NEW BRUNSWICK FLOORING

Vinyl & LVP

Luxury vinyl plank, luxury vinyl tile, sheet vinyl, SPC and WPC core options, waterproof flooring for NB conditions

28 Expert Answers from Floor IQ

newbrunswickflooring.com/construction-brain

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Q1

Can New Brunswick LVP go over old tile?

Yes, you can install LVP over old tile in New Brunswick — but only if the tile meets specific conditions first. Skipping the assessment step is where most NB homeowners run into trouble.

The tile surface needs to be flat, fully bonded, and in good condition. Walk the entire floor and press down on every tile — any hollow sound or movement means that tile is delaminating from the substrate beneath it. Loose or cracked tiles must be removed and the voids filled with self-levelling compound before LVP goes down. LVP is thin and flexible enough that it will telegraph any unevenness directly to the surface, creating visible high spots and accelerating wear. The industry standard for LVP installation is a subfloor that varies no more than **3/16 of an inch over a 10-foot span** — old tile floors in NB homes often fall outside this tolerance.

Grout lines are the other critical factor. Standard ceramic or porcelain tile with grout joints deeper than **1/16 of an inch** will show through most LVP products over time, especially in high-traffic areas. You have two options: skim-coat the entire tile surface with a floor-levelling compound to fill the grout lines flush, or choose a thicker, more rigid **SPC-core LVP** (stone plastic composite, typically 6mm or thicker) that bridges minor surface variation better than thinner WPC products.

NB-specific moisture considerations matter here. If the tile is in a kitchen, bathroom, or basement — common scenarios in Moncton, Fredericton, and Saint John homes — you need to think about what's happening beneath that tile. Old tile floors in NB basements often sit directly on concrete slabs that continuously release moisture vapour, especially during spring snowmelt from April through June. LVP is 100% waterproof on its surface, but moisture trapped between the tile and the LVP can cause adhesion issues with glue-down products and create mould conditions in the underlayment. Do a **calcium chloride or RH probe moisture test** on the concrete before proceeding — this costs $50–$150 and takes 24–72 hours but tells you exactly what you're dealing with.

One critical warning for older NB homes: if the existing tile was installed before 1986, the tile itself or the adhesive beneath it may contain asbestos. Installing LVP over intact tile is generally safe — you're not disturbing it — but if any tiles are cracked, crumbling, or need to be removed, **stop and test before doing anything**. Asbestos testing runs $25–$50 per sample and is non-negotiable under NB workplace health and safety regulations.

For a typical NB kitchen or bathroom tile floor in good condition, installing quality SPC-core LVP over top is a smart, cost-effective approach. You avoid the mess and cost of tile removal ($1–$4/sq ft), keep the existing moisture barrier intact, and end up with a warmer, quieter floor. Budget **$5–$12/sq ft fully installed** for quality LVP in the NB market, plus $2–$4/sq ft for levelling compound if the grout lines need filling.

This is a project where a professional eye during the assessment phase pays off. If you'd like help finding a local installer to evaluate your tile floor, New Brunswick Flooring can match you with a flooring professional in your area

for free — browse the directory at **newbrunswickconstructionnetwork.com/directory?trade=flooring**.

Q2

Does New Brunswick LVP click lock or glue down?

In New Brunswick, click-lock LVP is by far the most common installation method for residential projects, and it's the right choice for most NB homes. Glue-down LVP is used in specific commercial or high-stress applications but is rarely the best option for typical NB homeowners.

Click-lock (floating) LVP works exceptionally well in New Brunswick's climate because the floor is free to expand and contract as a single unit across NB's dramatic seasonal humidity swings. When your home drops to 25% RH in a January cold snap and climbs back to 65% in August, a floating floor moves with those changes without buckling or gapping. The key is leaving proper **8-12mm expansion gaps** around all walls, cabinets, door frames, and fixed objects — NB's humidity range makes this more critical here than in drier inland provinces. Undersized gaps are the number one cause of LVP buckling in NB homes during summer.

SPC (Stone Plastic Composite) core is the click-lock product you want for New Brunswick conditions. SPC is dimensionally rigid and virtually unaffected by temperature and humidity changes, making it ideal for NB's seasonal extremes. WPC (Wood Plastic Composite) core is softer underfoot but expands slightly more with temperature — still a good product, but SPC handles NB conditions with more consistency. Brands like COREtec, Shaw Floorte, and Mannington Adura are well-regarded and widely available through NB flooring suppliers.

Glue-down LVP is typically reserved for commercial spaces with heavy rolling loads (retail, healthcare, offices), installations over radiant heat where a floating floor would trap too much heat, or situations where floor height is extremely restricted. The downside in an NB residential context is that glue-down floors are much harder to remove and replace, and if moisture gets under a glued floor on a concrete slab — which is a real risk in NB basements — it can cause adhesive failure and edge lifting across large areas.

For NB basements specifically, click-lock SPC LVP over a dimpled drainage membrane (like Delta-FL) is the gold standard. The membrane creates an air gap between the concrete and the flooring, allowing moisture vapour to escape rather than accumulate under the floor. Never glue LVP directly to an NB basement slab without thorough moisture testing — calcium chloride or RH probe testing is worth the $50-$150 investment before committing to any installation method below grade.

Click-lock LVP is also one of the most DIY-friendly flooring options available. A homeowner comfortable with basic tools can tackle a single room or basement installation with good results. For larger open-concept spaces (500+ sq

ft), complex layouts with lots of angles, or installations over radiant heat, a professional installer will get better results with expansion planning and pattern consistency.

Fully installed, quality click-lock LVP in New Brunswick runs $5-$12/sq ft depending on the product and project complexity. If you're ready to get quotes, New Brunswick Flooring can match you with local installers for free — or browse contractors through the New Brunswick Construction Network directory at newbrunswickconstructionnetwork.com/directory?trade=flooring.

Q3

What is the difference between peel-and-stick vinyl plank and click-lock LVP for a budget NB flooring project?

Peel-and-stick vinyl plank and click-lock LVP are both affordable, waterproof options — but they perform very differently, and in New Brunswick's humidity climate, that difference matters a lot.

Peel-and-stick vinyl plank (also called self-adhesive vinyl plank) uses a pressure-sensitive adhesive backing that bonds directly to the subfloor. Click-lock LVP uses an interlocking tongue-and-groove edge profile to create a floating floor that sits on top of the subfloor without adhesive. Both are 100% waterproof, both come in realistic wood and stone visuals, and both are genuinely DIY-friendly — but they suit different situations and budgets.

Peel-and-Stick Vinyl Plank

Peel-and-stick is the cheaper entry point, typically **$1.50-$3.00/sq ft** for materials. The appeal is obvious: peel the backing, press it down, done. No underlayment, no spacers, no special tools. For a small bathroom floor or laundry room in a rental property, it gets the job done.

The problem is that peel-and-stick is extremely **subfloor-dependent**. The adhesive requires a perfectly smooth, clean, flat surface — any bump, dip, seam, or debris shows through immediately and causes edges to lift over time. In NB's older housing stock, where subfloors are often board-on-board construction from the 1950s and 60s, peel-and-stick almost always requires a full plywood overlay first, which adds **$1.50-$3.00/sq ft** in materials and labour and erases much of the cost advantage. The adhesive also weakens with temperature fluctuations — a common issue in NB homes where unheated spaces (mudrooms, cottages, seasonal camps) see wide temperature swings.

Peel-and-stick planks are also **thin** — typically 2-3mm — which means they offer almost no comfort underfoot and do little to hide minor subfloor imperfections despite the adhesive bond.

Click-Lock LVP

Quality click-lock LVP runs **$3-$7/sq ft** for materials, with premium SPC (stone plastic composite) core products from brands like COREtec, Shaw Floorte, or Mannington Adura reaching $5-$8/sq ft. Add $2-$5/sq ft for professional installation, or do it yourself with basic tools. The floating system means planks interlock and move together as a unit — no adhesive to fail, no permanent commitment to the subfloor.

For NB's seasonal humidity swings, click-lock LVP is the smarter choice. A quality SPC core product is **dimensionally stable** through NB's 30-50% annual humidity range, meaning it won't telegraph subfloor imperfections the way thin peel-and-stick does, and it handles the expansion and contraction cycle without edge lifting. You do need **8-12mm expansion gaps** around all walls and fixed objects — NB's summer humidity makes this non-negotiable — but the floating system accommodates that movement naturally.

Click-lock LVP is also thicker (typically 5-8mm for quality products), warmer underfoot, and significantly more comfortable to walk on. With a good underlayment, it also provides meaningful sound dampening — important in multi-storey NB homes.

Which One Makes Sense for Your Project?

For a **tight budget on a small, low-traffic area** with a perfectly flat subfloor — a bathroom, closet, or laundry room — peel-and-stick can work. For **anywhere else in an NB home**, click-lock LVP is the better investment. The price difference is modest, the performance difference is significant, and the longevity difference is dramatic. Quality click-lock LVP lasts 15-25 years; budget peel-and-stick in a real NB environment often starts lifting within 3-5 years.

If you're covering a basement, kitchen, or main living area, click-lock LVP on a dimpled drainage membrane (for concrete) or foam underlayment with vapour barrier (for wood subfloor) is the right call for NB conditions.

Need help finding a flooring professional for your project? New Brunswick Flooring can match you with a local installer for free — browse contractors through the New Brunswick Construction Network directory.

Q4

What is the best luxury vinyl plank for a NB aging-in-place renovation where slip resistance is critical?

For an aging-in-place renovation in New Brunswick, the best LVP combines a textured, matte surface finish with a rigid SPC core, a wear layer of at least 20 mil, and a coefficient of friction (COF) rating of 0.60 or higher — with brands like COREtec, Shaw Floorte, and Mannington Adura Max consistently meeting these benchmarks.

Slip resistance in LVP comes down to surface texture and finish, not just the material itself. High-gloss LVP looks beautiful in showrooms but becomes dangerously slippery when wet — a serious concern in NB bathrooms, entryways, and kitchens where tracked-in rain, snow, and spring mud are facts of life from October through April. You want an **embossed-in-register (EIR) texture** — where the surface texture aligns with the printed wood grain — rather than a uniform flat emboss. This creates micro-channels that displace water underfoot and dramatically improve wet traction. Look for products specifically labelled **matte or low-sheen finish** with a COF of 0.60 or above (the Americans with Disabilities Act threshold for wet slip resistance, which is the industry standard used by most manufacturers).

