

UK Flooring Direct

Solid Wood Installation Guide

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All Solid wood flooring can react to the presence of moisture. In the winter when the home has the central heating running, moisture can leave the wood, while in the summer months when the humidity is higher, the wood will absorb moisture. This is a natural process, due to wood being “Hygroscopic” in nature.

Nearly all problems related to Solid wood flooring are due to improper installation and exposure to excessive moisture in the concrete sub floor or excessive relative humidity (RH). If there is too much moisture it will cause the wood planks to cup, or buckle. This is why it is important when installing that you follow the correct recommended installation methods.

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Storage

Decorating and remodelling a home is a time-consuming process that can become even longer when little problems arise. If your building project exceeds the original timeframe you may need to store some of your flooring materials like Solid wood flooring. Solid wood flooring is extremely susceptible to environmental damage so it must be stored properly in order for it to be viable for use when you need it. If you make the effort to store your flooring properly, you can avoid having to deal with damage or replacements later.

While it may be required to leave your Solid wood flooring in the garage for a few days before bringing it inside to acclimatise, these conditions are not acceptable for long-term storage. Flooring must be kept in properly enclosed surroundings that have a secure roof and weatherproof windows. Extreme temperatures and excess moisture can irreparably damage



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wood flooring so it is important to select an area that will protect your flooring from exposure to the elements.

If Solid wood flooring is exposed to freezing temperatures or extreme humidity, this can lead to cracking or warping. In order to prevent this damage, if you are not sure, speak to our Customer Sales Team about what temperature and humidity is ideal for storing your particular type of flooring, and do what you can to control the temperature and humidity in your temporary storage area. Solid wood flooring needs to be kept clean and dry, so air circulation is also a concern. Clean air should be allowed to circulate among the stacks of flooring; you may need to install fans if your building has poor air flow.

The flooring should be laid down horizontally onto a flat surface, and never propped up against a wall, as this is very likely to cause the flooring to warp and bow.

As a general guide, look at Temperatures in the region of 18-24°C and Relative Humidity 45-60%. (Please refer to the manufactures guides upon delivery, or if you anticipate storage needs contact our Customer Service Team on 08443 274 444)



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Acclimatisation

Prior to installation solid wood flooring must be acclimatised to reach its equilibrium moisture content (EMC). The product should be left in the room it is going to be laid in at suitable room temperature and relative humidity (RH) for a minimum of 7 days prior to installation. Refer to the supplied guides with your product for further reference

Solid wood flooring can be installed several ways:

Fully Glued Down

Nail/ Screw Down

Floated on Fast Fit Peel and Stick Underlay (Only up to 150mm widths)

(You must avoid gluing the Solid wood flooring together with PVA glue).

Fully Glued Down

Installations

All floating flooring installations must use the correct underlay. Over a concrete subfloor you will need to use a superior underlay which has a built in damp proof membrane (DPM) such as Cushion Premium Black Underlay. Over a wooden subfloor you can use the Cushion Standard White Underlay or Cushion Plus White Underlay with its vapour barrier that allow the flooring and subfloor to breath. For installations over under floor heating we recommend using Cushion Ultra Silver underlay.



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Also for improved noise reduction we recommend the Cushion Acoustic Gold Underlay, bringing peace and quiet to the room, by reducing "Drum Sound". Also note that new concrete slabs require a minimum of 60 days drying time to achieve the correct moisture content of 4% (MC) or below, before covering them with a wood floor, please always test the moisture content of a concrete sub-floor in several random places to ensure it is suitable to be laid on. The concrete must also be free of paint, oil, existing adhesives, wax, grease, dirt and curing compounds. These may be removed chemically or mechanically, but do not use solvent-based strippers under any circumstances. The use of residual solvents can prohibit the satisfactory bond of flooring adhesives. It is important to ensure a proper bond between the adhesives and concrete and wood panels.

Another important consideration in using glue-down installation is your choice of adhesives as some are only suitable for floors up to a small width. To avoid warranty issues and the possibility of future problems we recommend 'Lumberjack 650 Floor Adhesive' 14L Tub which you trowel out to fully bond to the subfloor. Alternatively use 'Lumberjack 550 Foil Adhesive and foil applicator gun. This adhesive is applied with an applicator gun to run beads of adhesive on the subfloor at intervals and is easy for DIY and professional installations up to 150mm board width.

Nailed/Screw Down

Installations

Nailed down installation is the traditional way to install solid wood floors and can be done either directly onto wooden subfloor or on a concrete subfloor with the use of battens.

Solid wood floors can be nailed into existing wooden subfloors such as floorboards or plywood but not onto chipboard floors as these will not be strong enough to hold the nails. Floorboards must be in good condition and level, if not, it is advisable to lay 6mm plywood down first.



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When you nail down a Solid wood floor you use something like a Porta-Nailer to drive a nail at a 30° degree angle through the tongue and into the subfloor. Porta-Nailers can be hired from any good hire shop.

A DIY friendly alternative to this is our Tongue Tite Screws. These have been specially designed for use with tongue & groove wood flooring. Each pack covers 10m² and comes with a special drill bit that fits any standard electric drill or screwdriver.

Installing onto Battens

You can nail/screw down a solid wood floor over a concrete subfloor with the use of battens. A damp proof membrane sheet must first be laid over the concrete subfloor before the battens are fixed at centres of 400mm. The battens must be a minimum of 40mm in depth to avoid them bowing. The solid wood floor can then be nailed down as described above.

Floated on Fast Fit Peel and Stick

Underlay

You can install Solid hardwood flooring over a concrete subfloor or a mixture of different subfloors by floating it on an adhesive underlay. Fast Fit Peel & Stick Underlay has adhesive on one side which the solid wood floor is laid onto, however, the boards must be 150mm or narrower for a successful installation. Before you lay down the underlay you will need to either first lay a minimum 1000 gauge DPM sheet like our Fast Fit Polythene DPM or use our liquid Timba Barrier DPM.



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You will need to leave a minimum 15mm expansion gap around the perimeter of the room. To maintain this gap during installation, spacers are provided in our installation kit (purchased separately).

After you have installed the floor you can cover this expansion gap with scotia beading or replace you old skirting boards with new ones, this gives a much more professional finish. An expansion gap also needs to be left at doorways where the floor runs through from one room to another. For this transition, we have a full range of door profiles available to match your floor.

This is a brief guide on installing solid wood flooring always refer to the manufactures installation guides in the packs of the flooring. Or visit our Flooring Manufactures Installations Guides.

If you require any further advice on installation then please call our technical department on 0844 327 5555, e-mail us on technical@ukflooringdirect.co.uk.



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