



LAMINATE FLOORING INSTALLATION INSTRUCTIONS

Laminate installation Instructions, including expansion gap and coverage requirements and limitations.

Installation Instructions

Read completely before starting installation

All installed boards will be considered as accepted by the installer and/or homeowner. Any defects should be reported to the retailer immediately for inspection and/or replacement. We cannot accept responsibility for flooring installed with visible defects.

General precautions

Finfloor Floor products are inspected for quality before packaging and shipping. Nevertheless, a final job site inspection of your flooring should be performed for grade, colour, finish and quality. Ensure adequate lighting for proper inspection. Room temperature and humidity of the installation area should be consistent with normal, year-round living conditions for at least a week before installation. Room temperature of 15°-30°C and a humidity range of 30-70% is recommended. **It is most important that the product be acclimatised in closed boxes, in the area it is to be installed for 48 hours prior to installation.** You must install the flooring immediately after you open the cartons. Do not store directly on concrete or near outside walls.

ALL LAMINATE FLOORS REACT TO HUMIDITY AND MOISTURE.

It is the responsibility of the installer and the owner, to install an effective moisture barrier and to maintain correct moisture and humidity percentages.

- The humidity of a room can vary due to many factors – the change of seasons, geographical area for example. The floor must be able to expand and contract in all directions.
- This Laminate flooring is of natural origin and may have slight variations in shade and grain. It is recommended to be installed from several cartons at the same time to ensure good colour and shade mixture.
- When possible, pre-select and set aside boards that blend best with all floor beadings, skirting boards or mounted mouldings used to assure a uniform final appearance. Install these boards adjoining the mouldings.
- Be attentive to staggering the ends of boards in adjacent rows. They should be staggered at no less than a ¼ of the length of the panel header to header. E.g., 1200 long panel, header no less than 300mm.
- Any installation requiring the flooring to exceed the ****recommended floor coverage area***,. All doorways and adjoining rooms should have expansion joints. Door frames should be cut to allow for floor movement, do not use filler in the expansion gap.
- Always allow a minimum 10-15mm expansion (***refer to*range limitations below***) around all vertical obstructions. This is dependent on the geographical area where the flooring is to be installed.

Under floor heating

Under floor heating is not necessary with Floor laminates. However, if wanted, please obtain exact/detailed specifications from your approved flooring dealer.

Tools/Accessories

You will need the following tools and accessories to install Laminate Flooring correctly:

- Tape measure and Spirit level
- Metal hammer and tapping block,
- Fine-toothed saw (For ease use an electric jigsaw or circular saw)
- Ruler or straight edge
- Lever or pulling iron
- Pencils and Spacers
- A polythene membrane as a moisture barrier
- Waterproof tape
- A sound reducing underlay such as Finlay Underlay (A separate polythene membrane is not required if the underlay has a built-in moisture barrier). Other accessories such as threshold profiles, beading and pipe rosettes are available from your local supplier.



Subfloor preparation

CONCRETE

- Ensure that your subfloor is dry, clean, flat, smooth and level. Height differences of not more than 3mm in a meter must be levelled. The slab must also be no more than 12% moisture content on Prontemeter or 3% on Tramex moisture meter to be suitable for Laminate flooring. Correct any changes in height difference and ensure that the levelling compound has cured prior to starting your installation.
- Check your floor levels, quick method, nail into middle of the room tie a string, push the knot to the ground and check levels

WOOD AND OTHER SURFACES

- Ensure that your subfloor is dry, clean, flat, smooth and level. Height differences of not more than 3mm in a meter must be levelled.
- Correct any changes in height difference and ensure that the levelling compound has cured prior to starting your installation.

