

Installation Instruction, Cleaning & Maintenance Guideline

Environmental Conditions

The building must be watertight with all windows and doors fitted and all wet trades complete before taking delivery of materials and before any wood flooring installation can take place.

Always check the ambient room temperature and humidity which should be maintained at a constant level with a relative humidity, between 45% - 65%RH prior to, during and for the whole life of the wood flooring. Try to avoid extremes of low or high temperatures as this will negatively affect the stability of the wood flooring.

Acclimatise the wood flooring in the room where the wood is to be fitted for at least 72 hours prior to the installation. The timber material should be maintained in their original packaging in this period. Only remove the materials from their packaging just before installation. The wood should be stored out of direct sunlight, away from walls and radiators and on battens fully supporting the wood to prevent a build of heat on the bottom boards.

Acclimatising is used to balance the wood flooring with the environment in the installation area. If the temperature of the wood is at an equilibrium balance (the same as the room) and the moisture level of the wood is 8%(±2%) then you can assume that the timber does not require any further acclimatisation.

Low humidity can cause the wood to shrink and high level to cause expansion. Common causes of low humidity are using the heating at too high temperature, open fires and wood burners. High humidity is commonly caused by poor ventilation.

We recommend using a Digital Gauge to monitor the humidity and temperature level that can be easily adjusted by either placing moisture in the room (plants that are watered regularly or receptacles of water) or ventilating the room to reduce high levels of humidity. A humidifier/de-humidifier can also be used to control the atmosphere.

As a general rule, rooms/areas should be adequately ventilated to prevent a build of moisture in the environment. Care must also be given to rooms that are only heated when in use and with the heating switched fully off at other times. This can cause a buildup of humidity if the room is closed and not ventilated immediately after usage. The build of humidity / moisture will generally increase the moisture level of the wood flooring. The next time the room is used, the heating can dry out the moisture in the surface of the wood, causing cupping.

Subfloor Preparation

The subfloor must be sound, dry, free from contamination and flat to British Standard SR1 tolerance: maximum 3mm of level variance under a 2m long straight edge, at any point across the subfloor.

Where a wooden floor is to be fixed directly to bearers with nails or screws, the level should be assessed by placing a 2m straight edge or level across and along bearers to assess levels.

Screeded Substrates

Cementitious (sand and cement) / Calcium Sulphate (Anhydrite): The subfloor must be sound with no friable areas, free of laitance and dry.

Solid sub-floors can be overlaid with plywood for nailed installations. All plywood should be fixed with screws and plugs at maximum 200mm centres. Plywood can also be fully bonded.

The sub-floor must be measured for moisture content. This is carried out using a Hygrometer set on top of the screed or by inserting a sleeve into the screed.

For screed substrates, the moisture reading must be less than 75% Relative Humidity (RH).

Do not drill and screw through a liquid membrane.

Timber Substrates

The timber sub-floor and/or bearers must be sound, tested for vertical movement (which should be less than 5mm) and dry, tested using a spike-type meter. The moisture content of the subfloor should be less than 14% and within $\pm 2\%$ of the wood floor being installed.

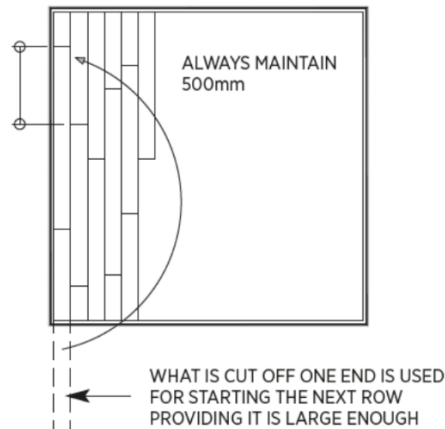
All suspended wood floors must have suitable through ventilation normally delivered by air bricks in the outside walls. Any wood sub-floor that has a higher moisture level than 14% should be investigated. They must also be free of infestations such as wood-rotting fungi and wood boring insects.

Unsuitable Substrates

A nailed/screwed floor must be fixed into suitable structural bearers or a plywood/chipboard layer of 18mm+ thickness. Generally, other substrates are unsuitable for this installation type.

Installation

Plank format flooring is designed to be installed in a randomly staggered pattern where the off-cut from the end of the previous row is used to start the following row, provided its length is equal to at least half the width of the plank.



In order to achieve a harmonious blend of tones throughout the floor, material should be taken from several packs and mixed during the installation. Working from 3-4 packs at a time creates a blend of tones from the variation in the raw material. Colour variety is inherent to all wooden floors and is a key feature in the choice of real wood material for any interior scheme.