SPC (stone plastic composite) core is the right choice for an NB aging-in-place project over WPC (wood plastic composite). SPC is denser and more dimensionally rigid, which means it won't flex or shift underfoot — important for walker and cane stability. It also handles NB's humidity swings better, with virtually zero expansion or contraction between our bone-dry February heating season and our humid August. A **20 mil wear layer minimum** is non-negotiable for a high-traffic aging-in-place home; 28 mil or 40 mil options from COREtec Plus Enhanced or Shaw Floorte Pro give you decades of durability and maintain their textured surface longer than thinner wear layers that polish smooth with foot traffic over time.

NB-Specific Considerations

New Brunswick's entryways take a beating — salt, sand, and snowmelt tracked in from November through March create wet, gritty conditions that accelerate wear and increase slip risk near doors. Choose a product with **attached underlayment that includes a moisture barrier**, and make sure your installer leaves proper **10mm expansion gaps** around all walls and fixed objects. NB's seasonal humidity swing of 30-50% RH means even rigid SPC needs room to breathe. In bathrooms, pay attention to **transition strips** between the LVP and any adjacent tile — flush or low-profile transitions eliminate trip hazards that are especially dangerous for aging-in-place applications.

Practical Tips

Pair your LVP selection with **area rugs featuring non-slip backing** in high-risk zones (beside the tub, at the kitchen sink, at exterior doors), but avoid thick rugs over LVP near doorways where they can bunch and create a trip hazard. For bathroom installations specifically, **COREtec Pro Plus Enhanced** and **Mannington Adura Max** both carry strong wet COF ratings and are widely available through NB flooring suppliers. Ask your supplier to show you the **technical data sheet** for any product you're considering — COF ratings should be listed there. If a supplier can't produce that document, that's a red flag.

When to Hire a Pro

LVP installation is one of the more DIY-friendly flooring projects, but for an aging-in-place renovation, **hire a professional installer**. Proper subfloor levelling is critical — even a 3mm hump under rigid SPC creates a flex point that can cause click-lock joints to fail and creates an uneven surface that increases fall risk. A professional will also ensure correct transition placement and expansion gap management throughout the home.

New Brunswick Flooring can match you with a local installer experienced in aging-in-place projects — get matched for free through the New Brunswick Construction Network directory.

Q5

What is the environmental impact of vinyl plank flooring and are there more sustainable LVP options available in NB?

Luxury vinyl plank (LVP) has a significant environmental footprint due to its petroleum-based PVC content and chemical manufacturing process, but newer bio-based and recycled-content options are becoming available in New Brunswick that reduce this impact.

Traditional LVP flooring is manufactured primarily from polyvinyl chloride (PVC), a plastic derived from petroleum and chlorine. The production process releases volatile organic compounds (VOCs) and requires substantial energy input. Most LVP products also contain phthalate plasticizers to maintain flexibility, though many manufacturers have moved to phthalate-free formulations in recent years. The **wear layer** typically includes aluminum oxide and other additives for durability, while the **backing layer** may contain fiberglass or other synthetic materials.

However, LVP's environmental impact must be weighed against its **exceptional durability and moisture resistance** — critical factors in New Brunswick's Maritime climate. A quality LVP installation can last 15-25 years without replacement, compared to carpet (5-10 years) or lower-grade laminate (8-12 years) that may fail prematurely in NB's humidity cycles. This longevity reduces the frequency of replacement and associated waste.

More sustainable LVP options available through NB flooring retailers include products with **recycled content cores** (using post-consumer plastic waste), **bio-based plasticizers** derived from plant oils instead of petroleum, and **low-VOC formulations** that meet stringent indoor air quality standards like FloorScore or Greenguard Gold certification. Brands like **Mannington Adura**, **Shaw Floorte**, and **COREtec** offer lines with 25-40% recycled content and phthalate-free construction.

For NB homeowners prioritizing sustainability, consider these alternatives: **Cork flooring** is renewable, naturally antimicrobial, and provides excellent insulation during our long heating season, though it requires more maintenance than LVP. **Bamboo flooring** grows rapidly and can handle moderate moisture better than hardwood, but still needs humidity control in Maritime conditions. **Reclaimed hardwood** eliminates new tree harvesting while providing the authentic wood character that many NB homeowners prefer.

The most environmentally responsible approach is **choosing the right product for your specific conditions** to maximize lifespan. Installing moisture-sensitive materials like standard laminate in NB basements leads to premature failure and waste. LVP's waterproof performance makes it the longest-lasting choice for bathrooms, kitchens, and below-grade spaces in our climate.

When selecting sustainable LVP, look for products with third-party environmental certifications, ask retailers about recycled content percentages, and choose thicker wear layers (20+ mil) that can withstand decades of use without showing wear patterns. The initial environmental cost of manufacturing is offset when the floor performs well for 20+ years instead of requiring replacement after 8-10 years.

Need help finding flooring contractors who work with sustainable products? New Brunswick Flooring can match you with professionals familiar with eco-friendly options available in the Maritime market.

Q6

What is the best LVP flooring for a NB veterinary clinic or pet grooming business that gets constant water exposure?

For a New Brunswick veterinary clinic or grooming business, you need 100% waterproof LVP with a rigid SPC (Stone Plastic Composite) core, commercial-grade wear layer, and antimicrobial surface treatment. The constant water exposure, cleaning chemicals, and pet traffic demand the most durable waterproof flooring available.

Commercial-Grade SPC LVP is your best option for this application. Look for products with a minimum 20-mil wear layer (residential LVP typically has 6-12 mil) and a rigid SPC core that won't expand, contract, or delaminate

under constant moisture exposure. The stone-plastic composite core is completely waterproof and dimensionally stable — critical for NB's humidity swings and your facility's wet conditions. Premium commercial brands like Mannington Adura Rigid, Shaw Floorte Pro, COREtec Plus Enhanced, and Mohawk SolidTech offer the durability you need.

Antimicrobial surface treatments are essential for veterinary environments. Many commercial LVP products now include built-in antimicrobial protection that inhibits bacteria, mould, and mildew growth on the surface. This isn't just marketing — it's genuine protection against the pathogens common in animal care facilities. The antimicrobial treatment is embedded in the wear layer and won't wash away with regular cleaning.

Installation considerations for your high-moisture environment include using a completely waterproof adhesive if going with glue-down installation, or ensuring perfect seam sealing if using click-lock floating installation. In veterinary settings, glue-down is often preferred because it eliminates any possibility of moisture penetrating seams and reaching the subfloor. Your installer should use a moisture-resistant adhesive rated for commercial wet areas.

Subfloor preparation is critical in NB commercial spaces. If you're installing over concrete (common in commercial buildings), test for moisture vapor transmission first. Even though SPC LVP is waterproof, excessive moisture from below can cause adhesive failure or create conditions for mould growth at the subfloor level. A moisture barrier or epoxy sealer may be necessary on your concrete slab.

Maintenance advantages of quality commercial LVP include resistance to scratches from pet claws, staining from bodily fluids, and damage from cleaning chemicals. The photographic wear layer won't fade under your facility's bright lighting, and the textured surface provides slip resistance when wet — important for both staff safety and animal traction.

Budget for commercial-grade LVP at $4-$8 per square foot for materials, plus $3-$6 per square foot for professional installation with proper moisture mitigation. For a typical 800-1,200 square foot veterinary clinic, expect $6,000-$15,000 total. This investment pays for itself through durability — quality commercial LVP lasts 15-20 years in high-traffic wet environments.

Professional installation is essential for commercial applications. The installer needs experience with moisture mitigation, commercial adhesives, and seam sealing techniques. Improper installation voids warranties and leads to premature failure in wet commercial environments.

Need help finding a commercial flooring contractor experienced with veterinary facilities? New Brunswick Flooring can match you with professionals who understand the unique requirements of animal care environments.

Q7

What LVP wear layer and overall thickness do I need for a busy NB home with multiple pets and children?

For a busy NB home with pets and children, choose LVP with a minimum 20-mil (0.5mm) wear layer and 6-8mm overall thickness. The wear layer protects against scratches from pet claws and dropped toys, while the thicker construction provides better dent resistance and sound dampening for active households.

Wear Layer Requirements for High-Traffic Homes

The wear layer is the clear protective coating on top of the design layer — it's your floor's armor against daily abuse. For NB homes with pets and children, a 12-mil wear layer (the minimum for residential LVP) won't last. Pet claws, toy cars, and constant foot traffic will wear through thin wear layers within 3-5 years, leaving visible scratches and dull spots that can't be repaired.

A 20-mil wear layer handles moderate pet traffic and active children for 10-15 years. If you have large dogs with heavy claws or multiple pets, step up to 28-mil or even 40-mil commercial-grade wear layers. These thicker layers cost $1-2 more per square foot but provide dramatically better scratch resistance. Premium brands like COREtec, Shaw Floorte Pro, and Mannington Adura Max offer 20-28 mil residential options that perform beautifully in NB family homes.

Overall Thickness and Construction

Total LVP thickness affects both durability and comfort underfoot. Standard 4mm LVP feels thin and hollow, telegraphs every subfloor imperfection, and provides minimal sound dampening — not ideal when children are running around upstairs. Choose 6-8mm thickness for better performance and comfort.

Look for **SPC (Stone Plastic Composite) or WPC (Wood Plastic Composite) core construction** rather than standard vinyl. SPC cores are extremely dent-resistant and dimensionally stable in NB's humidity swings. WPC cores are slightly softer underfoot and provide better sound absorption — excellent for multi-level homes where noise transmission matters. Both handle NB's seasonal moisture changes without expanding or contracting like laminate flooring.

NB-Specific Considerations

Maritime humidity makes waterproof flooring essential for busy family homes. Children spill drinks, pets have accidents, and NB's spring moisture can create unexpected water issues. LVP's 100% waterproof construction means you can clean up any mess without worrying about moisture penetrating the floor and causing damage or odours.

The freeze-thaw cycles in NB can shift subfloors slightly in older homes. Thicker LVP with quality underlayment bridges minor subfloor imperfections better than thin products, maintaining a smooth surface even if the house settles slightly during spring thaw.

Installation and Underlayment

For maximum sound control in a busy household, install your LVP over a quality cork or foam underlayment with sound-dampening properties. This costs an extra $1-2 per square foot but dramatically reduces footstep noise transmission to rooms below — worth every penny when children are playing upstairs.

