipal bylaws require minimum **STC (Sound Transmission Class) and IIC (Impact Insulation Class) ratings** between dwelling units. If your duplex has an upper and lower unit, the flooring system — including underlayment — must meet these sound requirements. Standard foam underlay may not suffice; you may need an **acoustically rated underlayment** like cork or specialized rubber that adds $1 to $2.50 per square foot but meets code requirements. Failing to address sound transmission can result in complaints, bylaw issues, and potentially having to tear up and redo the installation.

Here is a realistic budget summary for both units: Budget-friendly approach (12-mil wear layer, basic product): **$12,000 to $16,000**. Recommended mid-range approach (20-mil SPC, attached underlayment): **$16,000 to $21,000**. Premium approach (22-mil+ SPC, acoustic underlayment, upgraded trim): **$21,000 to $25,000**. These ranges include removal, prep, material, installation, and trim for both units. Find local flooring contractors experienced with duplex installations through the Calgary Construction Network at calgaryconstructionnetwork.com.

Looking for experienced contractors? The Calgary Construction Network connects homeowners with qualified professionals:

- Allure Residential & Commercial inc
- Bracha Concrete & Coatings Inc.
- The Original Workshop
- One OAK Flooring
- WestAim Construction Ltd.

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Q21

Can I install click-lock LVP myself in my Cochrane home or do I need a pro?

Click-lock LVP is one of the most DIY-friendly flooring products on the market, and a reasonably handy homeowner can absolutely install it successfully in a Cochrane home. That said, there is an important distinction between "possible to DIY" and "advisable to DIY" — and a few factors specific to Cochrane and the Calgary region that should influence your decision.

What makes LVP installation DIY-friendly: Click-lock SPC and WPC planks require no adhesive, no nails, and no special pneumatic tools. The planks cut easily with a utility knife and straight edge (score and snap) or an inexpensive vinyl cutter. The floating installation method means planks lock together over underlayment without attaching to the subfloor. Layout is forgiving — if you make a mistake, planks can be unlocked and repositioned. Most manufacturers include detailed installation instructions, and countless video tutorials cover every aspect of the process.

The tools you need are basic: a utility knife, a straight edge or T-square, spacers for expansion gaps, a tapping block and pull bar, a rubber mallet, a tape measure, and a pencil. If you need to make intricate cuts around door frames or irregular walls, a jigsaw or oscillating multi-tool is helpful but not essential for most rooms. Total tool investment for someone starting from scratch is roughly $50 to $100.

Where DIY goes wrong — and where Cochrane-specific conditions matter: The installation itself is straightforward, but **subfloor preparation is where most DIY LVP projects succeed or fail.** In Cochrane's newer developments — places like Fireside, Heartland, or Sunset Ridge — subfloors in homes built within the last 10 to 15 years are generally in good condition and may need minimal preparation. In older Cochrane properties, especially around the historic downtown or established areas near the Bow River, subfloors may have more issues requiring levelling compound, moisture mitigation, or plywood repair. Assessing subfloor condition and applying self-levelling compound are skills that require experience to get right.

Moisture testing on concrete slabs is non-negotiable, even for DIY installations. Cochrane sits in the same clay-heavy soil belt as Calgary, and basement slabs experience the same moisture migration issues. A calcium chloride test kit costs $20 to $30 for a DIY version, but interpreting results and knowing what mitigation to apply if levels are high is where professional knowledge adds value.

My honest recommendation for Cochrane homeowners considering DIY LVP: If you are installing in a single room or a straightforward open area with a subfloor in good condition — say a basement rec room, a bedroom, or a home office — **DIY is a reasonable choice that can save you $2 to $4 per square foot in labour costs.** For a 300 square foot room, that is $600 to $1,200 in savings. Take your time, watch the manufacturer's installation videos, and pay careful attention to expansion gaps (minimum 6 to 8mm at all walls — critical in our climate where

chinook temperature swings cause more movement than you might expect).

