



Wood Floor Maintenance Instructions

Congratulations on the purchase of your new hardwood floor. We have taken all possible steps to ensure that you receive a durable and quality product.

The principal enemy of timber floors is excessive exposure to moisture or dryness. Having left our premises, we have no control over the conditions to which they are subjected. Wood is a naturally hygroscopic material and will always be prone to small movement depending on climatic conditions. If suitable care and treatment is not taken, inherent stresses in wood may be released, resulting in movement or distortion such as swelling, warping, splitting or even discolouration. No liability will be accepted when problems are moisture related.

It is important to maintain a stable humidity level all year round in order to preserve the wood's form and appearance. Wood is a hygroscopic material and due to its natural movement characteristics, slight cupping or crowning is sometimes unavoidable. The optimal humidity range for hardwood flooring is between 45 and 60%. Temperature should be maintained at about 18 - 24 degrees Celsius. If underfloor heating is used a maximum sub-floor temperature of 26 degrees should be observed. Temperatures in excess of this may cause excessive movement and can lead to delamination of engineered boards and/or splits appearing in the surface of the wood. Gaps appearing between the boards indicate a drying out of the wood and insufficient degree of humidity. Temperature variations can also lead to some 'creaking' being heard from the flooring. The installation of a humidifier or air exchange system can prove indispensable in controlling humidity.

Key points about this phenomenon:

- **Moisture loss:** When the air inside your home becomes dry in winter due to heating, the wood in your oak floor loses moisture to the surrounding air, causing it to shrink.
- **Gaps between boards:** As the wood shrinks, gaps appear between individual floorboards.
- **Hygroscopic nature of wood:** Wood is considered "hygroscopic," meaning it readily absorbs and releases moisture depending on the surrounding environment.

Above all, don't forget that wood is a living material and that we must look after it for life. A proper care programme should always be observed. By following these simple guidelines you will maintain the natural beauty of your floor.

MAINTENANCE 'DO'S'

- If the flooring is to be covered after laying for any period of time (for example while final decorating takes place) then use a breathable and waterproof temporary floor protection. **Never leave a wood floor covered with floor protection for longer than two weeks, as this can lead to floor failure and discoloration of the floor finish.**
- Regularly sweep or vacuum the floor using a soft flooring attachment to prevent grit or abrasive dust from accumulating and scratching the surface
- Use protective pads under all furniture legs and castor wheels
- Use barrier mats inside and outside of all external doorways to help prevent the transfer of mud, grit, moisture and abrasive particles
- A suitable spray cleaner or mop rinsed in a recommended wood floor cleaning solution should be used for cleaning, with the mop squeezed damp beforehand. A Bona wood floor spray mop is recommended
- At regular intervals after cleaning a coat of Maintenance Oil should be applied to protect the floor and maintain its appearance
- Keep the ambient temperature to 18-24 degree Celsius and the relative humidity at 45-60% throughout the year. This will prevent any excessive expansion and/or contraction of the flooring.

MAINTENANCE 'DON'TS'

- Never allow any liquids or detergents to remain on the floor, these should be wiped and cleaned immediately
- Never leave a wood floor covered with floor protection for longer than two weeks, as this can lead to floor failure and discoloration of the floor finish and no adhesive tape of any description should be applied directly to the floor surface. **If an underfloor heating system is in place it should be turned off whilst the flooring is covered.**
- Where underfloor heating is used beware of leaving low-level furniture in one position for any length of time. If the flooring is 'capped' in this way, trapping heat, this will lead to cupping and/or gapping, from which the floor may not be able to recover
- The use of rugs is not recommended, as they trap heat which can lead to swelling, distortion, cupping, discoloration and in the case of an engineered floor, delamination.
- Never use wax, oil-based detergent, steel wool or any household cleaners. These may dull or damage the finish, leaving a greasy film, making the floor more difficult to clean
- Never use a steam cleaner because moisture can be forced into the wood, causing cupping and damage to the finish
- Do not use a vacuum with rotating brushes.