

The Nature of Wood

Choosing to have wooden flooring in your home is a big decision that comes with responsibilities. In order to get the most out of your wooden flooring we feel there are six important things you need to consider.

It's a natural choice.

Wood is a natural product. Its straight from Mother Nature which means it's beautiful to look at, comfortable to walk on, creates an ambience that lasts a long time. It is also non-allergenic, which in this day and age is often a good reason to fit it. Wood is renewable, unlike plastics and many other modern materials, so when it is replaced, one day in the future, it completes the circle of life and is reunited with Mother Nature.

Wood gets better with age.

Unlike humans, wood actually looks better over time. All wood changes colour. That's due to its interaction with the environment, like its exposure to sunlight. Some species darken quickly, while other changes less dramatically.

Smart floors are kinder to nature

A modern floor, such as engineered flooring is made up on the multi-layer principle. It makes it more stable and more likely to stay level even during the dramatic changes in weather that we have been witnessing lately. A solid wood floor, by its nature will crack and warp easily. Engineered floors make good use of natural resources without compromising its lifespan.

Its warm

Under floor heating works well with wooden floors that have been locked in and fitted properly. It also means that the floor stays flat and that gaps will never appear in between the planks. We have a full range of under floor heating systems. Just ask our Sales Team about them when you place your order.

You can feel it.

Maintaining a wooden floor takes some effort The surface treatment of the wood must be strong enough to withstand daily wear and tear, yet sufficiently thin and transparent that you can see and experience the feeling of nature. We have a full range of lacquers that can be applied thinly, which will help to retain the character of the wood. Some wooden floors have a layer of lacquer so thick that the floor feels plastic and artificial. If you want to feel even more texture, you can choose a floor with a matt lacquer or natural oil finish.

Who will use the floor?

The last and final thing to consider is who will use the floor? Is it mainly adults, or will there be babies crawling around on it? What about pets? Where will it be installed? Bedroom? Kitchen? The hardness of the wood can be a crucial practical factor when you make your selection. There are many types of wood that look the same but they vary greatly in hardness. When choosing your wooden flooring you may find it useful to discuss your needs with our Sales Team who will be happy to help you choose the right type of wood for your room, your situation and your lifestyle.

General maintenance and installation information on wooden floors

Tips on installation your wooden flooring

As Floorell don't offer a fitting service, you will need to either fit your chosen flooring yourself or hire a professional to do it for you. Either way, here's some advice that you may find useful.

On cement or stone floors

When installing the planks on cement or stone floors, watch for uneven areas and level these out with a leveling compound before installation. Ask our Sales Team to add this item to your order. A vapor barrier of 0.2 mm thick PE is essential as is footfall sound insulation, e.g. PE foam.

On floor boards

Level out uneven areas or lay out the room with installation chipboards before installation. Make sure you fasten all loose planks. It helps to install your Floorell flooring at right angles to the running direction of the planks. Don't forget to add the footfall sound insulation on the wooden planks before installation. Do not use on a PE film.

On wood-based panels

If you're thinking of installing your floorboards on top of chipboard or fiberboards you must level out all uneven areas. Make sure that you always lay footfall sound insulation between the installation plates and the planks. Do not use a PE film.

On PVC or linoleum floors

If you're laying your wooden flooring on top of a PVC or linoleum floor you must make sure the flooring is completely glued. Please note that warm-water under floor heating system cannot be used. Make sure you always install footfall sound insulation.

On warm-water under floor heating systems

If you're thinking of installing your wooden flooring on top of a warm water under-floor heating system it's important that you make sure all mineral underlying floors are heated to allow moisture that can damage the wood floor to escape.

The temperature of the warm-water under floor heating system should be increased in 5°C steps every day until the maximum heating capacity is reached. Finally, the heating system must heat continuously at full capacity for at least 72 hours.

Measure the residual moisture in the floor and allow for the following residual moisture contents:

Cement floor <1.5 % cement moisture (CM)
Anhydrite floor <0.3 % cement moisture (CM)

If the residual moisture content falls below these values, the heating system must be switched off again for 1-2 days before installation. During installation, the surface temperature of the cement floor must be at least 15°C but not more than 20°C. After installation – to which also our general guidelines for floating installation apply – the surface temperature of the floor must not exceed 25°C at most.