If you are doing a whole-home installation, especially one involving multiple rooms, complex transitions between spaces, stairs, challenging cuts around kitchen islands, or installation over concrete with uncertain moisture conditions, **hiring a professional is worth the investment.** A professional crew will complete a 1,200 square foot Cochrane home in 2 to 3 days — a job that would take a DIYer two to three weekends. Professional installation also preserves the full manufacturer warranty, which some brands void for non-professional installation. Browse flooring installers serving Cochrane through the Calgary Construction Network directory at calgaryconstructionnetwork.com/directory?trade=flooring — many Calgary-based installers regularly serve Cochrane and the surrounding communities.

Q22

What happens to LVP flooring if my Calgary basement gets water in a spring thaw?

If your Calgary basement gets water during spring thaw, the LVP planks themselves will be completely fine — they are 100 percent waterproof and will not swell, warp, delaminate, or suffer any structural damage. This is the single biggest advantage LVP holds over every other flooring option in a Calgary basement. However, what happens around and under the LVP matters enormously, and your response in the hours after water intrusion determines whether you are looking at a simple cleanup or a major remediation project.

Here is exactly what to do if water enters your Calgary basement with LVP flooring. First, **stop the water source** if possible — confirm your sump pump is running, check for foundation wall seepage, and if water is coming in through a window well or floor drain backup, address it immediately. Second, **remove standing water as quickly as possible** using a wet vacuum, sump pump, or towels. Water sitting on top of the LVP surface causes no damage to the flooring — but it will migrate through the expansion gaps at the walls and seep underneath the floating floor.

Water under a floating LVP floor is the real concern. When spring melt pushes water through Calgary's clay soil and into your basement — whether through foundation cracks, the slab-wall joint, or up through the slab itself — that water gets trapped in the space between the concrete slab and the bottom of the LVP. In a dark, warm cavity with no air circulation, trapped water creates ideal conditions for **mould growth** within 24 to 48 hours. This is why speed matters.

If water has gotten under your LVP, you need to **remove sections of the flooring to allow drying.** The good news is that click-lock floating LVP is designed to be disassembled — start at the wall closest to the water source, remove the baseboards, and unclick planks working back from the wall. Lean the removed planks against a wall to dry (they will be fine) and set up fans and a dehumidifier to dry the concrete slab. In Calgary's dry spring air, a bare concrete slab with good air circulation and a dehumidifier can dry in 2 to 5 days depending on how much water was present. **Do not reinstall the LVP until the slab moisture tests below acceptable levels** — a simple plastic sheet taped to the slab for 24 hours will show you whether moisture is still migrating up.

What to check for after a spring thaw water event in a Calgary basement: Inspect the underlayment — if you used standard foam underlay rather than closed-cell waterproof underlayment, it likely absorbed water and must be replaced. Check for mould on the concrete surface and the bottom of baseboards. Inspect the drywall at the base of walls for wicking — drywall absorbs water like a sponge and mould can develop behind baseboards invisibly. Sniff for musty odours in the weeks following the event.

Prevention for future Calgary spring thaws: Ensure your sump pump is functional and has a battery backup — power outages during spring storms are common. Grade the soil around your foundation to slope away from the house. Ensure downspouts discharge at least 2 metres from the foundation. Consider a **waterproof closed-cell underlayment** or a dimpled membrane under your LVP that creates an air gap for minor moisture migration without trapping water. And maintain your weeping tile system — in Calgary's clay-heavy soil, weeping tile can become clogged or overwhelmed during heavy spring melt.

The bottom line: LVP is by far the most resilient flooring for a Calgary basement prone to spring thaw water. Carpet would be destroyed. Hardwood would warp permanently. Laminate would swell and delaminate. LVP survives, can be removed and reinstalled, and protects your investment. If you need professional help assessing or reinstalling after water damage, find flooring contractors through the Calgary Construction Network at calgaryconstructionnetwork.com.

