Engineered/Solid Timber – Installation and Maintenance Guide

GENERAL INSTRUCTIONS: QUALITY FLOORING - ENGINEERED/SOLID FLOORING

Before starting with the installation, it is critical that you read the following instructions carefully. Failure to do so will inevitably result in problems occurring and invalidate your warranty

INSTALLER/OWNER RESPONSIBILITY:

Engineered/solid floors are a natural product and as such are subject to many variances in both colour and character, this is to be expected at all times. In order to establish a consistency of product a grading and manufacturing tolerance of 5% has been set to allow for de-selection of material if deemed unsuitable for the installation. a 5%-15% cutting or waste allowance must therefore be added to the net square meters required for the site to be installed. Each box of Engineered/Solid flooring will have approx. 30% short boards.

The **install/owner** assumes all responsibility for the final inspection of the product prior to installation. the installer or owner must determine that the job site environment and the sub-surfaces involved meet or exceed all requirements within these instructions; claims will not be accepted if a fault was visibly noticeable or preventable prior to installation. These conditions are noted further within.

All floorings must be stored in the correct conditions prior to installing.
This product "must not" be stored on site until all sub-floors; plastering, cement work; decorating and all other wet work is completely dry.

The **owner** has final responsibility to ensure that they have received the correct species and finish that was selected in store. The installer/owner must inspect each board and deselect pieces with defects whatever the cause, **under no circumstances should these be installed.**

Engineered flooring is suitable for conservatories and under-floor heating provided that the strict guidelines are followed. Engineered flooring maybe be glued or floated. Solid flooring should only be glued or with secret nails. It is normal practice to use stain, putty or filler stick for defect correction or minor dimension differences.
Always work from 3 to 4 packs at a time mixing boards to achieve the appearance you require, taking into consideration the texture of the wood and the natural change in colours. Each floor, even each board is an individual piece of nature, which is guaranteed to make your home a place of beauty.

Note: Keep a record of all your readings for later reference and warranty enquires. We strongly recommend you keep a record of your moisture and humidity readings prior to installation and in order to accurately determine acclimatization. These measurements "**will be**" required by the manufacturer or supplier if there are any future problems.

ACCLIMATISING YOUR NEW FLOOR:

Engineered/solid flooring does require acclimatization. **Prior to installation,** it is the **installer's responsibility** to ensure that the internal site conditions are stable and are suitable for the installation of the engineered/solid flooring. **A room temperature of between 18-22°C and relative humidity of between 45-65% must be maintained. Screed/concrete subfloors must be under 4% moisture content.** Failure to do this could cause ongoing behavioral problems with the floor and will invalidate the warranty.

The building should be fully enclosed including doors and windows and heating should be operational if there is under-floor heating in the building. All wet work must have been completed otherwise the moisture will transfer from walls floors and ceilings to the flooring.

The delivered flooring must be left in the packaging with polythene wrapping intact and only opened immediately prior to installation. the flooring should be stacked horizontally no more than 2 to 3 packs high or wide. Do not store next to radiators. Further checks must be undertaken by the installer to confirm the engineered/solid flooring is in equilibrium with the site it to be installed.

You can expect your engineered/solid flooring to be supplied at 8 % to 10% relative moisture content at the point of delivery. The correct moisture content for installation is 10% to 12%. Testing must be carried our to ensure the product is within this window. If the product has moved beyond 12% action should be taken to reduce the moisture/humidity readings within the area/product. A reputable installer will have testing equipment such as “Tramex” to check relative humidity and the moisture content of the subfloor and wood.

NEW BUILD AND RENOVATION PROJECTS:
A new installation site needs to dry out before engineered/solid flooring is delivered. There is nearly always excessive moisture on either new construction sites or major refurbishment contracts. In these instances, the wood will absorb the excess moisture; resulting in stress issues such as cupping, expanding and later contraction. Always protect against excessive moisture ingression, where it helps use dehumidification equipment to stabilize the site conditions.

“Explanation of why the flooring should be one of the last jobs to be undertaken on site; other trades can damage an excellent installation if care is not taken to safeguard against moisture ingression in hard wood floors. In new building projects moisture is introduced into the fabric throughout the construction process. **This will have to try out to below 4% moisture content before your flooring is installed.** This may take up to a day per 1mm thickness of concrete to dry out, therefore you MUST always take a new moisture reading of the concrete sub-floor before proceeding with the installation.”