Some under floor heating systems may not suitable for Floorell's wooden flooring. During heating

periods – especially in winter – the relative humidity decreases. As a result, a natural product like wood dries out severely, which in turn can promote the formation of gaps. We suggest that you use a humidifier you can counteract the shrinking of the wood and this also has benefits for your health. An ideal room climate is given at a relative humidity of 50–60%. We do have a specific under floor heating system designed especially for our wooden floor products. Give our Sales Team a call and they will advise you which system will suit your needs best.

How to care for your wooden floor

To ensure your wooden floor retains its natural beauty here are a few cleaning tips to follow. We know that you won't want to spend hours cleaning, so we've made them as quick and as simple as possible:

- Remember, the drier, the better - always clean with a well wrung out cloth or mop lengthways along the planks.
- Floor mats are a good way to stop large build ups of dirt in entrance areas. But don't use rubber-backed or non-ventilated mats or rugs as they may damage your floor. Instead use mats or rugs made especially for hardwood floors and remember to shake them out regularly.
- It's also good idea to place mats in any areas where water may be splashed, such as near a kitchen sink.
- If sand or dirt for does get inside a groove, try to remove it immediately with a soft broom, vacuum cleaner or cloth.
- Using protective felt gliders under all furniture will stop scratching and denting.
- Sweep it regularly with a soft brush or vacuum to keep the surface looking clean and dust free. Once all the dirt is gone, give it a good buff and watch how it shines.
- Do not use anything other than recommended wood specific products on it – you can buy them from us- just ask our Sales Team for more information.
- Floorell's wooden floors are finished with a ready-to-use treatment, but we do recommend that Solid Wood oil-treated floors should either be treated with maintenance oil according to the instructions directly after installation and before use, or alternatively, treated with wood soap according to the instructions directly after installation and before use.

Floorell's Top Wooden Flooring Tips:

- Never wax a wooden floor that has a urethane finish, Instead use a cleaners that won't leave a film or residue.

- It is inevitable that you may get the occasional scuff or mark on your floor boards. A hardwood floor cleaner is useful in removing them. (Just ask our Sales Team about our cleaning range). Simply spray some cleaner on a cloth and lightly rub the stained area. Sticky spots can be cleaned with a damp towel or sponge.
- As tempting as it is, do not use ammonia cleaners or oil soaps on a wood floor. They will dull the finish and affect the performance of your floor. These products will also affect the ability to recoat your floor later.
- Wood naturally expands when it is wet so you must never, ever wet mop or use excessive water to clean your floor. Large amounts of water can cause the wood to swell and may cause your floor to crack or splinter.
- Being a natural product, hardwood will expand and contract due to moisture level changes. So always have a cloth handy to clean up spills as soon as they happen.

How to deal with long term damage

We have no doubt that your Floorell wooden flooring will last forever. But after a many number of years, if your floor is showing excessive wear beyond normal cleaning you may want to consider screening and recoating.

What is screening and recoating?

It's the process used to get rid of the finish that is currently on the floor. Then, simply apply new coats of urethane. This process will bring your floor back to life and make it last that bit longer. If screening and recoating doesn't get rid of the damage you can always sand and refinish. But this should only be done if screening and recoating does not solve the problem.

What is sanding and refinishing?

This is an extensive process where the floor is sanded down to the bare wood, restained and then refinished. If the damage is only in a small area you may want to see if replacement boards are available to save on some work.

As much as you'd like to do it yourself we highly recommend that you hire an experienced professional when having any work done on your hardwood floor.

Protecting against everyday damage

So you've got your beautiful new wooden floor fitted. It looks great. No sooner have you invited your friends round to have a look and you've already got babies throwing toys at it, people spilling drinks and high heels scrapping it. Don't worry. There are some things we can prevent and other we can't. Here are a few things you can do to help minimize the damage:

- All hardwood floors will fade, darken or change shades over time- it's in their nature you can't

actually stop it. But you can reduce it's exposure to sunlight with blinds or curtains, window treatments as well as rotating area rugs and furniture regularly to allow floors to age evenly from UV exposure.

- To prevent scratches cover furniture and table legs with protectors.
- When you're moving heavy objects across your floor be careful.
- Ask people to remove stiletto heels as they can cause dents and scratches that are not covered by your warranty. Have a pair of slippers at the ready for them to slip into instead.
- Protect against pet damage by regularly trimming their nails or claws to avoid scratches on the hardwood floor.