

ENGINEERED TIMBER FLOORING INSTALLATION GUIDE

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

INOVAR flooring products are inspected for quality before packaging and shipping. Nevertheless, a final jobsite 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 you install the flooring immediately after you open the cartons, without waiting for several hours or days. Do not store directly on concrete or near outside walls.

General installation notes

ALL TIMBER 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 for example. The floor must be able to expand and contract in all directions.
- This engineered timber flooring is of natural origin and may have slight variations in shade and grain. It should 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 mid point when the boards are of equal length.
- Any installation requiring the flooring to exceed 8 metres in width or 12 metres in length will require an expansion or T-moulding. All doorways and adjoining rooms should have expansion joints.
- Always allow a minimum 12-15mm expansion around all vertical obstructions.

Subfloor heating

INOVAR ENGINEERED TIMBER IS NOT SUITABLE FOR FLOORS WITH UNDERFLOOR HEATING.

Subfloor preparation

CONCRETE

1) Ensure that your subfloor is dry, clean, flat, smooth and level. Height differences of more than 3mm +/- over 3 metre must be levelled. The slab must also be no more than RH60% or below to be suitable for 8mm Laminate flooring. Correct any changes in height difference and ensure that the levelling compound has cured prior to starting your installation.

WOOD AND OTHER SURFACES

1) Ensure that your subfloor is dry, clean, flat, smooth and level. Height differences of more than 3mm +/- over 3 metre must be levelled.

Correct any changes in height difference and ensure that the levelling compound has cured prior to starting your installation.

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Preparing to install

- 1) Clean and sweep.
- 2) Let the opened packages of flooring lie flat on the floor in the room in which the floor is to be installed.
- 3) Check door and door frame clearances to ensure that doors will move freely without contacting the 8mm Laminate surface.
- 4) Although an INOVAR Engineered Timber floor can be installed in any direction, as a rule, 8mm Laminate floors are usually installed perpendicular to a window. 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 INOVAR Engineered Timber in advance to get an eye pleasing distribution of the plank.
- 5) Lay INOVARLAY Underlay (or another approved underlay) taping the edges together using wide adhesive tape, but do not overlap the edges.

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, with the groove side 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 12-15mm free around the entire floor. To ensure stability, the planks at the end of each row must not be shorter than 300mm. If your last plank is shorter than 300mm, 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 planks by cutting the first plank of every other row in half. The pattern will then be repeated until the opposite wall is reached.

Do not install according to the "brick-laying" method.

- 4) Glue the boards at the end joints together. Use only a cross linked D3 PVA wood adhesive. Never use regular wood glue since this glue will avoid normal expansion and contraction and will lead to cracks and other defects.
- 5) Apply the glue to the top inside edge of the groove of the board (including the short side groove) in a continuous line. Never apply the adhesive in a broken line as this will cause your floor to squeak and will lead to a poor performance of your floor and reduce protection against moisture penetration via the joints.

Any excess of adhesive should be immediately wiped-off with a clean damp cloth. Wipe dry with a dry cloth to avoid "smearing".

- 6) The first board of the next row is pressed into position and tapped into the other board by using a rubber mallet and a tapping block. Never hit the board directly with the mallet. This will increase the risk of damaging the board.

If you notice that the boards do not go together entirely (open gap between boards) check whether you have used the right amount of glue. Too much glue will prevent your boards from closing due to a vacuum effect.

- 7) Chances are that the last row will be less than the width of the boards – so you will have to cut it along the length of the board.

Take the expansion gap into account when installing the last row of boards and thus cut the timber to the width of the gap of the last row minus the expansion gap (12- 15 mm) (don't include the tongue in this width).

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Apply the adhesive in the groove and put the boards into place with the spacing bar and wedges using a protective piece between wall and tool and between spacing bar and boards. Place the timber as low on the wall as possible and with the spacing bar force the board into position.

Do this as many times as necessary to close the gap.

Finishing

- 1) Remove the spacers.
- 2) Cover the expansion joints around the perimeter of the floor with baseboard mouldings 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.
- 3) Install the T-mouldings to hide the expansion gaps where needed (doorways, more than 6m wide or 10m long, etc.).
- 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.

Maintenance

- Sweep or vacuum as often as necessary to remove any loose dirt or grit.
- Use protective mats at all exterior entrances. Do not use rubber-based mats as the rubber may leach into the engineered timber.
- 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 mop only – avoid excessive amounts of water. Steam mops must not be used. If a spill occurs, soak up the bulk liquid promptly.
- Never use oil, soap, wax or other household products to clean your floor.
- Keep animal nails trimmed.
- Maintain relative humidity levels between 30% and 70%.