Preparing to install

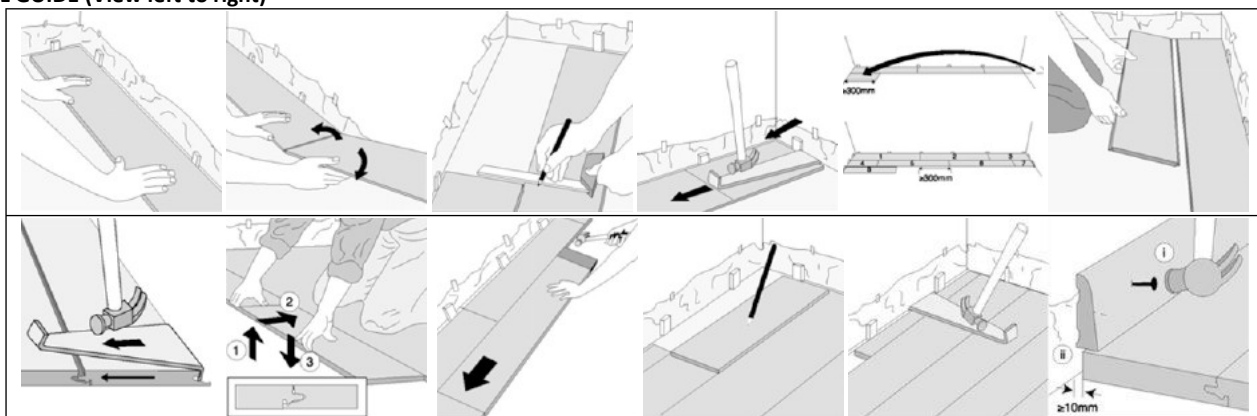
- 1) Clean and sweep the screed/sub-floor thoroughly.
- 2) The vapour barrier must overlap, be taped closed over its entire length and must face upwards, with the underlay in contact with the screed.
- 3) Let the opened packages of flooring lie flat on the floor, in the room in which the floor is to be installed.
- 4) Check door and door frame clearances to ensure that doors will move freely without contacting or restricting the movement of the floor panels.
- 5) Although a laminate floor can be installed in any direction, as a rule, Laminate floors are usually installed perpendicular to a window, in the direction of the greater light source. Installing the floor parallel to the longest wall tends to make a room appear larger. You will get better results by laying two or three rows of Laminate in advance to get an eye pleasing distribution of the plank.
- 6) It is important to do the set out at this stage to ensure a successful installation, check the measurements to ensure you have sufficient material for the installation.

Installation

- 1) Measure the room carefully to determine if it is square, and to calculate the width of the last row. For planks less than 50mm in width, re-cutting the first row will be necessary to ensure stability (do not include the tongue of a plank in your measurements, as all exposed tongues must be removed from the perimeter of the floor – i.e. the first row of planks). Should you have an irregular wall for the first row, the plank must be cut to follow the wall's irregularities.
- 2) When preparing to saw a plank (use safety glasses), always ensure that the decorative surface of the plank is facing down.
- 3) Starting in one corner of the room, the flooring should be installed from left to right or as per the instructions, with the tongue sides facing the walls. Place spacers between the plank and the wall (spacers provide the necessary space required for expansion around the perimeter of the floor). It is especially important to leave at least **10mm free (refer to *range limitations below)** around the entire floor. To ensure stability, the planks at the end of each row must not be shorter than ¼ length of the panel. If your last plank is shorter than this, it is advised to re-cut the first plank in the row. The remainder of the plank from your first row can be used as the first plank of the next row. Stagger the joints by cutting the first plank of every row to different lengths e.g. 300mm, 600mm, 900mm, full board. This will give a random pattern that will then be repeated until the opposite wall is reached.
- 4) When laying the planks for the first row, place the first plank flat and against the spacers. To put the second panel into place, join the width side of the second panel with the width side of the first panel, push them together firmly and fasten the joint by pushing the panel down flat onto the sub-floor. If the joint is not tight, use a hammer and a suitable tapping block and tap gently at the other end of the second panel, if necessary. Make sure the alignment of planks is straight.

