



Sustainable Woods™ Flooring

Suggested Steps to Prepare for and Maintain Your Hardwood Flooring

PRE-INSTALLATION/JOBSITE CONDITIONS

Wood flooring is one of the last jobs of any construction project. Prior to delivery of the wood flooring a site evaluation should be done. Check for the following:

The building should be completely enclosed. All outside doors and windows must be in place and have latching mechanisms. Surface drainage should direct water away from the building. All concrete, masonry, plastering, drywall, and other wet work should be completed and thoroughly dry. All texturing and painting primer coats should be completed. In warm months, the building must be well ventilated each day. Be sure the flooring will not be exposed to extremes of humidity or moisture. Interior environmental conditions must be near the average for the geographical area. Basements are to be dry

Crawl spaces must be dry. Crawl space must be a minimum of 18” (400MM) from ground to underside of joists. The crawl space earth (or thin “rat slab”) should be covered 100% by a vapor retarder of 6 mil black polyethylene. Where a proper ground covering is in place, the crawl space should have perimeter venting. Vents should be properly located to foster cross ventilation. Check the subfloor (wood or concrete) for good moisture content.

Where the minimum jobsite conditions are present, the flooring can be delivered and stored in the rooms in which it will be installed. Upon delivery check wood flooring moisture content to establish a baseline for required acclimation. Acclimate to recommendations or as necessary according to geographical location. Acclimation can be facilitated by breaking the floor units into small lots and/or opening packaging.

Where building codes allow, permanent HVAC should be on and operational a minimum of 7 days and maintained between 65 – 75 degrees and a relative humidity of 35% - 55% prior to delivery, during, and after installation of the flooring. Where building codes do not allow operation of the permanent system, acclimation of the flooring must be completed with the temperature and humidity maintained at or near normal living conditions between 60 to 80 degrees Fahrenheit and at the average yearly relative humidity for the area.

Test wood sub floors and wood flooring for moisture content using a pin-type moisture meter. The moisture content of the sub floor should not exceed 12% and the moisture content of flooring should be within 4% of the sub floor moisture content. Sustainable Woods™ lumber comes out of the kiln at 6-8% moisture content level, which is what is best for when it is milled into a finished product. During the process of milling it into flooring and transportation it will pick up some moisture, because it no longer in that very dry kiln.

All finished wall coverings and prime painting should be completed. Note: Base and shoe mold may be installed and finished after the flooring installation. Interior environmental conditions and moisture content of interior wood materials must be at occupied levels. Check moisture content of subflooring, trim, and exposed wood components.

Please refer to the NOFMA Technical Service manual of **INSTALLING HARDWOOD FLOORING** for additional information.

Subfloor Preparation

- The sub-floor must be completely dry.
- The sub floor should be free from any type of paint, oil, greases, dust and all other types of residues.
- The sub floor should be level in general. The level drop must be no more than ¼" over a ten feet distance.
- If plywood is used for sub-floor, the moisture content difference should be no more than 2% difference between solid wood and plywood. Plywood size for sub-floor is suggested to be ¾" x 48" x 48" and leave ¼" between sheets for expansion.
- For added protection, an additional 15 lb. Felt paper moisture barrier should be applied to the plywood sub-floor with 6" overlaps before installing the new wood floor.

*** Radiant Floors**

Solid hardwood flooring can be installed over radiant floors, but many things need to be considered. Please consult with experts before proceeding with an installation over a radiant floor.

STORAGE AND HANDLING

Solid wood flooring should be stored in the same environment in which it is expected to perform. Acclimate the product for a minimum of 72 hours or as long as needed in order to meet the proper installation requirements. Material is acclimated once it has reached moisture equilibrium consistent with the temperature and relative humidity of the job site and normal living conditions. Do not store materials directly on concrete – elevate material at least 4" above concrete. Do not move material outside in inclement weather. Always store material in a dry place.

FLOOR CARE AND MAINTENANCE

A rich variety of natural wood characteristics such as knots, mineral highlights, pin holes, distinctive differences in color, and grain configuration provides the truest wood grain texture and detail that nature has to offer. These natural appearances are not construed as defects. Being a natural material, hardwood floors will react to humidity and temperature variations. In high humidity, wood picks up moisture and swells; in low humidity wood releases moisture and shrinks. At some periods of the year splits may temporarily appear between the boards. This phenomenon is normal. Hardwood floors should be installed in environments of 35%-55% relative humidity for coverage under the warranty and to prevent possible damage, such as excessive swelling and/or shrinkage or other movement, due to extreme dryness/humidity. Installation of a humidifier or dehumidifier may be necessary. The floor is designed to perform in an environmentally controlled structure.

Remember, like any floor covering, our real wood floors will show signs of wear over time, depending on the size and lifestyle of your family. By observing a few precautions and setting up a regular cleaning routine and maintenance program, you can expect years of beauty from your floor. The following are examples of the reasonable and necessary maintenance you are expected to perform. They are not intended to be an exclusive list.

- Sweep or vacuum regularly since built-up grit can damage the surface of the wood. The vacuum head must be a brush or felt type. Be certain the wheels of the vacuum are clean and do not damage the finish. **DO NOT USE A VACUUM WITH A BEATER BAR HEAD.**
- Remove spills promptly using a soft cloth and recommended cleaning products.
- NEVER wet-mop, damp-mop, or flood your floor with water or other products. This can severely damage the flooring. Do not use hardwood floor cleaning machines.
- The use of approved maintenance and floor-care products, including but not limited to BonaX Swedish Formula Hardwood Flooring Cleaner, is highly recommended.
- **IMPORTANT:** Do not use oil soaps, liquid or paste wax products or other household cleaners that contain lemon oil, tung oil, silicon or ammonia. Use of these and other such products will harm the long-term performance of your floor and may also affect its recoat ability.
- Keep pets' nails trimmed, and paws clean and free of dirt, gravel, grease, oil, and stains.
- Place protective pads beneath furniture legs and feet to reduce scratches and dents.
- Use a dolly and protective sheets of plywood when moving heavy objects, furniture, or appliances.
- Make certain furniture casters are clean and operate properly (a minimum 1" width is recommended).
- Remove shoes with spiked or damaged heels before walking on floor. High heels that have lost their protective cap, thus exposing the fastening nail, will exert over 8,000 pounds per square inch of pressure on a floor. That's high enough to damage hardened concrete.
- Exposure to the sun and its UV rays accelerates the oxidation and aging of wood and fabrics. This causes the stain and/or wood to fade and/or to change color. We recommend that you rearrange rugs and furniture periodically so the floor ages evenly.
- Use area rugs in high traffic areas and pivot points (e.g., stair landings, room entries, etc.), especially if you have a large family or indoor pets.