Artimber®

Emerging · Enhancing · Evolving

INSTALLATION GUIDE

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It is recommended that all Artimber engineered timber flooring be installed by a professional flooring contractor with direct stick installation method. Subfloor preparation and the preferred installation method should be discussed with your contractor in advance , to ensure the installation method is best suited to the site conditions.

The manufacturer declines any responsibility for job failure resulting from or associated with inappropriate or improperly prepared subfloors or job site environment deficiencies. The installer must document all site tests, and the records must be available if a claim is filed.

Prior to Installation:

Understanding of the installation guide

It is expected that the installer reads through this entire set of installation instructions, so that they fully understand each step.

Floorboard Inspection

Prior to installation, it is required to thoroughly check each board for colour, finish, and overall quality. **Do not install any pieces that contain defects.**

All such inspections should be performed in the proper lighting conditions, preferably in places that will be exposed to natural light.

Site Condition Assessment

Artimber engineered timber flooring must be installed in a regulated and liveable environment to prevent possible damages not covered by warranty.

Excessive moisture can damage natural engineered timber flooring. Ensure that the site is suitable for the installation of the flooring and that the rooms where the flooring is to be laid are not affected by moisture.

Temperatures of 20 degrees Celsius and relative humidity between 40 and 60 percent suggest optimum conditions for installation of flooring. This also includes assessing the building for leaks and noting the slab quality. The contractor must also consider the adequacy of external drainage and that ponding of water against the building, which can can cause undesirable moisture ingress through the slab. Garden sprinklers along the edge of a house can have a similar effect.

The delivery of flooring should not occur until the building has been entirely enclosed and all cement work, plastering, painting, and other materials have completely dried. Concrete and plaster should be at least 60 days old and fully cured. Verify that basements and subfloor crawl spaces are dry and sufficiently aired to prevent any water-related damage.

Acclimatisation

Engineered timber flooring should be acclimatised to the installation environment 48 hours prior to installation. Do not store on concrete or next to exterior walls. The flooring pallets should be put in the installation area and left unopened until installation begins. Standing packages upright on their end is prohibited.

Installation in wet areas, which include bathrooms, laundries, toilets, saunas, or other moist or water-prone areas, is prohibited.

Heating and air conditioning systems must be completely functional and maintain a reasonable room temperature.

Subfloor Assessment and Preparation

The subfloor must be cleaned adequately before any installation. This may be achieved through grinding, sanding, sweeping and vacuum cleaning as well as ensuring the surface is free of wax, grease, paint, oil, previous or existing glues or adhesives, and other debris. If installing using the adhesive fixing method, do not use any cleaning products on the subfloor that could impair the bonding of flooring adhesives.

The subfloor must be levelled. It is required that there are no more than 3 mm deviations beneath a 2m straight edge for floated installations and no more than a 3 mm deviation beneath a 3m straight edge for adhesive fixed installations in any direction. This is generally achieved through grinding back the concrete and through use of levelling compounds.

Artimber engineered wood flooring cannot be laid over a cushioned floor such as carpet or carpet underlay.

Slab Subfloor

Moisture Content: Prior to installation, slab moisture must be evaluated using a concrete moisture metre and an in-slab relative humidity test. When measured with a concrete moisture metre, slab moisture must not exceed 6%, and when measured using an in-slab relative humidity test, it must not exceed 80%.

Structural soundness (when adhesive fixing): If the slab surface can be scored with a coin or similar then the surface layer is unsound and will need to be removed by grinding.

Wood-based Subfloors

Prior to installation, the wood-based subfloor should be sufficiently cleaned. This may be achieved through sanding, sweeping and vacuum cleaning.

When adhesive fixing the flooring ensure the surface is free of wax, grease, paint, oil, previous or existing glues or adhesives, and other debris. Note that particleboard can have a wax surface layer that needs to be removed by sanding.

The wood-based subfloor must be levelled. There should be no more than 3 mm deviation beneath a 2m straight edge for floated Installation and no more than 3 mm deviation beneath a 3m straight edge for adhesive fixed installations. Raised joints in particleboard subfloors will often need sanding to achieve the required flatness and an even transition between sheets.

The wood-based subfloor must be structurally sound. Ensure that subfloor is soundly fixed and as such no squeaking is present. This may require re-punching nails and board replacement in old timber floors. A plywood underlay can be used over a solid timber subfloor if there is doubt regarding seasonal movement effects or minor integrity concerns. Sheets approximately 6mm thick are glued with adhesive beads at 100mm intervals and stapled at a 12mm distance in from the perimeter and spaced out at 75mm. Throughout the body of the sheet stapling should be completed at 100mm spacing.

When dealing with older particleboard ensure that the surface is not flaking and with plywood ensure there is no delamination.

Prior to installation commencement, a minimum of three resistance moisture metre tests must be completed in each area where flooring will be laid, and the average in-service moisture content should not exceed 11 to 12 percent.

Subfloors Other Than Wood or slab

As outlined above our engineered timber flooring is not suitable for installation over carpet, perimeter-glued resilient vinyl, and rubber tiles. All are to be removed prior to installation and subfloor to be made good and levelled.

Engineered Timber flooring may be installed over Terrazzo, marble, ceramic tile, and any other hard surfaces that are well bonded to the subfloor, provided that the subfloor is dry, structurally sound, and flat. The contractor must clean and prepare the floor to the conditions generally as described above. Terrazzo, marble, and ceramic tile must be ground to assure flatness over joints and to achieve adequate adhesion (refer to your chosen adhesive manufacturer for further guidance.)