- 5) Repeat this procedure and complete the first row. At the end of the first row, mark and cut the last panel to obtain the suitable size/shape to fit the remaining space. Cut the panel with the décor side facing up if using a fine-toothed saw blade or guillotine. This last piece can be fitted with the use of a suitable tensioning tool or heel iron.
- 6) To start the second row, use the leftover piece of the last panel from the first row. To install the first panel of the second row, have it slightly tilted with its tongue inserted into the groove of the panel in the first row, and then press it down flat firmly so that the tongue and groove will interlock. The joint should be locked tight. If not, dismantle the panel and repeat the process and simply tap the panels tight with a heel iron (or a suitable tapping block) and a hammer. Start tapping from one end to the other, along the length side. Position the width (end joint) of the subsequent panel close to the exposed width (end joint) of the first panel so the lock is almost in place, with its tongue on the length side inserted into the groove of the panel of first row. Standing on the panels of the first row, pull this panel inwards and then push it firmly downwards so that the tongue interlocks with groove of the panel in the first row. Then use a hammer and tapping block and tap gently at the other end of the panel to tighten the width side. Follow the laying instructions explained earlier and complete the second row. Subsequent panels / consecutive rows can be installed by repeating these steps.
- 7) When you reach the final row, place a loose panel precisely on the last laid panel. Place another panel on top, but with its edge **10mm (refer to *range limitations table below)** from the wall. Trace a cutting line along the middle panel and saw it along that line. Lay the panel you cut and ease it into position. Insert spacers between the wall and the last panel laid to be sure there is a 10mm **expansion gap (refer to *range limitations below)**.
- 8) When going from one room to the other, make sure to separate the rooms with a transition moulding. The floor is ready for use as soon as it is laid.

VISUAL GUIDE (View left to right)



Finishing

- 1) Remove the spacers.
- 2) Cover the expansion joints around the perimeter of the floor with skirting and/or quarter rounds. If a vapour barrier was used, do not forget to fold the polyethylene film along the edge of the walls under the baseboards and/or quarter rounds. Fit these products to the walls without attaching them to the floor. Make sure that a 0.10mm feeler gauge is able to slide freely underneath the skirting to ensure the floor is not trapped, thus preventing expansion or contraction.
- 3) Install the T-mouldings to hide the expansion gaps where needed, doorways or allowable floor coverage, etc. **(refer to *range limitations below)**.
- 4) Any remaining boards can be kept for several years, stored flat in a moisture-free area. Furniture can be put back in position right away

Cleaning & Maintenance

Laminate Flooring is very hygienic and easy to clean.

- Sweep or vacuum as often as necessary to remove any loose dirt or grit. Do not use the beater bar on the vacuum cleaner.
- Use protective mats at all exterior entrances. Do not use rubber-based mats as the rubber may leach into the Laminate.
- Use felt protectors under heavy pieces of furniture.
- Never slide or roll furniture or appliances across your floor. Protect the surface if using a trolley to move heavy objects.
- Spiked heels or shoes in need of repair can severely damage your floor. In areas of excessive traffic and wear, make use of runners or area rugs.
- Damp clean only – avoid excessive amounts of water. If a spill occurs, soak up the bulk of the liquid promptly.
- Never use oil, soap, wax or other household products to clean your floor.
- Keep animal nails trimmed.
- Where possible maintain relative humidity levels between 30% and 70%.

*Range limitations table

Laminate Range	Coverage allowance	Expansion Gap requirements JHB	Expansion Gap requirements in DBN and along the coast	NOTE: NEVER silicone/glue/fix the floor to another vertical surface or floor profiles to the floor panels that will inhibit the “floating floor” system, as this will cause problems, e.g. gapping, peaking, tenting etc.
FINline 8mm	10 lin.m in length x 12 lin.m in width	Min.10mm	Suggested 12mm	
Black Forest + 12mm	20 lin.m in length x 20 lin.m in width	Min.10mm	Min.12mm to 15mm	
AGT Bella 8mm	9 x 9 lin.m in any direction	Min.10mm	Suggested 12 to 15mm	
AGT Natura 8mm	10 x 12 lin.m in any direction	Min. 12mm	Suggested 12 to 15mm	
AGT Armonia 12 mm	10 lin.m in length x 12 lin.m in width	Min.10mm	Suggested 12mm	
Authentic Herringbone	12 lin.m length x 12 lin.m in width	Min.10mm	Suggested 12 to 15mm	