It is also important to keep the atmosphere constant during and for at least 24 hours after the installation (particularly overnight) when temperatures can drop causing variations in the atmosphere and may not allow the glue to cure effectively.

Always create an unfilled expansion gap of a minimum 12mm on areas of less than 25 m² and a minimum of 15mm on larger areas.

Areas in excess of 10 linear meters x 8m width of the boards may require extra expansion between the boards and intermediate expansion in the length. Expansion gaps can be covered using a skirting board.

Threshold profiles should be installed in all doorways, arches or narrow sections that lead from one room/area to the next. Perimeter details which do not allow for a skirting must have a threshold detail which covers the expansion gap.

These thresholds must allow for the required expansion and contraction. Door frames and architraves can be undercut to allow the wood to slide underneath, still allowing for the expansion.

Note: Never undercut newel posts as these are structural sections of the stairs.

Maintenance Guide

Timber floors are designed to withstand the wear and tear of day-to-day life. Because wood is a natural material, it will react to the environment it is installed in – dry environments will cause a floor to lose moisture and humid environments will cause moisture to be gained. Using the correct cleaning products allows a wooden floor to adapt to its surroundings while still looking and performing as required.

Abrasive particles of dirt and grit trafficked on to a wooden floor can be very abrasive and seriously shorten the lifespan of any treatment. The floor's surface will quickly become dull due to scratches and the wood may be affected by the ingress of moisture and stains. Matting placed at external entrances is essential in prolonging the appearance and life of the floor, whilst reducing the frequency of refurbishment. It is important that matting is of a type which can remove grit and absorb moisture.

Matting should be large enough to allow two steps across it but, as a general recommendation, the mat should be as large as practical and be regularly cleaned.

It is also very important to ensure that the floor is protected from moveable furniture, such as tables and chairs, and a simple solution to this is to protect the floor by applying felt furniture feet to underside of the furniture legs. Regularly check and clean the felt feet to avoid / reduce embedded grit or particles from scratching the wood surface.

Looking After Your Floor

Regular cleaning and maintenance will keep the floor clean and looking as good as possible. The following information is designed to provide a guide to daily and regular maintenance for both commercial and domestic floors.

However, all floors are unique and will require individual assessment because the factors affecting them will vary. Changes in traffic levels and seasonal changes will also need to be taken into consideration, for example, additional matting may be required during periods of heavy rain. The frequency of any maintenance would depend on the usage of the floor and should be altered accordingly.

Timber floors treated with a UV Oiled factory finish has the texture and character of a natural wood floor by impregnating the surface of the timber with natural oils and waxes to nourish and protect the flooring. Every piece of timber is subtly different in its density and structure and it will adapt to the environment into which it has been installed after installation. This can lead to some areas of the flooring becoming microporous and it can sometimes be necessary to give UV Oiled floors a light maintenance treatment once the protection has been removed and before final handover. This treatment also allows for any minor scratches and the finish to be rejuvenated as part of a regular maintenance regime.

Cleaning Guide

With regular and proper maintenance, you can enjoy the flooring for many years to come and will aid in lengthening the lifespan of the flooring..

- As most dirt comes from outdoors, placing well suited doormats at the entranceways will prevent 80% of the potential dirt and moisture from entering the premises. For best effectiveness, , doormats should be vacuumed daily.
- It is highly recommended to have smooth protective pads on furniture legs that are angular or have dirtying edges. Heavy and bulk furnitures such as large cabinets or tables, should be equipped with the protective pads as well to avoid damage to the flooring.
- For daily cleaning and maintenance, simply vacuum and mop the floor will suffice.

Vacuum

- Vacuum your flooring regularly to keep dust to a minimum. However, if your vacuum has a beater bar, make sure it doesn't hit the floor to prevent scratches.
- Manual cleaning should take place in smaller areas or in areas where machines cannot access.

Mop

- Use a damp-mop with a flat-head mop and microfiber pad (Water is wood's worst enemy, use a damp mop rather than a soaking wet one.) Move with the grain and control the amount of cleaning solution by using a spray bottle. Rinse the mop when necessary. Avoid using harsh detergents that will dull the surface of your floors.

Spot/stain removal

- Stains/spills should be cleaned up as quickly as possible, when they are still fresh, and then rinsed with clear water.

Refreshing the floor

As with all timber floors, the surface of the flooring may be scratched or dull due to the everyday traffic. It is recommended to refresh the floor with a re-sanding and varnish service. The re-sand helps to remove micro scratches and scuffs while the new coat of varnish will breath a fresh new life into the floors.