The flooring can be glued or floated directly over a full trowel spread bed of adhesive bonded acoustic underlays. Underlay density needs to be sufficient to support engineered timber flooring and it must be installed according to the acoustic underlay manufacturer's recommendations. Do not use foam underlays when floating boards over an acoustic underlay but provide a 200mm plastic sheet so that the underlay does not incur seasonal floor movement.

ASBESTOS WARNING! Existing resilient tile, sheet vinyl flooring, backing, or felt linings may contain asbestos that is not readily identifiable. Inhalation of asbestos dust can cause asbestosis or other serious bodily harm.

If suspected, advice and testing is needed from contractors licenced in asbestos removal and appropriate steps taken before considering floor installation.

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Underfloor Heating

When installing engineered boards over a heated slab, the maximum board width and board thickness are 240mm and 15mm, respectively. It is essential that the entire board thickness does not exceed 20mm; otherwise, the insulating characteristics of the timber would impair the heating system's efficiency. Artimber does not provide a warranty for any goods over these sizes when installed on a heated slab.

When installing over a heated slab, the concrete substrate should have a moisture level of less than 3 percent. To ensure this is adhered to, it is required to turn on your underfloor heating prior to installation. Ensure that the heating requirements are followed prior to installing the floorboards. The surface temperature of the subfloor should not exceed 26 degrees Celsius. If the underfloor heating system is recently built, it must be turned on and remain on for at least two weeks before the floorboards are laid. Prior to installation, turn off the heating system at least 2 days in advance.

Turn the heating system back on one week after the floor installation has been completed. For operational usage, gradually raising the temperature by 1 °C each day will help the timber flooring acclimate and minimise floorboard damage.

It is essential to distribute heat evenly since hot patches might result in board movement in certain areas of the floor more than in others. Similarly, seasonal system operation may cause minor gapping or board shape variations.

Moisture Barrier Membrane

Before applying an appropriate liquid Moisture Barrier Membrane, the levelled subfloor must be completely dry. Follow the instructions supplied by the adhesive manufacturer.

Prior to commencing installation, inspect your moisture barrier membrane to verify it is dry and clean, and take moisture readings to check that the levels are right.

Installation:

Tools And Accessories Required

•Polyurethane timber flooring adhesive -

Do not use water-based adhesive. Only use a one-component, solvent-free, moisture-curing polyurethane timber flooring adhesive for gluing the boards down. If you use glue with a higher water content, the boards will move unfavourably.

•Trowel - Use a trowel size recommended by the adhesive manufacturer's guidelines for use with engineered flooring.

•Broom

•Tape measure

•Moisture metre (wood and concrete)

•Mallet (light coloured)

•Circular or hand saw

•Mitre or table saw

•Pull bar

•50mm to 65mm long gun driven finishing nails

•Chalk line and chalk

•Hammer

•Personal protective equipment (goggles, gloves, and masks)

•Utility knife

•Nail punch

•Loba Cleaner and Loba Remover

Step1: Get started

Install the flooring parallel to the longest exterior wall in the room. Measure out from the wall on the door side of the room in two places 750mm for 75mm and 127mm wide products. Mark and snap a chalk line across the two marks. The area between the chalk line and the wall is the working area and will be the last to be installed.

Step2: Spread the adhesive

Hold the trowel at a 45°-60° angle and spread the adhesive onto an area no larger than 3-4 m² at one time.

Step3: Install the floor

After the adhesive has been spread as above, start with the first piece of flooring. Install the flooring with the groove towards you and the tongue facing the opposite wall. Line up the groove of the flooring with the chalk line, and then press the flooring into the adhesive.

Working from left to right, lay the next board, and continue working towards the right until you need to cut a piece to complete the first row. Measure the size you need to complete the first row and cut to length.

Distribute lengths, avoiding "H" patterns and other discernible patterns in adjacent runs. Stagger the end joints of boards, row to row at a minimum of 15 cm for strip flooring, 20-25 cm for medium wide planks and 25 cm for planks wider than 12 cm.

If the leftover piece is less than 15 cm long, cut another piece at a random spot and start the second row with it.

A soft rubber mallet can be used to tap the boards on the face until they are in the proper position.

Always saw boards with the saw teeth turning down into the face or top of the board to protect the surface.

For wood subfloors, use small finishing nails to hold the first row in place. Fill nail holes with a filler designed to blend with your flooring.

Complete the rest of the installation in your working area by following the same installation procedures that are stated earlier in this section.

Lift a board periodically to make sure that there is 100% contact between the board and the flooring adhesive.

Step4: Finishing with the last row

Often, the entire length of the last row will need to be cut so that it is narrow enough to fit the remaining space. If this is the case, follow the steps below:

Lay a row of boards, unglued, with the tongue toward the wall, directly on top of the last row installed.

Take a short piece of the engineered timber flooring that is being installed with its face down and the tongue side against the wall. Draw a line with a pencil along the row moving down the wall. The resulting line gives the proper width for the last row.

You will need to use a pull bar extensively to ensure that the last row is properly flush.

After Installation:

Allow the floor to dry for 24 hours before doing any cleaning or replacing heavy objects, like furniture.

Due to the engineering of the boards, the requirement for expansion allowances is minimised. We suggest a 3mm space be kept between the boards and skirting. Match the colour of the silicone caulk to the floor or skirting.

Vacuum the floor thoroughly using the soft brush attachment or dust mop to remove any dirt and debris. Use a quality engineered timber flooring cleaner to finish the floor. We recommend Loba Cleaner. Please contact us for more information on aftercare products.

To avoid the prefinished boards from being damaged by other trades, it is preferable to install them as late as possible in the construction process. Should more work be required on the project after installation has been completed, it is necessary to have the floor covered with 2mm foam underlay followed by a 3mm or 4mm MDF sheet that is put together tightly (do not apply tape to the completed floor) or any other type of protection.