

# FLOORING INSTALLATION GUIDE



# fitting guide solid flooring

## IMPORTANT CHECKS BEFORE INSTALLATION:

Timber is a living substance that reacts to changes in relative humidity. Wood gains and loses moisture before and after installation, as surrounding conditions fluctuate. Indeed, wood expands in the summer when the humidity level is high and contracts in the winter when the humidity level is much lower. To minimise the expansion or contraction of your hardwood floor, it is recommended that the building should be well ventilated and the relative humidity level maintained to at least 45% all year long. Before you begin, plastering and cement work must be completely dry. It is strongly recommended that the wood be left to acclimatise at house temperature for a period of at least 48 hours at the ideal relative humidity level, which is 45%. For new constructions or renovations, the house should be occupied. Be sure to maintain a level temperature and humidity for at least five days prior to installation. The house must be heated at 22 degrees.

## TESTING THE SUBFLOOR FOR EXCESS MOISTURE:

### If subfloor is concrete:

The level of moisture in the concrete subfloor must be tested using a professional concrete moisture meter\*. The moisture content reading should be no higher than 3%. If a higher percentage reading is measured, the fitting of the timber floor should **not** go ahead. The concrete should be left to dry by installing a dehumidifier and turning on radiators until the correct moisture level has been achieved.

\*Please ensure your moisture meter is calibrated to give a percentage reading.

### If subfloor is timber:

The level of moisture in the timber subfloor must be tested using a hygrometer. The moisture content reading must not exceed 12%. If a higher percentage reading is measured, the fitting of the timber floor should **not** go ahead. If the humidity level is too high, turn up the heat and open the windows. Wait until the correct moisture level has been achieved before installing.

## INSTALLATION:

### Tools required:

- Hardwood floor nailer (with rubber mallet)
- Electric drill and bits
- Tenon-saw, circular saw or handsaw
- Claw hammer and nail punch
- Measuring tape
- Chalk line

Before you begin, it is important to verify the working condition of the hardwood nailer to prevent damage to the planks.

### General preparation:

- Remove the skirting boards.
- Using a handsaw, slit the bottom of the door frames  $\frac{3}{4}$ " (19mm) in order to slide a hardwood plank beneath the door.

### Preparation for installing solid flooring:

Having tested your subfloor for moisture as directed, the next step is to put down a vapour barrier. For this you must use 1000 gauge polythene. Ensure your subfloor is clean and free from grit to avoid puncturing the polythene. Unroll the polythene over the subfloor allowing an overlap at the joints of at least 100mm. Make sure you allow enough polythene to extend under the skirting boards and that the polythene lies flat to avoid any bunching. All joints must be sealed using waterproof tape.

If you are installing your solid floor over a concrete subfloor, you now put down your fixing base. For this you can use full sheets of 19mm plywood or pre-treated 35x50mm timber batons. Both sheets and batons must be fixed to the subfloor using hammer in fixings. Batons should be fixed no more than 200 - 250mm apart from each other.

### Step by Step Installation:

- Begin in the corner where the two longest straight walls come together and preferably lay your flooring in the direction of the incoming light. If you are fitting your floor over an existing timber subfloor, you should lay your flooring in the opposite direction to the existing floor.
- Using the chalk line, draw a line 12mm larger than the width of the timber board out from your starting wall.
- Select your boards, using the straightest boards first. Select your boards with care, making sure to reject any flawed pieces.
- Lay the groove edge of your first board on the guideline (groove edge facing wall) and fix through the face of the board to the subfloor. Continue in this manner until the first row is complete.
- Start the second row with a board that is shorter or longer than the board used in the first row to avoid aligning the joints. Set the board in place and secure with secret nails through the tongue using your hardwood floor nailer. Nail every 8 – 10" and never nail closer than 3" towards the end of a board.
- Install the subsequent rows in the same manner, continuing to alternate with boards of different lengths to avoid aligning joints.
- Expansion Gaps: You must leave expansion gaps of 1mm every 4 – 5 rows to allow for timber movement and to prevent cupping. Also, an expansion gap of 12mm should be left around the perimeter of the floor and also around radiator pipes.
- The last three rows should be installed in the same manner as the first row. Finally slot row zero behind the first row and face nail in the same fashion.
- Nail holes can be filled using a matching wax or wood filler.





# fitting guide semi-solid flooring

## BEFORE INSTALLATION:

Bearfoot semi-solid flooring should be kept in its packaging for 24 hours in the room where it is to be installed. Do not open packs prior to installation as to do so will make fitting your flooring difficult.

## TESTING THE SUBFLOOR FOR EXCESS MOISTURE:

### If subfloor is concrete:

The level of moisture in the concrete subfloor must be tested using a professional concrete moisture meter\*. The moisture content reading should be no higher than 3%. If a higher percentage reading is measured, the fitting of the timber floor should **not** go ahead. The concrete should be left to dry by installing a dehumidifier and turning on radiators until the correct moisture level has been achieved.

\*Please ensure your moisture meter is calibrated to give a percentage reading.

### If subfloor is timber:

The level of moisture in the timber subfloor must be tested using a hygrometer. The moisture content reading must not exceed 12%. If a higher percentage reading is measured, the fitting of the timber floor should **not** go ahead. If the humidity level is too high, turn up the heat and open the windows. Wait until the correct moisture level has been achieved before installing.

