

General Installation Guidelines

The following should be used for guideline purposes only, as it is the responsibility of the installation contractor to ensure that floors are installed correctly and safely, subject to the relative site conditions, sub floor and specified finish.

These guidelines are designed to complement the current British Standard BS8201 and any other relevant standards of manufacturer's instruction.

SITE CONDITIONS

Before materials are delivered to site, all wet trades should be complete and dried out. The building must be weather tight, i.e. doors and windows fully fitted.

Site conditions should be checked to ensure the humidity levels are - and are maintained at - between 45% and 65% RH, and the room temperature between 15°C and 25°C.

Extremes of temperature / humidity will affect the stability of wood flooring. Low humidity can cause the wood to shrink, and a high level to cause expansion. Typical causes of low humidity are the use of heating at too high a temperature, open fires and wood burners.

We recommend using a thermometer/hygrometer to monitor temperature and humidity. A humidifier / dehumidifier can be used to control the ambient conditions.

As a general guide, areas should be adequately ventilated to prevent a build-up of moisture in the atmosphere. Wood will naturally change its size during the progress of the seasons. In the summer, the humidity is generally at its highest level and wood joints should be reasonably tight together.

During the winter, when heating is typically used, the humidity levels are generally lower and wood flooring will naturally show small gaps between the joints.

This is natural movement and not a manufacturing or installation fault.

The wood flooring should acclimatize in the room where the wood is to be fitted for at least 72 hours prior to installation, to balance the wood flooring with the environment it is going to be used in. It should be stored out of direct sunlight, away from walls and radiators and on battens fully supporting the wood to prevent a build of heat on the bottom boards.

UNDER FLOOR HEATING

Ensure that the system is fully commissioned, tested, run for a full cycle to a maximum of 27°C floor temperature and left running for 2 weeks prior to installation. Floor probes should be installed and connected to room thermostats for each zone to ensure the sub floor surface temperature doesn't exceed 27°C as this may cause

shrinkage/delamination. The manifold flow rate of the water temperature should be suitable for timber flooring in accordance with the manufacturers recommendations.

During installation the ambient room temperature should be maintained between 15°C and 25°C. On completion the floor temperature should be increased by no more than 3°C day to a maximum of 27°C. Always increase/decrease temperature using this method, to minimize movement within the floor.

We recommend installing Fidbox temperature & humidity recording devices in the back of the flooring to provide evidence of the readings below and above the floor.

SUBFLOOR REQUIREMENTS

The sub floor must be clean, dry and flat to British Standard tolerance, with a maximum 3mm gap under a 2m long straight edge at any point across the sub floor.

◆ TIMBER SUBFLOOR

Timber sub floors must be sound and level. It should be tested using a Protimeter or similar moisture meter. The moisture content of the timber sub floor must be less than 14% WME.

All suspended wood floors must have suitable through ventilation, usually delivered by air bricks in the outside walls. Any wood sub floor that has a moisture level in excess of 14% should be investigated. It must also be free of infestation such as wood-rotting fungi and boring insects. We would recommend installing a plywood of minimum 6mm thickness, complying with BS EN 314-1: 2004 Class3 (formerly referred to as WBP) over all timber sub floors, laid at 90° to the run of existing floorboards.

◆ CEMENTITIOUS (SAND AND CEMENT)/CALCIUMSULPHATE(ANHYDRITE)SUB FLOOR

The sub floor should be dry-less than 65% RH (or less than 75% RH if a vapour check membrane or surface damp proof membrane is applied over the sub floor)-and must be free from laitance, dust and cracks. The moisture content of solid sub floors must be checked using a hygrometer, and be in accordance with British Standards Annex A.

If the sub floor is an anhydrite/calcium liquid type screed, the surface needs to be sanded to remove the laitance and a suitable primer applied before installation to improve adhesion of the adhesive.

Liquid moisture suppressant products cannot be used on anhydrite/calcium liquid type screeds and can only be used on standard concrete in accordance with the manufacturer's recommendations.

ONGOING CONDITIONS

The most critical time for newly installed wood flooring is during and for 48 hours after the installation. Allowing the temperature or humidity to alter, particularly overnight when temperature can drop can cause the wood to lift slightly away from adhesive, affecting the bond.

Throughout the life of the floor, we recommend that the temperature should be maintained between 15°C and 25°C, and relative humidity levels between 45% and 65%, which will keep any movement within the floor to a minimum

and ensure that the floor remains stable. As with any wooden floor, if humidity levels rise or fall outside of these parameters, a greater degree of shrinkage or expansion would be expected to occur.