Looking for experienced contractors? The Calgary Construction Network connects homeowners with qualified professionals:

- True North Overhead Doors
- Upper Cut Landscaping LTD
- UR COWRY CABINETS
- Amar Homes Inc
- Ardco Construction

View all contractors ?

Q23

How does the cost of LVP compare to laminate for a Calgary whole-home install?

LVP costs roughly 20 to 40 percent more than laminate for a whole-home installation in Calgary, but the gap narrows significantly when you factor in laminate's limitations and the additional costs they create in certain rooms. For a typical 1,200 to 1,500 square foot Calgary home, you are looking at approximately **$3,600 to $10,500 for laminate** versus **$4,800 to $13,500 for LVP** — a difference of roughly $1,200 to $3,000 in total project cost.

Here is the detailed comparison at current Calgary market rates. **Laminate flooring** runs **$3 to $7 per square foot installed**. At the low end, you get a basic 7mm product with an AC3 wear rating suitable for bedrooms and light-traffic areas. At the high end, you get a premium 12mm product with AC5 commercial rating, realistic embossed textures, and enhanced locking systems. **LVP (SPC rigid core)** runs **$4 to $9 per square foot installed**, with the same progression from basic to premium. The material cost difference is roughly $1 to $2 per square foot, and labour costs are comparable since both use click-lock floating installation.

Where the real cost comparison gets interesting is in room-by-room suitability. Laminate is **not waterproof** — its HDF (high-density fibreboard) core swells permanently when exposed to standing water, and the damage is irreversible. This means laminate is not recommended for **bathrooms, laundry rooms, kitchens (especially near dishwashers and sinks), or basements** where moisture risk exists. If you install laminate throughout a Calgary home, you will need a different flooring material in these wet areas — typically tile or vinyl — which adds transition complexity and additional per-square-foot costs for the alternative material. LVP, by contrast, can go everywhere in the home with a single consistent product, simplifying the installation and creating a seamless visual flow.

For a **Calgary basement specifically**, laminate is a risky choice. Calgary's clay soil pushes moisture through basement slabs year-round, and even with a vapour barrier, the humidity levels at the slab surface create a hostile environment for HDF-core products. A single sump pump failure, spring thaw water intrusion, or hot water tank leak will destroy laminate permanently — and basements account for a significant portion of most Calgary homes' finished square footage. LVP handles all of these scenarios without damage.

Durability is another differentiator that affects long-term cost. Quality LVP with a 20-mil wear layer handles pet scratches, dropped objects, and heavy furniture better than most laminate in the same price range. Laminate's photographic print layer, while increasingly realistic, chips and cannot be repaired when damaged — you have to replace individual planks, and matching discontinued patterns can be difficult. LVP's thicker wear layer resists most impacts, and individual damaged planks in a floating installation can be replaced relatively easily.

The bottom-line recommendation for a whole-home Calgary installation: If budget is the absolute top priority and you are installing only on the main floor and upper level (no basement, no bathrooms), laminate at $3 to $5 per square foot offers good value. If you want a single product that performs everywhere in the home — including the basement, bathrooms, kitchen, and laundry room — LVP at $5 to $7 per square foot is the better investment. The additional $1,500 to $3,000 for a typical Calgary home buys you waterproof performance, superior durability, and a product that handles Calgary's chinook temperature swings and basement moisture conditions without compromise. Need help deciding? Get matched with a flooring professional for a free estimate through Calgary Floor Installers — browse flooring contractors at calgaryconstructionnetwork.com/directory?trade=flooring.

Disclaimer: This guide is provided for informational purposes only by Calgary Floor Installers. It does not constitute professional advice. Always consult qualified, licensed contractors and your local building authority before starting any flooring project. Information is current as of April 5, 2026 and may change. Visit **calgaryfloorinstallers.com** for the latest answers.