When to Hire a Professional

While LVP installation is DIY-friendly, busy family homes often have complex layouts with multiple rooms, transitions, and obstacles. Professional installers ensure proper expansion gaps around all fixed objects (crucial in NB's humidity swings) and create clean transitions between rooms that handle heavy foot traffic without separating or lifting.

Need help finding a professional flooring installer? New Brunswick Flooring can match you with experienced contractors who understand the demands of active family homes and NB's unique climate conditions.

Q8

How do I fix a single damaged LVP plank in the middle of a room without disassembling the entire floor in my NB home?

Replacing a single damaged LVP plank in the middle of a room requires cutting out the damaged piece and installing a replacement without disturbing the surrounding planks. This is one of the few mid-floor repairs that ambitious DIYers can tackle, though it requires patience and the right technique.

The key is making precise cuts that remove only the damaged plank while preserving the click-lock connections on adjacent planks. You'll need a circular saw or oscillating multi-tool, a sharp utility knife, and a replacement plank that matches your existing floor exactly. The repair technique depends on whether your LVP has a rigid SPC core (stone plastic composite) or a softer WPC core (wood plastic composite) — SPC requires more aggressive cutting while WPC can often be scored and snapped.

Start by removing the tongue edges from the damaged plank. Use a circular saw set to the exact thickness of your LVP (typically 4-8mm) to cut along the long edges, staying about 3mm inside the plank edges to avoid damaging adjacent planks. Make relief cuts every 6-8 inches, then use a sharp chisel to break out the center

section. The goal is to remove the damaged plank while leaving the groove edges of surrounding planks intact — these grooves will receive the modified replacement plank.

For the replacement plank, you'll need to **modify the click-lock system** since you can't slide it in from the end like during normal installation. Cut off the bottom lip of the groove on both long sides and one short side using a sharp utility knife or fine-tooth saw. This creates a plank that can drop into place from above rather than clicking in horizontally. Test-fit the modified plank before applying adhesive — it should sit flush with surrounding planks without forcing.

New Brunswick's humidity cycles make this repair timing-sensitive. LVP expands and contracts slightly with temperature changes, so perform this repair during stable weather — avoid the peak of summer heat or the coldest winter days when your floor may be at maximum expansion or contraction. The replacement plank needs room to move with the rest of the floor, so don't force it into a space that's too tight.

Apply a thin bead of construction adhesive or PL Premium to the subfloor where the replacement plank will sit, then carefully position the modified plank. The adhesive prevents the plank from lifting since it can't mechanically lock like the original installation. Weight the repair with books or boxes for 24 hours while the adhesive cures.

This repair works best on newer LVP installations where you can source an exact match. If your floor is more than 2-3 years old, finding matching planks becomes difficult due to production lot variations and discontinued patterns. Consider saving a few extra planks from your original installation for future repairs — store them in a dry location away from temperature extremes.

Hire a professional if the damage extends to multiple planks, if you're uncomfortable with precision cutting near expensive flooring, or if the damaged area is near complex transitions or built-in cabinets. A flooring contractor can often source matching material through trade channels and has specialized tools that make cleaner cuts with less risk to surrounding planks.

Need help finding a professional flooring installer for more extensive repairs? New Brunswick Flooring can match you with local contractors who specialize in LVP installation and repair.

Q9

How does luxury vinyl plank hold up in a NB restaurant or cafe with heavy commercial foot traffic?

Luxury vinyl plank can perform well in NB restaurants and cafes, but you need commercial-grade SPC (stone plastic composite) products specifically rated for heavy commercial traffic, not residential LVP that

will fail within 6-12 months under restaurant conditions.

Commercial-grade LVP designed for restaurants typically features 20-mil or thicker wear layers, enhanced urethane coatings, and rigid SPC cores that resist indentation from heavy equipment, chairs, and constant foot traffic. Premium commercial lines from manufacturers like Mannington, Shaw, or Tarkett are engineered for hospitality environments and carry commercial warranties of 10-15 years when properly installed and maintained.

New Brunswick's restaurant environment creates unique challenges that make material selection critical. The Maritime humidity swings that affect residential flooring are amplified in commercial kitchens where steam, temperature fluctuations, and frequent wet cleaning create extreme conditions. Unlike residential spaces, restaurants experience constant moisture exposure from dishwashing, food prep, spills, and daily mopping with commercial cleaners. Standard residential LVP will delaminate, curl at seams, and show permanent staining under these conditions.

The 100% waterproof nature of quality commercial LVP makes it superior to hardwood, laminate, or standard vinyl tile in NB restaurant applications. Grease fires, wine spills, and the acidic cleaning chemicals required by health inspectors won't penetrate properly sealed LVP seams. However, **installation quality becomes critical** — any gaps in seaming or inadequate substrate preparation allows moisture infiltration that leads to subfloor damage and eventual flooring failure.

Key specifications for NB restaurant LVP: Look for products with 20+ mil wear layers, antimicrobial treatments, slip-resistant textures (crucial for wet commercial kitchens), and SPC cores rated for 500+ pounds per square inch. The subfloor must be perfectly level and sealed — restaurant equipment creates point loads that will telegraph through any substrate imperfections. Professional installation with heat-welded seams is essential in kitchen areas where liquid penetration is guaranteed.

Maintenance requirements are intensive compared to residential applications. Daily cleaning with pH-neutral commercial cleaners, immediate spill cleanup, and periodic deep cleaning with approved products are non-negotiable. Chair glides, equipment pads, and entrance mats become essential to prevent premature wear patterns.

When to hire a professional: Commercial LVP installation requires specialized knowledge of substrate preparation, seam welding, and health department requirements that exceed typical residential flooring experience. The investment in proper installation ($8-$15 per square foot fully installed for commercial-grade products) pays for itself through extended lifespan and reduced maintenance costs. Find commercial flooring contractors experienced with NB restaurant installations through the New Brunswick Construction Network directory.

Q10

What is the cost to install commercial-grade LVP in a 3000-square-foot NB retail space?

Commercial-grade LVP installation in a 3,000 sq ft NB retail space typically costs $15,000-$27,000 fully installed, with material costs of $4-$8/sq ft and installation running $1-$3/sq ft depending on substrate preparation requirements and layout complexity.

Commercial LVP differs significantly from residential products in both performance specifications and installation requirements. **Commercial-grade LVP features enhanced wear layers** (20-40 mil compared to 6-12 mil residential), reinforced core construction for heavy foot traffic, and often requires full-spread adhesive installation rather than floating click-lock systems. Popular commercial brands like Mannington Commercial, Armstrong Flooring, and Tarkett specify these products for retail environments with their superior dimensional stability and impact resistance.

Substrate preparation accounts for a major portion of commercial flooring costs in NB retail spaces. Most commercial buildings have concrete slab floors that require moisture testing, potential moisture mitigation, and levelling compound to achieve the flat surface commercial LVP demands. Retail spaces often need extensive floor preparation to remove old adhesive, repair cracks, and ensure proper drainage away from entry doors where Maritime weather brings in moisture and debris.

Installation complexity varies significantly with layout and existing conditions. Simple rectangular spaces with minimal cuts and obstacles run toward the lower cost range, while retail spaces with fitting rooms, display fixtures, and complex perimeters require more labour time. Commercial installations also typically include cove base installation, transition strips to different flooring materials, and coordination with other trades for fixture placement.

Additional commercial considerations include:

- **Moisture testing and mitigation**: $2-$5/sq ft if concrete shows excessive moisture transmission
- **Floor levelling compound**: $2-$4/sq ft for uneven concrete
- **Adhesive removal**: $1-$3/sq ft if removing old flooring
- **Cove base installation**: $3-$6/linear foot
- **After-hours installation**: 15-25% premium to avoid disrupting business operations

Commercial projects require professional installation due to adhesive application requirements, substrate preparation complexity, and the need for warranty compliance. Most commercial LVP manufacturers void warranties for improper installation, making experienced commercial flooring contractors essential. The investment

in quality installation pays off through reduced maintenance costs and extended floor life in high-traffic retail environments.

Find commercial flooring contractors experienced with retail installations through the New Brunswick Construction Network directory at newbrunswickconstructionnetwork.com/directory?trade=flooring.

Q11

How much does it cost to install LVP in a NB staircase including bullnose nosing and risers?

LVP staircase installation in New Brunswick typically costs $75-$150 per step fully installed, including bullnose nosing and risers. For a standard 13-step staircase, expect to pay $975-$1,950 total, with premium LVP products and complex layouts pushing costs toward the higher end.

Material costs break down to $15-$35 per step for quality LVP planks, $25-$50 per step for matching stair nosing (bullnose), and $10-$20 per step for riser material. Premium brands like COREtec, Shaw Floorte, or Mannington Adura with matching stair accessories run $50-$105 per step in materials alone. The **labour component** adds $25-$45 per step for professional installation, which includes precise cutting, adhesive application, and proper fitting of nosing pieces.

Stair installation is significantly more complex than flat flooring because each step requires individual measurement, cutting, and fitting. The bullnose nosing must overhang the riser by exactly 1-1.25 inches while maintaining consistent reveal lines up the entire staircase. Most LVP stair nosing is solid vinyl or composite material that matches the plank colour and texture but provides the structural edge needed for safety and durability. In New Brunswick's humidity swings, proper adhesive selection matters — moisture-cure urethanes or MS polymers perform better than standard construction adhesives in our Maritime climate.

Preparation work often adds to the base cost. Existing carpet removal runs $5-$15 per step, while old hardwood or laminate removal costs $10-$25 per step depending on the fastening method. If the existing stair structure needs repair — loose treads, squeaky steps, or damaged substrates — add $25-$75 per affected step for carpentry work. **Stair skirts and trim work** typically require removal and reinstallation, adding $150-$400 to the project depending on complexity.

This is definitively professional-only work. Stair installation requires specialized tools (flush-cut saws, pneumatic brad nailers, oscillating multi-tools), experience with precise measurements, and knowledge of building code requirements for tread depth and riser height consistency. Mistakes on stairs are both visible and potentially dangerous — an improperly installed nosing can create a trip hazard. Most flooring contractors charge a premium

for stair work because it's time-intensive and requires their most skilled installers.