UNDER-FLOOR HEATING:
Engineered floor is suitable for use with under-floor heating systems subject to the manufacturer’s recommended installation guidelines with timber flooring.
When laying a floor where under floor heating has been installed it is important to follow these guidelines:

1. The heating has been started up at least 3 weeks before laying the floor to achieve an ambient living environment.
2. Make sure that there is no water leaking from the pipes.
3. If the subfloor is concrete, make sure the concrete is dry. This means not more than 4% moisture, full depth of screed.
4. The subfloor must meet all the requirements for under flooring heating.
5. Installation method should be as a floating floor and a combination underlay incorporating a DPM must always be used.
6. The surface temperature of the ground (below the engineered/solid flooring) cannot exceed +27°C.
7. The heating has to be turned off 48 hours before laying the floor.
8. 2 days after laying the floor, the heating should be turned on gradually, increasing 2-3°C every 24 hours.

9. A minimum temperature of 18°C must be maintained.

Always check the heating manufacturer's detailed instructions to ensure compatibility.

SUB BASE:

Engineered flooring can be floated on most types of flooring which is dry and level, e.g. sand and cement screeds, timer floor boards, chipboard, ply etc. when fitting to a sub base (screed, ply, chipboard etc) the sub base must conform that it must not deviate by more than + or – 3mm under a 3m straight edge in any one direction. Wooden sub structures must be sound and securely fixed. They must be a minimum of 18mm in depth in order to be supportive. (This applies to Ply or Chipboard also)

Screed subfloors must be under 4% moisture content. Above this will cause excessive dimensional change in the wood flooring resulting in problems such as delaminating not covered by the guarantee. On ground floors a surface moisture inhibitor must be laid with joints over lapped by 6 inches (150mm) or more and lapped up the wall behind the skirting board. These joints should be taped.

UNDERLAY:

Engineered flooring, if floated must be installed over a minimum of 2mm foam or poly type underlay. If an acoustic underlay has been installed first and is suitable according to manufacturer's instructions for flooring to be laid directly on top, then a 2mm foam or poly type underlay is not necessary. However, if a 1.5mm cork or bitumen type acoustic barrier is used, then a 2mm foam in particular is recommended to install over same. The foam stops "grinding" between wood flooring and O.S.B.,ply, etc. underneath. Moisture inhibitors (such as 1000g poly) will only assist in protecting the floor from residual moisture when the concrete sub floor is 4% or less. They will not cover up an inherent moisture problem that should be addressed prior to installing the flooring.

EXPANSION:

All engineered/solid floors will react to changes in the presence of moisture within the boards. In the winter months when central heating is present, moisture leaves the wood causing the floor to contract. In the summer months when the humidity is higher the wood will expand. This needs to be allowed for during the fitting process. Therefore, it is important when installing an engineered/solid floor to leave the proper expansion area around the perimeter and to ensure the flooring is fully acclimatized prior to installation. Please note with a large area (lengths in excess of 10 m) the floor must be divided with an expansion gap provided on both length and width. On completion, this gap is again covered by a profile that is not fixed to the new flooring.

INSTALLATION OF FLOOR – ALL METHODS:

On completion of the preceding tasks the following steps should be followed for installation.

1. Generally, you will want to floorings to run the length of the room towards a natural source of light for aesthetic reasons.
2. Under cut the bottom of the door frames, wardrobes, etc. to allow for the floor board and underlay to fit under it.
3. Open 4 or 5 packs and "shuffle" the boards to ensure an even distribution of colour and character.
4. If you discover a defective piece DO NOT LAY IT. You are the final judge of acceptable quality.
5. The manufacturer will not be responsible for costs associated with installing, finishing and/or replacing of flooring installed with obvious defects.

6. Mark a straight line parallel to the chosen wall, allowing a 10-15mm gap for expansion. It may be necessary to scribe the first row of boards to achieve correct alignment.
7. The first board should be laid groove to the wall allowing for expansion of approx. 10-15mm between the wall and first board.
8. The last board in the first row should be fitted using a puller bat ensuring a 10-15mm expansion gap at the head of the board.
9. The second row and all following rows should be started with the off cut from the last board on the previous row. It is necessary to ensure that the end joint of adjoining rows are at least offset 150mm, this leaves the floor stronger and is visually more attractive.
10. Tapping blocks should be used to tap boards together, direct contact of hammer or mallet on the board edge is not recommended.
11. All perimeter gaps should be covered with skirting or Scotia using cover strips at thresholds.