EXPANSION & COVERAGE REQUIREMENTS PER RANGE:

	<p>With wax impregnated core and joint system – the expansion must NEVER be less than 10mm for rooms up to 10.000 lin.m. in length x 12.000 lin.m. in width. This will increase to 12/15 mm. when installed in Durban or any moist/humid climate, up to the maximum allowable coverage in an uncontrolled environment of 10.000x 12.000lin.m. all round the floor installation. Remember this gap is to be present around ALL vertical obstacles. This includes doorways, door frames, or any floor finishing profile.</p> <p>NEVER silicone/glue/fix the floor to another vertical surface, or floor profiles to the floor panels and sub-floor that will inhibit the “floating floor” system, as this will cause problems, e.g., gapping, peaking, tenting etc.</p>
	<p>With wax impregnated core and joint system – The expansion gap must NEVER be less than 12mm for rooms up to 14 lin.m in length x 15 lin.m in width. This will increase to 12/15mm when installed in Durban or any moist/humid climate, up to the maximum allowable coverage. This applies to uncontrolled environments. Remember this gap is to be present around ALL vertical obstacles.</p> <p>NEVER silicone/glue/fix the floor to another vertical surface, or floor profiles to the floor panels and sub-floor that will inhibit the “floating floor” system, as this will cause problems, e.g., gapping, peaking, tenting etc.</p>
	<p>The expansion gap must NEVER be less than 10 mm for rooms up to 9 lin.m in length x 9 lin.m in width. This will increase to 12/15mm when installed in Durban or any moist/humid climate, up to the maximum allowable coverage. This applies to uncontrolled environments. Remember this gap is to be present around ALL vertical obstacles.</p> <p>NEVER silicone/glue/fix the floor to another vertical surface, or floor profiles to the floor panels and sub-floor that will inhibit the “floating floor” system, as this will cause problems, e.g., gapping, peaking, tenting etc.</p>
	<p>The expansion gap must NEVER be less than 12mm for rooms up to 10 lin.m in length x 12 lin.m in width. This will increase to 12/15mm when installed in Durban or any moist/humid climate, up to the maximum allowable coverage. This applies to uncontrolled environments. Remember this gap is to be present around ALL vertical obstacles.</p> <p>NEVER silicone/glue/fix the floor to another vertical surface, or floor profiles to the floor panels and sub-floor that will inhibit the “floating floor” system, as this will cause problems, e.g., gapping, peaking, tenting etc.</p>
	<p>The expansion gap must NEVER be less than 12mm for rooms up to 10 lin.m in length x 12 lin.m in width. This will increase to 12/15mm when installed in Durban or any moist/humid climate, up to the maximum allowable coverage. This applies to uncontrolled environments. Remember this gap is to be present around ALL vertical obstacles.</p> <p>NEVER silicone/glue/fix the floor to another vertical surface, or floor profiles to the floor panels and sub-floor that will inhibit the “floating floor” system, as this will cause problems, e.g., gapping, peaking, tenting etc.</p>
	<p>The expansion gap must NEVER be less than 12mm for rooms up to 12 lin.m in length x 12 lin.m in width. This will increase to 12/15mm when installed in Durban or any moist/humid climate, up to the maximum allowable coverage. This applies to uncontrolled environments. Remember this gap is to be present around ALL vertical obstacles.</p> <p>NEVER silicone/glue/fix the floor to another vertical surface, or floor profiles to the floor panels and sub-floor that will inhibit the “floating floor” system, as this will cause problems, e.g., gapping, peaking, tenting etc.</p>