Get multiple quotes for stair projects as pricing varies significantly between contractors. Some charge per step, others quote the entire staircase as a package. Always verify that quotes include all materials (planks, nosing, risers, adhesive) and specify the LVP brand and product line to ensure accurate comparisons.

Need help finding a professional flooring installer experienced with LVP stair installations? New Brunswick Flooring can match you with qualified contractors in your area for free estimates.

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Q12

How does vinyl plank flooring perform in a wheelchair-accessible NB home with frequent wheelchair and walker traffic?

Luxury vinyl plank (LVP) is an excellent choice for wheelchair-accessible homes in New Brunswick, offering superior durability, smooth rolling surfaces, and moisture resistance that handles NB's challenging humidity conditions without the maintenance demands of hardwood.

LVP's dense core construction and protective wear layer make it exceptionally well-suited for mobility device traffic. Quality LVP with **SPC (stone plastic composite) or WPC (wood plastic composite) cores** provides the dimensional stability needed for NB's 30-50% annual humidity swings while maintaining a perfectly flat surface that won't develop gaps, cupping, or raised edges that can catch wheelchair wheels or walker legs.

Durability and wear resistance are where LVP truly excels for accessibility needs. Commercial-grade LVP with **20-mil or thicker wear layers** can handle decades of wheelchair traffic without showing wheel marks or indentations. The surface remains smooth and level, unlike hardwood that can develop worn grooves in high-traffic

paths or laminate that may chip at plank edges. Premium brands like COREtec, Shaw Floorte, and Mannington Adura offer residential products with commercial-grade durability ratings specifically designed for heavy rolling loads.

Installation considerations for wheelchair accessibility require careful attention to transitions and thresholds. LVP's thin profile (4-6mm) minimizes floor height changes, but proper transition strips at doorways and between rooms are critical to prevent catching. **Flush-mount transitions** or micro-beveled strips work better than standard raised transitions for wheelchair navigation. The floating installation method allows for easy future repairs — individual damaged planks can be replaced without disturbing the entire floor.

NB's Maritime climate makes LVP particularly advantageous over hardwood for accessible homes. Unlike solid hardwood that requires consistent 35-45% relative humidity year-round, LVP remains dimensionally stable whether your home's winter humidity drops to 25% or summer levels climb above 60%. This eliminates the seasonal gaps and movement that can create wheelchair navigation hazards with wood flooring.

Maintenance simplicity is crucial for accessible living. LVP requires only regular sweeping and damp mopping — no refinishing, no humidity monitoring, no seasonal adjustments. Spills and accidents clean up easily without staining or warping, important for homes where mobility challenges may make immediate cleanup difficult.

Surface texture selection matters for wheelchair performance. Choose **low-gloss or matte finishes** rather than high-gloss surfaces that can become slippery when wet. Subtle texture provides grip for walkers while remaining smooth enough for easy wheelchair rolling. Avoid deeply embossed textures that can collect debris or create uneven surfaces.

Subfloor preparation becomes even more critical for accessible installations. Any bumps, dips, or debris will telegraph through the thin LVP and create rolling resistance or instability for mobility devices. Professional subfloor leveling ensures the smoothest possible surface for wheelchair navigation.

For wheelchair-accessible NB homes, budget **$5-$8 per square foot** for quality LVP with commercial-grade wear layers, plus $2-$4 per square foot for professional installation with proper subfloor prep and accessibility-focused transition work. This investment provides decades of maintenance-free performance in NB's challenging climate while supporting independent mobility throughout your home.

Need help finding a professional flooring installer experienced with accessibility requirements? New Brunswick Flooring can match you with contractors familiar with mobility-friendly installations.

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Q13

Can I install LVP flooring in a NB three-season porch that drops below freezing in winter?

No, standard LVP flooring should not be installed in an unheated three-season porch in New Brunswick. While LVP is waterproof and handles humidity well, repeated freeze-thaw cycles will cause the click-lock connections to fail and the planks to shift, buckle, or separate.

Temperature Cycling Damage

LVP expands and contracts with temperature changes, and New Brunswick's winter conditions create extreme thermal cycling in unheated spaces. Your three-season porch will experience 100+ freeze-thaw cycles between November and April, with temperatures swinging from -20°C to +15°C. This constant expansion and contraction stresses the click-lock joints beyond their design limits. The planks will gradually work loose, creating gaps, raised edges, and an unstable walking surface.

The subfloor underneath also moves with temperature changes. If your porch has a concrete slab, freeze-thaw cycles can cause minor heaving and settling that telegraphs through the flooring. Wood subfloors in unheated spaces experience even more dramatic movement as moisture content fluctuates with outdoor humidity.

Better Options for Three-Season Porches

Porcelain tile is your best bet for an unheated NB porch. Choose freeze-thaw rated porcelain (not ceramic) with a slip-resistant surface texture. Install it over a properly insulated and sloped substrate with appropriate expansion joints. Professional installation runs $12-18/sq ft but will last decades through Maritime winters.

Outdoor-rated composite decking designed for ground contact can work if your porch structure allows for a raised deck system. This creates an air gap that handles freeze-thaw movement better than direct-adhered flooring.

Sealed concrete with decorative staining or stamping is another durable option if you have a concrete slab base. Add area rugs during the warmer months for comfort and style.

Timing Considerations

If you're determined to use LVP, consider it a seasonal installation that you remove each fall and reinstall each spring. Some homeowners store floating floors during winter, but this is labor-intensive and risks damaging the click-lock connections during repeated assembly.

When to Hire a Pro

Any flooring installation in an unheated space requires professional assessment of the substrate, drainage, and structural movement. The installer needs to account for seasonal expansion, proper slope for water runoff, and transition details where the porch meets heated interior spaces.

Need help finding a flooring professional experienced with three-season installations? New Brunswick Flooring can match you with contractors who understand Maritime climate challenges.

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Q14

Is luxury vinyl plank flooring good for New Brunswick basements?

Luxury vinyl plank is one of the best flooring choices for New Brunswick basements — arguably the single best option for the province's moisture conditions. LVP's 100% waterproof construction, dimensional stability, and comfortable underfoot feel make it ideally suited to the unique challenges that NB basements present, from spring moisture migration through concrete slabs to the elevated humidity that Maritime homes experience year-round below grade.

The reason LVP works so well in NB basements comes down to how it handles moisture. Unlike hardwood (which absorbs water and warps), laminate (whose HDF core swells permanently when wet), or carpet (which traps moisture and breeds mould), LVP's SPC or WPC core is completely impervious to water. You can flood it, and once the water is removed, the floor is undamaged. This matters enormously in New Brunswick, where **basement concrete slabs continuously release moisture vapour** due to the province's high water table and Maritime climate. Spring snowmelt from April through June raises the water table further, temporarily increasing moisture transmission through basement slabs across the province. LVP handles this ongoing moisture exposure without degrading.

That said, **LVP over an NB basement slab still requires proper preparation**. Before installation, perform a moisture test on the concrete. A calcium chloride test (which measures moisture vapour emission rate) or a relative humidity probe test will tell you whether moisture levels are within acceptable limits. Most LVP manufacturers specify maximum moisture readings in their warranty requirements — exceeding these limits, even with a waterproof product, can cause issues with adhesive breakdown in glue-down installations or create conditions for mould growth beneath the floor. In NB basements with elevated moisture readings, install a **dimpled drainage membrane** ($1.50 to $3.00 per square foot) between the concrete and your underlayment. This creates an air gap that allows moisture to evaporate rather than becoming trapped.

For NB basements, choose an **SPC (stone polymer composite) core LVP** rather than WPC. SPC is denser and more rigid, handling the temperature fluctuations common in NB basements (which are often cooler than main floors and may have uneven heating). SPC also resists indentation better under heavy furniture and storage. Quality SPC-core LVP runs **$3 to $7 per square foot for materials** in New Brunswick, with premium brands like COREtec, Mannington Adura Max, and Shaw Floorte Pro at $5 to $8. Add $2 to $5 per square foot for professional installation, bringing fully installed costs to **$5 to $12 per square foot**. A typical 400-square-foot NB basement rec room costs **$2,000 to $4,800 fully installed**.

Install a foam underlayment with an integrated vapour barrier beneath floating LVP — this is essential in every NB basement, even with waterproof flooring, because it adds thermal insulation (basement floors are cold in NB winters) and prevents moisture from migrating upward into your living space. If your LVP comes with pre-attached padding, do not add a second underlayment — the excessive cushion damages click-lock joints over time.

Maintain **10 to 12mm expansion gaps** around all walls and fixed objects. NB basements experience less dramatic temperature swings than main floors, but the gaps are still necessary for the floating system to function properly. Use transition strips at doorways and where basement flooring meets adjacent surfaces.

Click-lock LVP installation is one of the most DIY-friendly flooring projects available, and basements with straightforward rectangular layouts are ideal starter projects. However, if your NB basement has moisture concerns, uneven concrete, or multiple rooms requiring careful transition planning, a professional installer ensures proper moisture testing, subfloor preparation, and a finished result that holds up for years. Get matched with a flooring professional for a free estimate through New Brunswick Flooring.

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Q15

What is the best LVP brand for moisture-prone areas in NB homes?

For moisture-prone areas in New Brunswick homes, COREtec, Mannington Adura Max, and Shaw Floorte Pro consistently rank among the top-performing LVP brands, and all three are available through NB flooring retailers. The best brand for your specific situation depends on the room, your budget, and whether you prioritize waterproof performance, comfort underfoot, or scratch resistance — but any of these three will handle the Maritime moisture challenges that NB homes face.

COREtec is widely considered the brand that pioneered the modern rigid-core LVP category, and it remains a benchmark for moisture performance. Their SPC-core products are 100% waterproof with an attached cork underlayment that provides warmth and sound dampening — a meaningful advantage in NB basements where concrete floors are cold during the long heating season. COREtec products are dimensionally stable across NB's humidity swings and carry strong warranties. Expect to pay **$5 to $8 per square foot for materials** in New Brunswick. Their COREtec Pro Plus and COREtec Originals lines are particularly well-suited to NB conditions.

Mannington Adura Max uses a proprietary HydroLoc core that provides excellent waterproof performance with a slightly warmer, more resilient feel than pure SPC products. The Adura Max line is popular with NB homeowners who want the waterproof benefits of LVP but prefer a softer, less rigid feel underfoot — closer to how real hardwood feels. Mannington has an excellent reputation for realistic wood-grain visuals and consistent quality. Materials run **$5 to $7 per square foot** in NB, and the product carries a lifetime residential waterproof warranty.

