

TONGUE AND GROOVE ENGINEERED FLOORBOARDS *GLUED ON CONCRETE* INSTALLATION GUIDE

Smarter Timber Flooring engineered oak floorboards can be installed by a professional installer. If you require a professional installer feel free to contact us to. This is a 'general' installation guide. For more information and detailed installation instructions, please also refer to the manufacturers' installation instructions provided in your flooring packaging to coincide with the warranty.

Installer / owner responsibility

- The installer has responsibility for the final inspection of the boards and has to check the quality prior to installation. Examine for: color, finish and quality. If the material is not acceptable, do not install and contact Smarter Timber Flooring immediately.
- The installer must determine prior to installing the floor whether the site environment and sub floor involved meet or exceed all applicable standards and recommendations involved (see further). The moisture content of sub floor and the climatic conditions of the job-site should be verified and should confirm with the applicable standards and manufacturer's recommendations.
- Use of stain, filler or putty for defect correction during or after installation should be accepted as normal.
- Any piece of timber that is doubtful as to grade, manufacturing quality or factory finish should not be used by the installer.
- Please note that a "non-correct" installation will affect the warranty.

Natural characteristics of timber and wood in general

- Timber is a natural product. Under the influence of moisture in the air and the daily temperature and humidity variations, the timber floor planks will expand and contract. This phenomenon is normal. Although plywood based engineered timber floors are generally more stable than solid timber floors and lumber core based engineered floors, it is recommended to take into account a sufficient expansion gap on either side of the width of the room of approx 10mm. This will allow the floor to expand and contract as a whole evenly and will avoid (but not entirely prevent) to a great extent gapping.
- Good care has been taken during the manufacturing process of the timber floor boards, to compose boards of the same colour and grain variation. However no two boards are the same: colour, grain and gloss variation can happen from batch to batch due to the nature of the product and the manufacturing process. We recommend that you lay out the boards before installation and judge the colour and grain variation throughout your entire floor. Make a floor plan, and only then start the installation.
- Note that different batches of timber floors can have colour and grain variation and that due to the aging process, newly installed additions to the floor will have substantial colour variation. This variation may disappear over time depending on the exposure to the intensity of the UV component in light.
- The flooring can be installed onto concrete/screed subfloors and existing wood provided they are dimensionally stable.

Pre-installation procedure

- Read this installation advice and if you have any questions contact Smarter Timber Flooring.
- Do not install timber floors in wet areas such as bathrooms, showers, washrooms, saunas, etc.
- Check the condition of the sub floor (see further).
- Stack the timber boxes in the area to be installed.
- Put the boxes flat on a smooth surface and do not put too much on top of each other.
- Leave enough room between the boxes for natural ventilation (approx. 5 - 10 cm).
- Permanent air conditioning and heating systems should be in place and operational.
- Allow approx. 7% extra material above the surface area to make your installation look professional and cater for wastage.

Installation conditions

- In addition to this set of instruction, we suggest installers refer to the AFTA (Australian Timber Flooring Association) Engineered Flooring industry standards technical publication (Version 1 – Feb 2012), for moisture content & humidity guidelines prior to installing the timber floors.
- All sources of moisture must be rectified prior to the installation of the floor, and moisture levels in rooms fitted with hardwood flooring should be maintained at a stable level; in line with normal living conditions. Any construction dampness (such as recently laid concrete slab, or wet paint) must be completely dry
- The boxes of timber floor boards should be stored in a dry place protected from wind, rain, sun and other adverse weather conditions and the packaging should only be opened just before the start of the installation.
- Particularly during winter time and high humidity periods, the timber floor boards in their original unopened packaging should be acclimatised to the room temperature for at least 48 hours (for solid timber floors at least 6 - 8 weeks).
- The surface temperature of the sub floor, at the time of installation, should be at least 17 C and at the most 28c, with the ideal relative humidity of 55%.
- Open the boxes as work progresses to minimise their exposure to humidity. Check that the boards are sound before fitting them.
- Each board should be carefully checked prior to installation; never install any damaged board or board of sub standard quality.
- Always take the boards out of several different boxes alternately during installation.

Sub floor preparation

- Please consult appropriate available Standards or enquire with appropriate Authorities
- All sub-floors (concrete, existing floorboards, plywood, particleboard etc.) must be level, clean, pressure resistant and dry.
- Deviations in any subfloor level must not exceed 3mm under a 3 lineal metre straight edge. Raised points must be sanded/ground down and depressions filled using a good quality cementitious levelling compound. Please engage a professional installer's services for these matters. Place straight floor board on its edge to see if there are any gaps greater than indicated above.
- It is essential that the moisture content of any subfloor complies with the relevant standard. For Australian conditions the recommended standard is a maximum of 4.8% for concrete/screed subfloors and 12% for wood subfloors.

All potential sources of moisture (e.g. walls, drains, damp proof courses, plumbing, fridges, washing machines etc.) must be thoroughly checked and rectified if found to be an issue. The final responsibility for determining if the subfloor is dry enough for installation of the flooring lies with the installer. In almost all flooring installations, a moisture barrier will be required. What form of Moisture Barrier Membrane you should use will be dependent on the installation method and the sub-floor.

- The levelled subfloor must be allowed to dry out completely before applying a suitable liquid Moisture Barrier Membrane. Comply with all instructions provided by the manufacturer.