FLOATING INSTALLATION:

- ✓ D3 rated PVA glue should be applied to the head of the board in a 150mm strip. Along the length of the board apply glue every 150-200mm leaving a gap of 80-100mm between each application of glue. This is to allow any excess glue space to fill up, rather than glue being squeezed to surface.
- ✓ The second row and all subsequent rows should be started with the off cut from the last board on the previous row. It is necessary to ensure that the end joints of adjoining rows are at least offset by 500mm, this leaves the floor stronger and is visually more attractive.
- ✓ Tapping blocks should be used to tap boards together, direct contact of hammer or mallet on the board edge is not recommended.

GLUE ON TO WOODEN OR CONCRETE SUB-FLOOR:

- ✓ You must use a water-free, alcohol or polyurethane glue, specially formulated for use with wood flooring. Installation can be by either the traditional trowel method or by applying a glue batten system, in all cases follow the instructions of the adhesive manufacturer.
- ✓ With this method, you adhere direct to the sub floor.
- ✓ Once the first row of boards is correctly aligned and glued in to place, weight them down while the glue sets. Any surplus glue that may seep out on to the surface of the wood must be removed immediately with a damp cloth.
- ✓ Flooring straps can be used to pull the boards together and hold them firm whilst the glue sets.

WOOD FLOOR CARE GUIDE:

- ✓ Timber flooring is a lifetime investment, and the decision’s concerning them should not be taken lightly.
- ✓ Routine maintenance should include protecting the surface finish from moisture and heavy wear which creates scratches. Our recommended Maintenance Instructions requires more than sweeping and vacuuming.

CONSUMER EXPECTIONS:

- ✓ Wood floors are NOT impervious to the day to day grit, food, spills and water.
- ✓ Preventive maintenance like area rugs, floor protectors on ALL furniture on your wood floors, and routine maintenance with proper hardwood floor cleaner should always be exercised improper products can contribute to additional wear, may VOID your warranty, and cause failure when recoating.

MAINTENANCE INSTRUCTIONS

Set out below are Maintenance Instructions for cleaning and protecting your timber flooring:

Your new floor will add warmth and character to your home whilst offering superior wear and stain resistance, and easy no-wax care. The following simple maintenance steps will ensure that your floor is protected and kept looking new.

Cleaning the floor:

1. For daily cleaning, vacuum or sweep the floor, or wipe with a damp mop or cloth. Mopping or sweeping the floor will minimize wear from abrasive grit and dirt.
2. Wipe up spillages as soon as possible with a damp mop or wiping cloth which has been well wrung out to remove all excess water.
3. We recommend using Bona floor cleaning products. mopped dry with an anti-static or similar mop.
4. Do not wax, polish or use abrasive cleaners or scouring powder to clean your floor.
5. Do not use a steam mop. This will cause moisture to penetrate and discolour the floor joins and will void the warranty.

Protecting the floor:

1. Use quality area rugs and doormats by outdoor entrance areas to prevent dirt, sand, girt and other substance such us oil, asphalt or driveway sealer from being tracked onto your floor.
2. Use floor protectors and wide-beating leg bases/rollers to minimize indentations from heavy objects. Generally, the heavier the item, the wider the floor protector should be for maximum protections.
3. Felt or rubber protector should be used under chair and table legs.
4. Avoid walking on the timber floor with metal tipped stiletto-heeled shoes.
5. Avoid gouges or cuts into your floor from sharp objects. Small objects dropped from a height have immense impact pressure and steps should be taken to protect the floor from such impacts.
6. Never try to slide or roll heavy objects across the floor without precautions.
7. Rolling loads from castors under furniture and trolleys may damage the surface. The smaller the castor the greater the likelihood of damage occurring.
8. Keep pets' nail trimmed.
9. Rearrange rugs and furniture periodically so the floor ages evenly. UV sunlight will soften the tone of different species of hardwood to varying degrees.
10. Use a humidifier to maintain humidity levels between 45-60%.

The information in the *Quality Flooring Installation and Maintenance Guide* MUST be followed in every way. If any of these requirements are NOT completed. You will be jeopardizing your wood floor performance and/or warranties and guarantees. Allowing any items to be over looked, could cause the installation to fail in the short or long term.

By reading this installation instruction, you have acknowledged and understand the guidelines, terms and conditions in this document. All warranty claim must be in writing with proof of purchase.