Shaw Floorte Pro is Shaw's professional-grade LVP line, available through flooring retailers across New Brunswick. Their SPC-core products handle moisture, temperature fluctuations, and heavy traffic well, and Shaw's national distribution means replacement planks are easier to source if you need them years down the road. Pricing sits at **$4 to $7 per square foot for materials**, making it slightly more accessible than COREtec while still delivering premium performance.

Beyond these three, **Proximity Mills** and **Paradiso** are quality mid-range options available in the NB market at $3 to $5 per square foot, offering solid waterproof performance at a lower price point. They lack the brand recognition

and some of the advanced features (attached cork backing, proprietary core technologies) of the premium brands but perform well in standard residential applications.

When choosing an LVP brand for moisture-prone NB areas, focus on these specifications rather than just the brand name: **SPC core** (stone polymer composite) rather than WPC for basements and bathrooms, as SPC is denser and more dimensionally stable in cool, damp conditions. A **wear layer of at least 20 mil** (0.5mm) for residential use and 28 mil for areas with heavy foot traffic or pets. **Attached underlayment with vapour barrier** is a bonus that simplifies installation and adds thermal insulation — important for NB basements. And confirm that the product carries a **waterproof warranty** that specifically covers subfloor moisture, not just surface spills.

For NB's specific moisture challenges — spring snowmelt pushing moisture through basement slabs, humid Maritime summers, coastal fog in communities like Saint John and Shediac — any of the premium brands above will perform reliably. The differences between them are more about feel, appearance, and budget than moisture performance. Quality LVP from any reputable manufacturer, properly installed with appropriate moisture testing and subfloor preparation, will handle everything New Brunswick's climate throws at it.

Budget **$5 to $12 per square foot fully installed** for premium LVP in New Brunswick. Always get at least three quotes from local installers — pricing varies 25 to 40% between contractors for the same product and scope in the NB market.

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Q16

How does LVP compare to hardwood for home value in the NB real estate market?

In New Brunswick's real estate market, hardwood flooring still carries a slight premium in perceived home value, but the gap has narrowed significantly as LVP quality has improved and buyers have become more practical about Maritime moisture conditions. The honest answer is that both products add value compared to worn carpet or dated vinyl, and the right choice depends on the specific home, its location, and the rooms involved.

Real hardwood floors — particularly solid or engineered hardwood in oak, maple, or birch — carry a traditional prestige that resonates with NB homebuyers. A well-maintained hardwood floor signals quality construction and permanence, and real estate agents across Fredericton, Moncton, and Saint John consistently report that hardwood is a selling feature that buyers notice. Refinished original hardwood in older NB homes (and the province has a large stock of pre-1970s homes with beautiful hardwood under carpet) can be a significant value driver. Engineered hardwood runs **$6 to $14 per square foot fully installed** in NB, and solid hardwood runs **$8 to $14 per square foot fully installed**.

However, the NB real estate market has shifted meaningfully in recent years. Savvy buyers — particularly younger purchasers and those relocating from other provinces — increasingly recognize that **LVP is a smart, practical choice for Maritime homes**. They understand that NB's humidity swings, basement moisture, and coastal conditions make hardwood maintenance more demanding here than in Ontario or the Prairies. A home with quality LVP throughout the main floor and basement signals to these buyers that the flooring is low-maintenance, waterproof, and will not gap in winter or cup in summer. Quality LVP runs **$5 to $12 per square foot fully installed** in NB — often less than hardwood, which means you can floor the entire home for the same budget.

The practical reality is that **condition matters more than material type** when it comes to resale value. A pristine LVP floor adds more value than scuffed, gapped hardwood that needs refinishing. And refinishing hardwood costs **$3 to $6 per square foot** in NB — so if your existing hardwood is in rough shape, the cost to restore it may be comparable to installing new LVP. From a return-on-investment perspective, both quality hardwood and quality LVP installations in NB typically return 70 to 80% of their cost at resale, according to general renovation ROI benchmarks.

For NB homeowners making this decision with resale in mind, here is a practical approach: **use hardwood or engineered hardwood on the main floor living areas** (living room, dining room, hallways) where it has the most visual impact and where you can control humidity. **Use LVP in the basement, kitchen, bathrooms, entryway, and any moisture-prone areas** where hardwood would struggle with NB conditions. This hybrid approach gives you the prestige of hardwood where buyers see it first and the practical performance of LVP where moisture

demands it. Many NB flooring installers can match LVP colour tones to your hardwood species so the transition between materials is cohesive.

One important note: **do not install solid hardwood in an NB basement hoping to boost resale value**. Below-grade hardwood will fail in Maritime conditions, and a damaged hardwood basement floor is a red flag for buyers and home inspectors alike. Quality LVP in a basement adds real value; damaged hardwood subtracts it.

Ultimately, the best flooring investment for resale in the NB market is the one that looks great, performs reliably in Maritime conditions, and is professionally installed. Both hardwood and LVP achieve this when chosen for the right rooms.

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Q17

Can I install LVP over concrete in my New Brunswick basement?

Yes, LVP is one of the best flooring options to install over concrete in a New Brunswick basement, but moisture testing and proper preparation are essential before any planks go down. LVP's waterproof core makes it inherently compatible with concrete, but NB's Maritime climate means your basement slab is likely transmitting more moisture vapour than slabs in drier provinces — and ignoring this can lead to mould growth beneath the floor, adhesive failure, and warranty voidance.

Start with a moisture test — this is non-negotiable in New Brunswick. Concrete basement slabs in Maritime provinces continuously release moisture vapour from the soil below, and NB's water table sits close to the surface in many communities, particularly in river valley locations like Fredericton and Miramichi and coastal areas like Saint John and Bathurst. Spring snowmelt from April through June raises the water table further, increasing

moisture transmission through your slab. Use a **calcium chloride test** (which measures moisture vapour emission rate — you want results below 3 pounds per 1,000 square feet over 24 hours) or a **relative humidity probe test** (you want readings below 75% RH within the slab). These tests cost **$50 to $150** when performed by a professional, or you can purchase DIY test kits for $20 to $40. Budget the time — calcium chloride tests take 60 to 72 hours to produce results.

If moisture readings are within acceptable limits, your installation path is straightforward. For **floating click-lock LVP** (the most common installation method in NB basements), lay a foam underlayment with an integrated vapour barrier over the clean, dry concrete. This barrier prevents residual moisture from migrating upward, adds thermal insulation against the cold concrete (NB basement floors are notably cold from October through April), and provides a small amount of cushion. Budget **$0.50 to $1.00 per square foot** for quality underlayment. If your LVP product comes with pre-attached padding, skip the separate underlayment but still lay a standalone vapour barrier sheet — the attached pad alone does not provide adequate moisture protection over NB basement concrete.

If moisture readings are elevated — common in older NB homes, homes without exterior drainage tile, or any basement that has experienced water intrusion — install a **dimpled drainage membrane** ($1.50 to $3.00 per square foot) over the concrete before your underlayment. The dimpled membrane creates an air gap that allows moisture to evaporate and drain rather than becoming trapped beneath the flooring. This is the standard approach for NB basements with moderate moisture concerns and is far more effective than simply adding extra underlayment layers.

The concrete surface must be **flat to within 3mm over a 1-metre span**. NB basement slabs, especially in homes built before the 1980s, commonly have dips, humps, and rough patches that need attention. Use **self-levelling compound** ($2 to $4 per square foot applied) to flatten significant irregularities. Minor roughness can be ground down with a concrete grinder. Do not skip this step — LVP is thin enough that subfloor imperfections telegraph through the surface as visible bumps and accelerate wear at high spots.

For NB basements, choose **SPC-core LVP** rather than WPC. SPC is denser and more rigid, meaning it handles the cooler temperatures of NB basements without softening or expanding excessively. It also resists indentation better from heavy furniture and storage items. Quality SPC-core LVP runs **$3 to $7 per square foot for materials**, with professional installation adding $2 to $5 per square foot. A typical 400-square-foot NB basement runs **$2,000 to $4,800 fully installed**.

Maintain **10 to 12mm expansion gaps** at all walls and fixed objects. The best time to install basement flooring in NB is **late summer through fall** when soil moisture is at its annual low and your moisture test results will reflect the most favourable conditions. Avoid installing during spring snowmelt season when slab moisture is at its peak.

Click-lock LVP over concrete is a manageable DIY project for a straightforward rectangular basement room. However, if your moisture test shows elevated readings, the slab is significantly uneven, or your basement has a history of water intrusion, a professional installer ensures proper moisture mitigation and subfloor preparation that protects your investment for years to come.

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Q18

What is the difference between SPC and WPC luxury vinyl plank for NB conditions?

SPC (stone polymer composite) and WPC (wood polymer composite) are the two core types used in modern luxury vinyl plank flooring, and for New Brunswick's Maritime climate, SPC is generally the stronger choice — particularly for basements, ground-level rooms, and homes without consistent climate control. Both are 100% waterproof, but they differ in density, rigidity, comfort, and how they perform across the temperature and humidity extremes that NB homes experience.

SPC core is made from a blend of limestone powder (calcium carbonate), PVC, and stabilizers, creating an extremely dense, rigid plank. This density gives SPC several advantages in NB conditions. First, it has **minimal thermal expansion and contraction**, meaning it stays dimensionally stable across the 30 to 50% indoor humidity swings that Maritime homes experience between winter heating season and humid summers. Second, its rigidity means it bridges minor subfloor imperfections better than WPC, which matters in older NB homes where subfloors may have developed slight unevenness over decades. Third, SPC handles **cooler temperatures without softening** — important for NB basements and ground-level rooms that stay cooler than the rest of the house during the long heating season. SPC typically runs **$3 to $6 per square foot for materials** in New Brunswick.

The trade-off is comfort. SPC's density makes it harder and less forgiving underfoot. Standing on SPC for extended periods (in a kitchen, for example) is noticeably less comfortable than standing on WPC or hardwood. The rigidity also means SPC transmits more impact noise — footsteps and dropped objects sound sharper. Adding a quality cork underlayment ($1 to $2 per square foot) under SPC significantly improves both comfort and sound, and is a worthwhile investment for NB main-floor living spaces.

