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Engineered Flooring Floating Installation Instructions

Trout River Lumber, LLC. Warrants all of our prefinished engineered flooring over 3” wide. The maximum area covered without a transition is a width of 20’ and a length of 40’. Proper use of ½” expansion joints at all vertical structures and the use of T-moldings to break up the width of the flooring, not to exceed 20’, is mandatory.

The loss of warranty coverage may be lost if the installation instructions are not followed, recommendations are not heeded or improper tools or materials are used. Floating a floor does provide some advantages, but there are situations that need to be made aware. Because the floor is not directly attached to the sub-floor, some vertical movement may occur as well as a hollow sound when walked on. It is also more difficult to replace a plank that has become damaged then if it had been put down via the nail/staple or full glue down method.

INSTRUCTIONS SHOULD BE READ CAREFULLY

Sub-floor Specifications

A. The sub-floor must be level to within an 1/8” in an 8’ radius. Use a 6’ or longer straight edge to find the high/low spots. Use a fifteen-pound felt or an approved leveling compound to fix variations in the sub-floor. When using the felt, cut small pieces the same shape as the depression and stack as many as needed to fill the area. This method should be used for fixing small depressions. The use of felt to fix large depressions will void the warranty, as this may cause excessive movement. The use of leveling compound is recommended for larger variances. Allow for sufficient drying time, when using leveling compound, before the start of the installation process. If installing over a concrete sub-floor, only use a leveling compound for depressions, sanding or grinding off the high spots.

B. Concrete sub-floors must be tested using a properly done calcium chloride test. Results must be less than 3 lbs. moisture per 1000 square feet over a 24 hour period on a dry weight basis. If the test results read above 3 lbs. but less than 8 lbs. and no apparent source of moisture can be eliminated, a moisture sealer approved for use with hardwood floors can be used. Retest after the moisture sealer has been applied to make sure that moisture level is below 3 lbs. per 1000 square feet.

C. When using a wood sub-floor, the moisture content must be under 13%.

D. Make sure that the sub-floor is completely clean and smooth

E. A relative humidity level of 40-60% must be maintained at the job site. The room temperature must be within 15 F of what the normal operating temperature will be.

Job Site Inspection

Before installing Trout River Lumber LLC's engineered floors, inspect the job site thoroughly. As long as there is no moisture problem present and they are level, floating the floor over any existent floor, except for carpet, is possible.

Exterior: The outside surroundings of the jobsite should be carefully inspected for apparent sources of moisture and improper drainage. The yard should be sloped away from the foundation and gutters and eaves should be checked to insure that they are not allowing water to be dumped near the foundation.

Crawl space: Foundation vents must be in place to provide cross ventilation. The opening area of these vents should equal 1 ½% of the square footage of the crawl space. The vents should remain open year round. A 6 mil black poly moisture barrier must be placed on the ground under the designated install area if excessive moisture is present under the house.

Inside: Make sure the sub-floor's moisture level is correct. Check the room's condition as well. Water stains, peeled paint near windows and doors, rusty metal could indicate a present moisture problem.

Sub-floor Requirements

Wood (Preferred)

4 x 8 sheets of ¾" CDX plywood, sub-floor grade (Exposure 1) or ¾" OSB board, sub-floor grade, with joint spacing 19.2" or less on center joint construction.

Wood (Minimum)

4 x 8 sheets of 5/8" CDX plywood, sub-floor grade (Exposure 1) with a maximum of 16" on center joint construction. Follow manufacturer's recommendations for spacing and fastening. Typically spacing for joint systems is 1/8" around the perimeter, fastened every 6" on bearing edges and 12" along intermediate supports.

Note: Door Casings should be notched or undercut to prevent difficult scribe cuts.

Concrete

Trout River Lumber's engineered floors are ideal for installation over lightweight or standard density concrete sub-floors. A concrete sub-floor is acceptable for a floating installation if there is no standing water or discoloration and appears dry. Also, 6 mil poly sheeting and a 1/8" high compression foam underlayment should be installed properly before the flooring is installed.

Note: Concrete sub-floors should be at least 60 days old before beginning installation.

Moisture

The following items should be inspected and/or checked to prevent your new floor from being damaged by moisture and moisture causing problems.

1. Gutters, drains, and down spouts should be free from debris and transport water away from the foundation

2. The landscaping around the house should be sloped away from the foundation at a minimum of 6" every 10'.
3. Make sure windows and doors are weather tight.
4. Inspect the concrete sub-floor (if applicable) for cracks and buckling caused by water being forced up through the slab, discoloration caused by the presence of water, or the existence of water itself.
5. Ensure that proper ventilation is present in crawl space, attic, and basement.
6. Piping, water heaters, appliances that utilize water and any other plumbing fixtures in the installation area should be checked for leaks and fixed as needed.
7. Seasonal changes in relative humidity should be taken into consideration and accounted for.
8. Air conditioners being set to an extremely low temperature, common in areas with high humidity, will cause the slab to sweat if the dew point is reached. Damage caused by this is not covered by the warranty.

Installation

Note: Trout River Lumber's Engineered Flooring does not need to be acclimated prior to installation.

Note: Clean any flooring adhesive that may find its way onto the flooring immediately.

Always begin a floating installation with the groove facing the wall. Make sure to leave expansion joints along walls and all vertical structures. The sub-floor should be cleaned thoroughly before installation.

Tools and Materials Needed

- Tape Measure
- Chalk Line
- Last Board Puller
- Hammer
- Tapping Block
- Floating Floor Adhesive
- Expansion Shims
- Floor Protectors
- Router
- Table Saw or Miter Box Saw

Step 1: First Run

- 1.1 – Start with groove facing wall. If beginning wall is not square, scribe a line to ensure a true, fixed base from which to build the rest of the floor.

- 1.2 – Place expansion shims every 12” along wall to prevent movement during the remainder of the installation
- 1.3 – In this type of installation, glue placement is very important. A 3/32” bead should be run along the topside of the groove on any end joint. Do not fill the groove completely as this will prevent a tight fit between planks.

Step 2: Subsequent Runs

- 2.1 – To minimize waste, start each subsequent run with the cut off piece from the last only if it is at least 12” long. End joints should be staggered at least 6”.
- 2.2 – Again, in this type of installation, glue placement is very important. A 3/32” bead should be run along the topside of the groove including the end joint. Do not fill the groove completely as this will prevent a tight fit between planks.
- 2.3 – Set cut off board from previous run taking in account any need for expansion joints and shims. Inspect side and end joints to ensure a proper fit has been made. Use the tapping block to finish setting the board, bringing it flush with existing run and previous piece. Never directly tap the tongue side or face layer.
- 2.4 – The last piece of the run should be cut with awareness of the expansion joint. Apply glue and install as recommended. Use the last board puller to gently pressure last board in place.
- 2.5 – Inspect all seams for tight fit and continue to next run.

Step 3: Last Run

- 3.1 - The last run will almost always have to be cut to fit. Make sure to take in account expansion space. Use the Last Board Puller to engage all joints.

Note: The last row should not be under 1 ½” wide.

Job Completion

Remove all expansion shims and install mouldings and/or trim over expansion spaces.

Never nail directly into the flooring material.

If further information is needed, please refer to the NWFA website at www.nwfa.org