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- It is advisable to use the same brand moisture barrier (E.g Bostick Ultraseal) as the glue (e.g Bostick Ultraset) you are going to use. Check with your glue supplier for their recommendations for a compliant moisture barrier.
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Installation - expansion gaps

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- In order to cater for a normal expansion and contraction, you should leave a gap of approx 10 mm between the edge of the floor and the wall or any other solid surface it meets. This gap should be covered by an appropriate trim after the timber floor is installed. A similar gap should also be left around other permanent fixtures such as kitchen cabinets, doorframes etc, and where the flooring meets tiles, carpet or any other floor covering. Large or very long rooms will need bigger allowances for expansion joints.
 - An expansion gap over the entire width or length of the floor may be necessary for any length/width of installation greater than 26 ft (8 meters).
 - When laying the timber floor through several adjoining rooms, expansion joints must also be provided at every doorway.

Installation - glue-down method

- In gluing the timber directly to the sub-floor, the sub-floor must be flat and free of any 'bumps'. See "Sub-floor preparation" above.
- Use only PU (Poly Urethane) based glues to glue the boards to the subfloor. Never use waterbased glues! Use of any other type of glue may make warranty claims nil and void.
- ***Always use a proper moisture seal between the subfloor and the timber floor to be installed. Ask your retailer or distributor of adhesives for full advice.***
- Only use a one component, (solvent free) moisture curing polyurethane timber flooring adhesive as glue for gluing the boards down. If you use a glue with a too high water content, the boards will expand uncontrollably.
- In areas where there is a concern with moisture, use a proper moisture seal. Ask Smarter Timber Flooring for full advice.
- Once you have chosen a starting wall, snap a chalk line to see how straight it is. After the adhesive is spread and the first row of planks is installed and secured, it will serve as an anchor for the subsequent rows of planks, which will be pushed snug against it. An expansion joint is needed (see above).
- Use the trowel according to the adhesive manufacturer's instructions (different types and different "teeth heights" are available).
- When applying the adhesive, please strictly comply with all the instructions provided by the adhesive manufacturer. Any surplus glue that may seep out onto the surface of the wood must be removed immediately. The glue should not be applied in the groove or the tongue of the flooring. Continue to fit the boards from left to the right. Always stagger the end joins by a minimum of 300mm. Measure and trim the last board to fit. Where possible, use cut offs to start the next row. Flooring straps can be used to pull boards together and hold them in place whilst the glue dries. For the last row of boards, you can use the sandwich technique to measure the width of board required, ensuring that the row is not less than 100mm in width.
- Hold the trowel at a 45 angle to the sub-floor to obtain the proper ridges.
- Begin spreading adhesive at the starting wall and spread an area about 1ft (30 cm) wide along the length of the wall. The spread rate of adhesive and timing for installation should be according the adhesive manufacturer's instruction. Never spread out too much glue at one time, never the entire floor and always work in sections.
- Proper placement of the first row of planks is very important. The tongue side of the plank will face away from the starting wall. Lay the first row parallel to the wall making sure it is absolutely straight and tight relative to the starting wall. Use wedges to keep an expansion gap and keep the first row of planks in place.
- The groove at all sides of the boards can be glued with a PVA D3 cross linked wood adhesive with a pointed tubular applicator, in order to increase the moisture penetration and stability of the floor.
- Any excess of adhesive should be immediately wiped off with a damp cloth, then a dry cloth.
- For the next row hold the plank at a 45 angle, engage the side tongue and then press into the adhesive and slide lengthwise until the end tongue fits into the previous row. Never use planks that are less than 19 ½" (500 mm) in length to prevent "clustering". Use the tapping block to tap with a hammer and tighten the fit.
- Continue laying planks until the entire adhesive that was spread has been covered. Always make sure that there is enough glue on the sub-floor to cover the entire plank. Make sure as you work that the planks are straight or the entire installation will be out of alignment. Avoid installing according to the "brick-laying" method. Stagger the joims of the boards at least 300mm apart, allowing for an overall blend effect finish.
- It is important that contact be made between the adhesive and the planks. You can use a roller after each section is laid to make sure of this or you can step on the planks with a rubber sole in a sliding motion in the direction of the anchor row in the starting wall to tighten the fit. Either manner is acceptable as long as good adhesive transfer is obtained shortly after installing the flooring. Do not hammer the planks on the top into the glue and make sure the "anchor" row does not move.
- If necessary use some weight(s) to hold the planks tight to the sub-floor until the glue has properly bonded.

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- Furniture, equipment and traffic should be kept off the flooring until the adhesive is firmly set, usually about 24 hours (see adhesive instructions)
- ***It is vital that all glue residues are removed immediately after laying each pre-finished board. If using “Bostick Ultraset” to glue down use “Bostick Wipes” or a solvent suitable to the glue being used. Always test solvents first on an off-cut to establish that the solvent does not affect the colour or finish.***
- Once floors are laid on a building site it is essential that the floor be protected using 2mm foam underlay and 3mm or 4mm MDF sheeting that is securely taped together (do not apply tapes to the finished floor). This protection must be maintained until all works have been completed. Avoid plaster dust on the surface of the floor. If dust is present vacuum off immediately, do not mop. Moisture can set the plaster dust into the low grain of the timber making it extremely difficult if not impossible to remove.
- Cleaning, we recommend the use of a good quality wood soap (Bona) with microfiber-type swivel cleaning pad for daily/weekly cleaning sprayed.

Finishing off:

- Once all the laying procedures have been completed and the glue is sufficiently dry (see information on adhesive bottle), all the spacing wedges should be removed.
- Any visible joints or gaps should be filled with a non silicon based filler to match the colour of the timber or a cork strip/compound. Always test the filler on a leftover piece of plank to check for reaction (if any).
- Skirting-boards or scotia can now be installed by nailing, screwing or gluing directly to the perimeter walls or existing skirting. Never fix them directly to the installed floor.