WPC core is made from a blend of wood powder or bamboo powder, PVC, and a foaming agent, creating a lighter, slightly softer plank with a small amount of give. WPC's advantages are comfort and sound — it feels warmer and more cushioned underfoot than SPC, produces less impact noise, and is generally more pleasant to walk on in bare feet or socks. Many WPC products include a built-in cork or foam backing layer that adds further comfort and thermal insulation. WPC typically costs **$4 to $7 per square foot for materials** in NB — slightly more than comparable SPC due to the more complex manufacturing process.

However, WPC has meaningful disadvantages in NB conditions. Its lower density means it is **more susceptible to thermal expansion and contraction** — during NB's hot, humid summers, WPC expands more than SPC, and during dry winters, it contracts more. This increases the risk of gapping and buckling if expansion gaps are undersized. WPC is also **less dent-resistant** than SPC, so heavy furniture, dropped tools, or large dog nails leave marks more easily. And because WPC is slightly flexible, it does not bridge subfloor imperfections as effectively — requiring more thorough subfloor preparation in older NB homes.

Choosing Between Them for NB Rooms

For **basements** — SPC is the clear winner. NB basements are cooler, prone to moisture, and often sit on imperfect concrete slabs. SPC's density, rigidity, and temperature stability make it the right choice below grade.

For **main-floor living areas and bedrooms** — WPC offers superior comfort if your home has consistent climate control (heating, humidifier in winter, AC or dehumidifier in summer). If climate control is inconsistent, SPC is safer.

For **kitchens and bathrooms** — either works well since both are waterproof, but WPC's softer feel is appreciated in kitchens where you stand for long periods. SPC resists dropped pots and heavy appliances better.

For **rental properties and high-traffic areas** — SPC's superior dent resistance and dimensional stability make it the more durable, lower-maintenance choice.

Both SPC and WPC install as floating click-lock systems and cost **$5 to $12 per square foot fully installed** in New Brunswick. The installation process is identical, so your choice comes down to the room's conditions and your priority between durability (SPC) and comfort (WPC). For most NB homes, SPC on the main floor and basement with WPC in bedrooms is an excellent balanced approach.

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Q19

How long does luxury vinyl plank flooring last in a New Brunswick home?

Quality luxury vinyl plank flooring typically lasts 15 to 25 years in a New Brunswick home, with premium products potentially reaching 30 years under good conditions. The actual lifespan depends on the product quality, wear layer thickness, installation method, and how well the floor is maintained through NB's demanding seasonal cycles.

The wear layer is the single biggest factor in LVP longevity. Budget LVP with a 6-mil (0.15mm) wear layer will show traffic patterns and scratching within 5 to 8 years in high-use areas like kitchens and hallways. Mid-range products with a 12-mil (0.3mm) wear layer handle residential traffic well for 15 to 20 years. Premium LVP with a 20-mil (0.5mm) or thicker wear layer — products from brands like COREtec, Mannington Adura, and Shaw Floorte — can genuinely last 25 years or more with normal residential use. In NB, quality LVP runs $5 to $8 per square foot for materials, with installation adding $2 to $5 per square foot.

One of LVP's greatest advantages in New Brunswick is its dimensional stability through our extreme humidity swings. Unlike solid hardwood, which can gap in winter and cup in summer due to NB's 30 to 50 percent relative humidity swing between seasons, SPC-core (stone polymer composite) LVP barely moves. This means no seasonal gaps, no cupping, and no need for the whole-home humidifier that hardwood floors demand in Maritime homes. WPC-core (wood polymer composite) LVP is slightly more flexible and comfortable underfoot but marginally less dimensionally stable — still far superior to hardwood in NB conditions.

Factors that shorten LVP lifespan in NB homes include dragging furniture without felt pads, allowing grit and sand to accumulate (especially during NB's long winter when tracked-in road salt and gravel act like sandpaper), and exposing the floor to prolonged direct sunlight through south-facing windows without UV-filtering window treatments. Pet claws are generally fine on quality LVP, though large dogs on thin wear layers will eventually leave marks.

To maximize your LVP's lifespan, use doormats at all exterior entrances to catch winter grit, sweep or vacuum regularly with a hard-floor setting, damp-mop with a pH-neutral vinyl floor cleaner, and use felt pads on all furniture legs. Avoid rubber-backed mats directly on LVP, as the rubber can cause discolouration over time. In NB's coastal communities like Saint John or Shediac, where tracked-in salt is heavier, a second interior doormat makes a noticeable difference in reducing abrasive wear.

For the best long-term value in a New Brunswick home, invest in an SPC-core LVP with at least a 20-mil wear layer. The upfront cost difference between a 12-mil and 20-mil product is typically only $1 to $2 per square foot — on a 900 square foot installation, that is $900 to $1,800 extra for potentially 5 to 10 additional years of life. That math works out strongly in favour of the better product. If you are planning to sell within 5 to 10 years, a mid-range

12-mil product offers excellent value without over-investing.

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Q20

Is LVP flooring safe for families with young children in NB?

Yes, modern luxury vinyl plank flooring is safe for families with young children. Quality LVP products from reputable manufacturers meet strict North American safety standards and are an excellent choice for NB family homes, offering a combination of durability, comfort, waterproof performance, and easy cleaning that few other flooring types can match.

The primary safety concern parents raise about vinyl flooring relates to phthalates — chemical plasticizers historically used to make vinyl flexible. Major LVP manufacturers have largely eliminated phthalates from their residential flooring lines, and products certified under FloorScore or GreenGuard Gold meet strict indoor air quality standards for volatile organic compound (VOC) emissions. When shopping for LVP in New Brunswick, look for FloorScore certification on the packaging or product specifications — this confirms the product has been independently tested and meets California Section 01350 standards, the most stringent indoor air quality benchmark in North America.

From a physical safety perspective, LVP is one of the most child-friendly flooring options available. It offers a slightly softer surface than tile or hardwood, which means less impact on little knees during crawling and fewer injuries from tumbles. SPC-core LVP is firmer than WPC-core, so families with toddlers who are still unsteady on their feet may prefer WPC for its marginally more forgiving surface. Adding a quality cork or foam underlayment beneath either type further improves cushioning and warmth underfoot — an important comfort factor during NB's long heating season from October through April.

LVP's waterproof construction is a genuine advantage for families with young children in New Brunswick. Spilled milk, juice, bath splashes, and potty-training accidents wipe up completely without the staining, warping, or moisture damage that these same incidents would cause on hardwood or laminate floors. This waterproof quality also makes LVP ideal for NB basements where families often create playrooms — Maritime moisture migration through concrete basement slabs is no threat to properly installed LVP with a vapour barrier underlayment.

Practical tips for families choosing LVP in NB include selecting a textured or embossed surface finish rather than a smooth, glossy one. Textured finishes provide better grip for small feet — especially important when children run in from NB's snowy winters with damp socks. Choose a product with at least a 12-mil wear layer, as children's toys, particularly those with wheels and metal edges, can scratch thinner wear layers surprisingly quickly. Budget LVP at $3 to $4 per square foot will show wear faster than mid-range products at $5 to $7 per square foot, and the investment difference over a typical 500 square foot family area is only $1,000 to $1,500.

One precaution worth noting: during the first 48 to 72 hours after installation, new LVP can off-gas a mild chemical odour as it acclimates to your home's temperature. Ventilate the room well by opening windows during this period — even in NB's colder months, a few hours of fresh air circulation each day for the first couple of days is sufficient. After this initial period, off-gassing is negligible in certified products.

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Q21

What wear layer thickness should I choose for LVP in my NB home?

For most New Brunswick homes, a 20-mil (0.5mm) wear layer offers the best balance of durability and value for main living areas, while a 12-mil (0.3mm) wear layer is adequate for bedrooms and low-traffic spaces. The wear layer is the transparent top coating that protects LVP from scratches, scuffs, and UV fading — it is the

single most important specification in determining how long your floor will look new.

Wear layer thickness is measured in mils (thousandths of an inch), and the differences between tiers are significant in real-world performance. **6-mil wear layer** products ($3 to $4 per square foot) are entry-level and suitable only for light-traffic areas like guest bedrooms or closets. In NB's climate, where winter grit tracked in from driveways and walkways acts as an abrasive on flooring surfaces, a 6-mil wear layer in a hallway or kitchen will show visible traffic patterns within 3 to 5 years. **12-mil wear layer** products ($4 to $6 per square foot) handle moderate residential traffic well and are a solid choice for bedrooms, home offices, and dining rooms. **20-mil wear layer** products ($5 to $8 per square foot) are the sweet spot for NB kitchens, living rooms, hallways, and any area with regular foot traffic — expect 20 to 25 years of attractive performance. **28-mil and above** products ($7 to $10 per square foot) are commercial-grade and overkill for most residential applications, though they are worth considering for home-based businesses or extremely high-traffic households.

Beyond thickness, the **type of wear layer treatment matters**. Look for ceramic-bead or aluminium-oxide enhanced wear layers on premium products — these dramatically improve scratch resistance compared to standard urethane coatings. This is particularly relevant for NB pet owners, as dog claws on a standard 20-mil wear layer will eventually leave fine scratches, while a ceramic-bead enhanced 20-mil layer resists pet traffic far more effectively.

For New Brunswick homes specifically, the wear layer's UV resistance rating deserves attention. NB gets significant direct sunlight through south and west-facing windows during summer months, and budget LVP with poor UV resistance can fade or discolour where sunlight hits the floor. Premium brands include enhanced UV stabilizers in their wear layer formulations — this is one of the meaningful quality differences between a $4 per square foot product and a $6 per square foot product that is not immediately visible in the store.

A practical room-by-room guide for NB homeowners: use 20-mil in kitchens, main hallways, living rooms, and entryways where winter boots and road grit are constant from November through April. Use 12-mil in bedrooms, formal dining rooms, and upper-floor hallways. For basements, a 12-mil to 20-mil SPC-core product works well — the waterproof core matters more than wear layer thickness in below-grade NB installations where moisture management is the primary concern.

The cost difference between 12-mil and 20-mil is typically $1 to $2 per square foot for materials. On a 900 square foot main-floor installation, that is $900 to $1,800 more for a floor that will look better and last years longer — a worthwhile investment in most NB homes.

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Can luxury vinyl plank be installed over radiant floor heating in New Brunswick?