The subfloor must be sound and all uneven areas level before installation.

## INSTALLATION:

### Tools required:

- Hammer
- Tapping blocks
- Handsaw or jigsaw
- Drill and auger or flat wood bits
- Pulling bar
- Waterproof wood glue
- Damp cloth
- Wedges

### General preparation:

- Remove the skirting boards.
- Using a handsaw, slit the bottom of the door frames  $\frac{5}{8}$ " (14mm) in order to slide a semi-solid plank beneath the door.

### Preparation for installing semi-solid flooring:

Having tested your subfloor for moisture as directed, the next step is to put down a vapour barrier. For this you must use 1000 gauge polythene. Ensure your subfloor is clean and free from grit to avoid puncturing the polythene. Unroll the polythene over the subfloor allowing an overlap at the joints of at least 100mm. Make sure you allow enough polythene to extend under the skirting boards and that the polythene lies flat to avoid any bunching. All joints must be sealed using waterproof tape.

Next roll out a layer of Bearfoot underlay foam over the entire area. Old floor coverings of PVC felt, linoleum or any other non-springy floor covering can remain to act as an insulating

layer. Textile floor coverings, especially those with foam (rubber) backing, must be removed.


Place wedges between the wall and the floor and also around central heating pipes and other obstacles. This is very important because your semi-solid floor needs room to expand. Leave at least a 10mm gap all around the floor. When your floor is finished the gap between the walls and the floor will be covered by the skirting board.

### Step by Step Installation:

- Lay the first board along the longest wall of the room with the groove side facing the wall. Allow an expansion gap of 10mm between the wall and the board.
- Take your second board and run a thin bead of glue along the upper side of the groove on the butt end. Attach it to the first board and tap into place using the hammer and tapping block. Wipe away any surplus glue immediately using a damp cloth.
- Continue along this first row until it is complete, using the saw to cut the last piece to fit.
- Start your second row with the offcut from the end of the first row. This will ensure that your joints do not align. Run a thin bead of glue on the upper side of the groove along the length and width of the board. Slot the board into place against the start of the first row. Tap into place using the hammer and tapping block.
- Continue this process until you reach the far wall. You may need a pulling bar to pull the last row of boards into position.
- Where you encounter radiator pipes, use the drill and bits to cut the board to allow room for the pipes plus allow an additional 10mm for expansion.
- Wait a minimum of 12 hours before using the floor or removing the wedges.
- Replace skirting.

## special requirements regarding underfloor heating

### IMPORTANT

- Bearfoot Marketing only recommend Semi-Solid Flooring for use over underfloor heating.
  - The heating system must be run at full temperature for at least two weeks and then turned off for two days prior to installation.
  - Follow the installation instructions as above for installing semi-solid flooring over concrete using polythene and 3mm foam underlay.
  - Once installation is complete, the heating must be turned on very gradually – at a rate of 2 degrees increase per day.
  - When heating system is turned off, for example in the summer, the temperature must be reduced gradually – at 2 degrees per day – and when it needs to be turned back on again the same gradual rate of increase must be used.
  - We do not recommend the use of Beech semi-solid flooring over underfloor heating.
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# taking care of your timber floor

Although your Bearfoot hardwood floor offers high durability and easy maintenance, it is not indestructible. The following are tips which will help to preserve the beauty of your floor:

## PROTECTING YOUR FLOOR

- Regularly sweep or vacuum the floor to prevent any loose dirt or grit scratching the surface.
- Place doormats inside and outside at every entrance.
- Use felt pads under chairs and table legs to prevent any scratching.
- Always protect your floor when moving heavy objects. Use an old rug (wrong side up) and slide the object along the floor on the rug.
- Place a rug in areas where spillages may occur i.e. in front of the dishwasher and sink.

## CLEANING YOUR FLOOR

### Routine Cleaning:

1. Vacuum clean or mop the floor to remove any surface dust and grit.
2. Occasionally, the floor should be cleaned using a mild soap based cleaning product.
3. A variety of specialised cleaning products are available. Our staff will be happy to advise or contact your local Bearfoot stockist for more information.

### Important:

The amount of water you use when cleaning your floor should be kept to a minimum. Always use a well wrung out cloth or mop and remove any puddles of water on the surface immediately.

### Things to Avoid:

- Never pour any cleaner directly onto the floor.
- Do not allow any liquid to remain on the floor.
- Do not use any oil-based or wax cleaners/polishes on your floor. These products will make the surface greasy, slippery and difficult to clean.
- Some manufacturers recommend cleaning hardwood floors using a mop rinsed in water and vinegar. This is acceptable provided the mop is well wrung out before it is used on the floor.

### Stain Removal:

The following tips are provided to help you treat common stains which could affect your timber floor. As with other surfaces, the quicker you tackle a stain on your floor, the easier it is to remove. After removing the stain, wipe the floor using clean water and a damp cloth.

STAIN	REMOVAL
Fruitjuice, milk, cream, tea, lemonade beer, wine, coffee	soap based cleaner (neutral soap)
chocolate, grease, oil, shoe polish, scuff marks, tar	whitespirits
printing and other ink, lipstick	alcohol
blood	cold water



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