Yes, most quality LVP products are compatible with radiant floor heating, but you must verify the specific product's maximum temperature rating and follow both the flooring manufacturer's and the heating system manufacturer's guidelines. This combination is increasingly popular in New Brunswick, where homeowners want the warmth of radiant heat during our long heating season without the moisture-sensitivity concerns that hardwood presents in Maritime conditions.

The critical specification is the **maximum surface temperature** the LVP can tolerate. Most quality LVP products are rated for a maximum floor surface temperature of 80 to 85 degrees Fahrenheit (27 to 29 degrees Celsius). A few premium products are rated up to 90 degrees Fahrenheit (32 degrees Celsius). Exceeding the rated temperature — even briefly — can cause the vinyl to soften, warp, discolour, or release the click-lock connections. This means your radiant heat system must have an accurate thermostat with a floor-temperature sensor, not just a room-air thermostat. The floor sensor ensures the surface temperature never exceeds the LVP's rated maximum, regardless of what temperature the room air reaches.

SPC-core (stone polymer composite) LVP is the better choice over WPC-core for radiant heat applications in NB. SPC's rigid mineral-based core conducts heat more efficiently and is more dimensionally stable at elevated temperatures than WPC's foamed core. WPC products can sometimes soften slightly at the upper end of their temperature range, leading to expansion or indentation issues. The thermal conductivity of SPC also means the radiant heat reaches the room surface more effectively, which improves the heating system's efficiency — a meaningful benefit given NB's heating costs from October through April.

Installation considerations for radiant heat in NB start with the underlayment. Use a thin, dense underlayment specifically rated for radiant heat — thick foam underlayments act as thermal insulators, blocking the heat from reaching the room and forcing your system to work harder. Cork underlayment at 1.5mm to 2mm thickness offers a good balance of thermal transfer and sound dampening. Never use a standard 3mm foam pad over radiant heat. The total thermal resistance (R-value) of the LVP plus underlayment should not exceed the manufacturer's maximum — typically around R-1.0 to R-1.5.

Before installing LVP over a new radiant heat system, the heating system should be commissioned and run through a gradual warm-up cycle for at least 2 weeks prior to flooring installation. This drives residual moisture from the concrete slab or subfloor assembly — especially important in NB, where new concrete retains more moisture due to our Maritime humidity levels. After installation, ramp the system temperature up gradually — no more than 5 degrees Fahrenheit per day — to avoid thermal shock to the flooring.

Electric radiant heat mats installed under LVP must be done by a licensed electrician to comply with the Canadian Electrical Code. **Hydronic (hot water) radiant systems** require a plumbing permit under NB's Plumbing Installation and Inspection Act. Both systems work well with LVP, but electric mats offer easier retrofit into existing NB homes where adding hydronic piping to existing subfloor assemblies may not be practical.

If you are considering LVP over radiant heat for your NB home, a professional flooring installer experienced with heated subfloors is strongly recommended. The combination of proper product selection, underlayment specification, temperature control, and installation technique requires coordinated expertise.

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How do I clean and maintain luxury vinyl plank flooring in my NB home?

Luxury vinyl plank is one of the lowest-maintenance flooring options available, requiring just regular sweeping and occasional damp mopping to stay looking great for decades. The key to LVP longevity in a New Brunswick home is preventing grit damage — the fine sand, road salt, and gravel tracked in during NB's long winter season are more damaging to your floor's wear layer than any cleaning product.

Daily and weekly maintenance is straightforward. Sweep, dust-mop, or vacuum your LVP regularly — at least twice per week in high-traffic areas and more frequently during NB's winter months when road grit accumulates faster. If vacuuming, use the hard-floor setting with the beater bar turned off, as a spinning beater bar can scratch the wear layer over time. For damp mopping, use a spray mop or wrung-out microfibre mop with clean water or a pH-neutral vinyl floor cleaner. Products like Bona Hard-Surface Floor Cleaner or the manufacturer's own recommended cleaner work well. Avoid soaking the floor — while LVP is waterproof on the surface, excess water can seep through seams on floating installations and sit beneath the planks, potentially causing subfloor issues in

NB's moisture-prone environment.

Products and practices to avoid are just as important as what you should use. Never use wax, polish, or "shine enhancer" products on LVP — these leave a residue that builds up over time, creates a dull film, and actually makes the floor more slippery. Never use abrasive cleaners, scouring pads, steel wool, or ammonia-based cleaners. Avoid steam mops — despite LVP being waterproof, the intense concentrated heat from a steam mop can damage the wear layer, soften the adhesive on glue-down installations, and potentially warp the edges of floating planks. Vinegar-and-water solutions are popular online but should be used sparingly if at all, as the acidity can dull the wear layer's finish over many applications.

Seasonal maintenance in New Brunswick deserves special attention. From November through April, place sturdy doormats at every exterior entrance — ideally a coarse mat outside the door to knock off heavy debris and a second absorbent mat inside to catch moisture and fine grit. Road salt is corrosive and abrasive; wiping it up promptly prevents both surface scratches and potential discolouration. In NB's coastal communities like Saint John, Bathurst, and Shediac, salt air and tracked-in sand are year-round concerns, making entrance mats a permanent fixture rather than a seasonal one.

For spot cleaning, most spills wipe up immediately with a damp cloth. Stubborn marks from rubber shoe soles, crayons, or adhesive residue can be removed with a small amount of rubbing alcohol or mineral spirits on a soft cloth — test in an inconspicuous area first. Pet accidents should be wiped up promptly; while LVP resists moisture damage, urine left sitting at seam edges can eventually work underneath on floating installations.

Protective measures that extend your floor's life include felt pads on all furniture legs (replace them every 6 to 12 months as they collect embedded grit), using furniture cups under heavy items like pianos and refrigerators to distribute weight, and placing mats in front of kitchen sinks and stoves where dropped utensils and grease splatter are common. Avoid rubber-backed mats, as the rubber can chemically react with vinyl and cause permanent discolouration.

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Q24

Does LVP flooring expand and contract with humidity changes in NB?

LVP does expand and contract, but far less than hardwood or laminate, which is one of its biggest advantages in New Brunswick's Maritime climate. While no flooring material is completely immune to dimensional change, quality SPC-core and WPC-core LVP products offer dramatically better stability through NB's extreme 30 to 50 percent relative humidity swings between winter and summer.

The mechanism is different from wood-based flooring. Hardwood and laminate absorb and release moisture, causing them to physically swell and shrink — this is why solid hardwood floors in NB homes develop visible gaps every winter when indoor humidity drops to 20 to 30 percent, and may cup during humid summer months. LVP, by contrast, responds primarily to **temperature changes** rather than humidity. Vinyl softens slightly and expands when warm and contracts slightly when cool. This thermal response is generally much smaller in magnitude than the moisture response of wood, but it is not zero — and in NB, it matters.

SPC-core (stone polymer composite) LVP has the best dimensional stability of any LVP type. The rigid limestone-powder core barely responds to temperature changes and is essentially unaffected by humidity. SPC products are the top recommendation for NB homes where temperature fluctuations are significant — think rooms with large south-facing windows that heat up in summer sun, or sunrooms and enclosed porches that swing from warm daytime to cool evening temperatures. **WPC-core (wood polymer composite) LVP** is slightly more susceptible to thermal expansion due to its foamed core structure, though still vastly superior to hardwood or laminate.

Despite LVP's superior stability, proper expansion gaps are still mandatory in NB. Manufacturers specify 6 to 10mm gaps around all walls, door frames, cabinets, pipes, and fixed objects. Some NB installers are tempted to reduce these gaps because "vinyl doesn't move much" — this is a mistake. In a 20-foot-wide NB living room that experiences a 15 to 20 degree Celsius temperature swing between a cold January night and a sunny July afternoon, even the small per-plank expansion adds up across the room. Without adequate gaps, the accumulated expansion can cause the floor to buckle, tent, or push against baseboards and door frames.

Situations where LVP dimensional movement becomes noticeable in NB include direct sunlight through large windows (surface temperatures can reach 40 degrees Celsius or higher, causing localized expansion), rooms above unheated crawl spaces where floor temperatures fluctuate more dramatically, and installations that bridge heated and unheated zones without proper transition strips. In these scenarios, choosing an SPC-core product and maintaining the manufacturer's specified expansion gaps eliminates virtually all movement-related issues.

Compared to the alternatives in NB's climate, LVP's dimensional stability is a decisive advantage. Solid hardwood requires a whole-home humidifier in winter and dehumidifier in summer to stay within its safe 35 to 55

percent RH range. Standard laminate with an HDF core swells permanently if exposed to moisture. LVP simply handles NB's moisture and temperature extremes with minimal fuss — it is one of the primary reasons LVP has become the fastest-growing flooring category in the province.

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What is the best LVP for a New Brunswick kitchen that gets heavy foot traffic?

For a high-traffic New Brunswick kitchen, choose an SPC-core luxury vinyl plank with a minimum 20-mil wear layer, ceramic-bead or aluminium-oxide enhanced surface coating, and a textured finish. This combination delivers the waterproof performance kitchens demand, the scratch resistance heavy traffic requires, and the dimensional stability NB's Maritime humidity swings necessitate.

SPC-core over WPC-core is the clear choice for NB kitchens. SPC's rigid stone-polymer composite core resists indentation from heavy appliances, dropped pots, and standing on the same spot in front of the sink or stove for extended periods. WPC's foamed core is softer underfoot, which is comfortable, but more prone to indentation and slightly less dimensionally stable when exposed to the temperature swings near NB kitchen windows and exterior doors. SPC also handles the occasional standing water from a spilled pot or a dishwasher leak without any risk of core damage.

The **wear layer** takes the most punishment in a kitchen. A 20-mil wear layer with an enhanced surface treatment — ceramic-bead or aluminium-oxide coatings that major brands like COREtec, Mannington Adura Max, and Shaw Floorte Elite include — resists the scratching from chair legs sliding at the kitchen table, pet claws on hard surfaces, and the fine grit that NB's winter months deposit on kitchen floors via foot traffic from entryways. A standard urethane 20-mil wear layer is good; an enhanced one is noticeably better for kitchens that serve as the household's central living space, as many NB homes are designed.

Texture and finish matter for kitchen safety and appearance. Choose a product with an embossed-in-register (EIR) or wire-brushed texture rather than a smooth, glossy finish. Textured finishes hide micro-scratches from daily use, provide better grip when the floor is damp from cooking splashes, and look more realistic than flat finishes. In NB's coastal communities, where tracked-in moisture is a year-round concern, a textured surface reduces slip risk meaningfully.

Specific products well-suited for NB kitchens in the $5 to $8 per square foot material range include COREtec Pro Plus (20-mil wear layer, SPC core, cork-attached backing), Mannington Adura Max Apex (20-mil, SPC, excellent visuals), and Shaw Floorte Pro series (20-mil, SPC, commercial-rated). Budget-conscious options at $4 to $5 per square foot with 12-mil wear layers will perform adequately but expect visible wear patterns in front of the sink and stove within 8 to 12 years rather than 15 to 20.

Installation details that matter for NB kitchens include using a thin, dense underlayment if the product does not have a pre-attached pad — avoid thick foam pads that feel bouncy and allow indentation under heavy appliances. Ensure proper expansion gaps around all cabinets, islands, and plumbing penetrations. Plan for transition strips at doorways to adjacent rooms. For a typical NB kitchen of 150 to 250 square feet, expect to invest $1,200 to $2,500

for materials and $500 to $1,250 for professional installation — a total of $1,700 to $3,750 fully installed.

A professional installer will ensure precise cuts around cabinets, islands, and plumbing, and will properly handle the transition from kitchen LVP to adjacent room flooring — details that make the difference between a floor that looks installed and a floor that looks like it belongs there.

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Q26

Can I install LVP flooring myself or do I need a professional in NB?

Click-lock LVP is one of the most DIY-friendly flooring options available, and a handy NB homeowner can absolutely install it in standard rectangular rooms. That said, larger installations, open-concept layouts, and rooms with complex cuts around cabinets, fireplaces, or angled walls benefit significantly from professional experience. The honest answer depends on the scope of your project and your comfort level with precision measuring and cutting.

What makes LVP good for DIY is the click-lock floating installation system. The planks snap together without glue, nails, or adhesive, and float over the subfloor on an underlayment pad. No acclimation period is required for most LVP products (unlike hardwood, which needs 5 to 10 days in NB). You need only basic tools: a utility knife and straight edge for cutting (SPC-core scores and snaps cleanly), a rubber mallet and tapping block for seating joints, spacers for maintaining expansion gaps, and a pull bar for the last row against the wall. A mitre saw or jigsaw speeds up the work but is not strictly necessary.

A realistic DIY timeline for a single NB bedroom (150 to 200 square feet) is one full day for a first-timer, including subfloor preparation, underlayment, and plank installation. A 500 to 800 square foot main floor in an open-concept

NB home is a two to three day weekend project for an experienced DIYer. The labour savings are meaningful: professional LVP installation in New Brunswick runs $2 to $5 per square foot, so a 700 square foot DIY installation saves $1,400 to $3,500 in labour costs.

Where DIY LVP installation gets tricky in NB homes involves several common scenarios. Older NB housing stock — particularly pre-1970s homes in Fredericton, Saint John, and Moncton — often has uneven subfloors with dips, humps, and squeaky spots that need correction before LVP goes down. Self-levelling compound on concrete or plywood overlay on wood subfloors requires experience to get right, and skipping this step means the imperfections will telegraph through your new floor. Complex room layouts with multiple doorways, angled walls, bay windows, or L-shaped kitchens require precise cutting and careful expansion gap management that challenges first-time installers. And installing around kitchen islands, fireplace hearths, and stair nosings involves cuts and transitions where mistakes are highly visible.

Hire a professional installer for open-concept main floors over 500 square feet where a single continuous installation must navigate multiple rooms and transitions, any installation over concrete basement slabs in NB (moisture testing and proper vapour barrier placement are critical in Maritime conditions), rooms with extensive cabinetry or irregular layouts, and situations where the existing subfloor needs significant preparation. Professional installation on a typical 900 square foot NB project runs $4,500 to $10,800 fully installed including materials.

A smart middle-ground approach that many NB homeowners use: DIY the bedrooms and straightforward rectangular rooms to save on labour, and hire a professional for the kitchen, main living area, and any complex transitions. This captures significant savings while ensuring the most visible and challenging areas get expert attention. Browse flooring contractors in the New Brunswick Construction Network directory at newbrunswickconstructionnetwork.com/directory?trade=flooring to find local installers for quotes on the professional portions.

Q27

Is COREtec LVP worth the price compared to budget vinyl plank in NB?

COREtec is worth the premium for main living areas and high-traffic spaces in a New Brunswick home, but budget LVP can be a smart choice for bedrooms, closets, and rental properties where long-term durability is less critical. The price difference is real — COREtec products run $6 to $9 per square foot for materials compared to $3 to $4 for budget alternatives — but the performance gap is equally real, and NB's Maritime climate makes that gap more consequential than in drier provinces.

What you get with COREtec that budget LVP cannot match starts with the core construction. COREtec's patented SPC core uses a precise blend of limestone powder and polymer that delivers exceptional rigidity, indentation resistance, and dimensional stability. Budget LVP often uses lower-density SPC cores or WPC cores with inconsistent density — these softer cores can telegraph subfloor imperfections more readily and dent under heavy furniture or appliance legs over time. In NB homes with older subfloors that are not perfectly flat, COREtec's rigid core bridges minor imperfections more effectively.

The **wear layer quality** is another meaningful difference. COREtec's 20-mil wear layer includes enhanced scratch-resistance treatments, while budget products at 6 to 12 mils use standard urethane coatings. In a New Brunswick kitchen or hallway where winter grit, road salt, and daily traffic punish the surface, a COREtec floor will still look sharp after 15 years while a budget floor may show noticeable traffic patterns after 5 to 8 years. The visual realism is also strikingly different — COREtec's embossed-in-register textures and high-definition photo layers produce a convincingly wood-like appearance that budget products with flat printing and smooth surfaces cannot replicate.

COREtec products include an **attached cork backing** that provides built-in sound dampening and thermal insulation — a genuine comfort advantage during NB's long heating season. Budget LVP sold without attached backing requires a separate underlayment ($0.50 to $1.00 per square foot additional), which narrows the total price gap somewhat. The cork backing also adds a subtle warmth underfoot that bare SPC or WPC cores lack.

Where budget LVP makes sense in NB includes bedrooms where foot traffic is light and a 12-mil wear layer provides adequate durability, rental properties where cost recovery is the priority and tenants may not maintain the floor carefully, basement recreation rooms where the primary concern is waterproof performance rather than wear-layer longevity, and temporary installations in homes being prepared for sale. At $3 to $4 per square foot installed in these scenarios, budget LVP delivers tremendous value.

The real-world cost comparison for a typical NB project: a 900 square foot main-floor installation with COREtec at $7 per square foot materials plus $3 per square foot installation totals approximately $9,000. The same area with budget LVP at $3.50 per square foot materials plus $3 per square foot installation totals approximately $5,850. The $3,150 difference buys you a floor that will likely look better for an additional 8 to 12 years — roughly $260 to $400 per year for the added lifespan. For a home you plan to live in for 10 or more years, the premium pays for itself.

A balanced approach many NB homeowners take is using COREtec or equivalent premium LVP (Mannington Adura Max, Shaw Floorte Pro) in the kitchen, living room, and main hallway, with a quality mid-range product in bedrooms. This concentrates the investment where it matters most while keeping the overall project budget reasonable.

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Q28

How do I choose between sheet vinyl and luxury vinyl plank for my NB bathroom?

For most New Brunswick bathrooms, sheet vinyl offers superior waterproof protection because it eliminates seams where water can penetrate, while LVP delivers a far more realistic and attractive appearance. The right choice depends on your bathroom's specific moisture exposure, your budget, and how important visual appeal is to you — both products perform well in NB's Maritime humidity conditions.

Sheet vinyl's greatest advantage is seamless water protection. In a standard NB bathroom under 100 square feet, a single piece of sheet vinyl covers the entire floor with zero seams. Water from bath splashes, overflowing tubs, children's bath play, and the persistent humidity that Maritime bathrooms experience cannot penetrate to the subfloor. This is especially important in NB homes with wood-framed subfloors, where moisture damage leads to soft spots, mould, and eventually structural repair. Quality sheet vinyl for bathrooms runs $2 to $5 per square foot for materials, with professional installation adding $3 to $6 per square foot — total cost for a typical 60 to 80 square foot NB bathroom is $400 to $880 for materials or $700 to $1,500 fully installed.

LVP's advantage is appearance and perceived value. Modern luxury vinyl plank in wood-look patterns with embossed textures looks dramatically more realistic than sheet vinyl's printed patterns. LVP gives an NB bathroom the visual warmth of hardwood without any of the moisture risk that makes real wood floors impossible in bathroom environments. Quality waterproof LVP for bathrooms runs $5 to $8 per square foot for materials plus $2 to $5 per square foot for installation — a typical NB bathroom costs $800 to $1,500 for materials or $1,200 to $2,500 fully installed. However, LVP's click-lock joints create seams. While the surface is waterproof, standing water that sits on seams for extended periods can eventually wick underneath the planks to the subfloor. In a well-maintained bathroom where spills are wiped up reasonably promptly, this is rarely an issue — but it is a real vulnerability compared to seamless sheet vinyl.

For NB bathrooms specifically, consider these factors. Bathrooms on upper floors above finished rooms benefit from sheet vinyl's superior seam protection — a tub overflow or toilet leak on LVP seams sends water to the ceiling below. Main-floor bathrooms over crawl spaces or basements are more forgiving, and LVP works well. Master bathrooms and powder rooms that guests see benefit from LVP's premium appearance. Children's bathrooms with heavy water splashing lean toward sheet vinyl's worry-free protection.

A hybrid approach that works well in NB homes is using LVP in the main bathroom area and transitioning to sheet vinyl or tile in the immediate tub and shower surround where water exposure is heaviest. Alternatively, some NB homeowners are choosing **rigid-core LVT (luxury vinyl tile)** in stone-look patterns specifically designed for wet areas — these products combine LVP's premium appearance with tighter-fitting joints that resist water

penetration better than standard plank products.

Installation considerations for NB bathrooms include ensuring the subfloor is completely flat and clean — bathroom subfloors in older NB homes often have water damage from years of prior leaks that needs repair before new flooring goes down. For either product, a moisture barrier between the subfloor and flooring is recommended in NB. Professional installation is advisable for bathroom flooring due to the precise cuts around toilets, vanities, and tub bases — these cuts are visible and unforgiving, and the waterproof integrity of the installation depends on getting them right.

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