



**Atkinson & Kirby**  
Real Wood Flooring for Professionals



## LAYING GUIDELINES

### Floating Installations

Multi-Layer Hardwood Flooring

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**This product is suitable for laying over (certain types of) underfloor heating systems. Please contact your supplier for technical information prior to laying.**

#### PRE-INSTALLATION

To keep the wood in excellent condition it is imperative that the humidity level be controlled at all times, from delivery to laying the floor, and during the years that follow installation.

The optimal humidity range for hardwood flooring is 45–60%; temperature should be maintained at about 18°C.

Flooring should never be stored outdoors, on a cement floor, in a garage or in any damp conditions. Care should be taken to store the wood flat; packs should never be lent against a wall. Pre-finished boards should be left in the packaging in the room where it is to be laid until you are ready to lay the floor (at least overnight). Unfinished flooring packs should be open and the boards spread around the room in which they are to be laid for at least 5 days, at normal living temperatures.

In a new construction all windows and doors etc should be installed and all wet trades should be completed. Surface drainage should direct water away from the building. Basements and crawl spaces must be dry. For further information regarding crawl spaces, please contact Atkinson & Kirby. In a newly constructed building, the heating must have been in operation for at least 10 days prior to the floor being laid. Upon delivery, check wood flooring moisture content with a moisture meter (all flooring contractors should possess one). Test concrete for moisture. A Damp Proof membrane must also be present underneath the concrete, if present, as well as over it. Where a new concrete slab has been laid, the moisture content must not exceed 5% and the humidity level of the building must not exceed 60%. Prior to installation, ensure that wood flooring is within acceptable range of moisture content with the wood subfloor. If not within the acceptable range, then a suitable Damp Proof Membrane should be installed, over the wood subfloor, prior to installation.

In on ground and below ground applications, always add a suitable Damp Proof Membrane. All subfloors must be flat, clean, dry and structurally sound, free of squeaks, and free of protruding fasteners. All subfloors should be flat to within 3mm over a 3 metre length, or 2mm over a 2 metre length.

Due to the variety of installations we can only generalise. We would always recommend that the floor layer satisfy themselves of the suitability of the conditions before laying the floor.

**Do not lay the flooring in areas that are wet or humid, e.g. bathrooms, shower rooms etc.**

It should also be remembered that the floor layer is the last person to inspect the flooring. Care should be taken to ensure that a balanced look is maintained when laying out the floor; any pieces that are suspect should not be laid. The manufacturer cannot be held responsible for defects due to incorrect installation or boards with defects that have been installed. A waste factor of 5% should be taken into account.

As a general rule we recommend at least 12-18mm expansion around the perimeter if the room and at doorways. At least 12-18mm expansion must also be left where the floor comes in to contact with any other vertical surfaces. These expansion gaps can be covered by mouldings after installation.



Allow 15mm minimum expansion space at all vertical obstructions. Adequate ventilation must exist beneath the wood flooring e.g air bricks around the perimeter of the building.  
In areas where the flooring comes into contact with a fireplace, stove, heating system or un-insulated hot air vents a layer of asphalt or wax paper should be laid first. This will prevent excess drying out of the wood flooring.

## **POST INSTALLATION**

The appearance of spaces between boards indicates a drying out of the wood and an insufficient degree of humidity.

The appearance of waves or noticeable swelling in the finish of the wood floor indicates the presence of excessive humidity. Heating systems may have to be utilised throughout the year to maintain the correct humidity level. The installation of a humidifier or an air exchange system can prove indispensable in controlling humidity.

Above all don't forget that wood is a natural, living material and that we must look after it for life. A proper maintenance program should always be carried out

Barrier matting should be placed at all exterior doorways.

Remember that pets running round, stiletto heels, and dirt and grit left on the floor can scratch wood; regular maintenance should be carried out to prevent this.

**For full maintenance guidelines please refer to the individual maintenance guidelines that apply to the finish of your floor.**

**ATKINSON & KIRBY RECOMMEND FITTING BY A PROFESSIONAL FLOORING CONTRACTOR.**

**For ease of installation the following tools are required:  
Saw, Gripfill PVA Glue, Hammer (500g minimum), Tape Measure, Pencil, Professional Knocking Block, Professional Pull Bar, Drill, Wedges and a "T" square.**

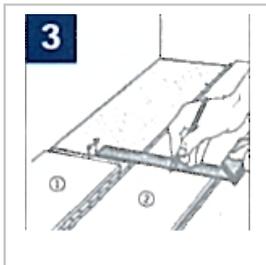
The following information is based upon practical experience.



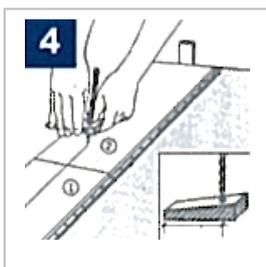
Ensure that the subfloor is sound, level and free of debris. Cover the area with an appropriate underlay as recommended by Atkinson & Kirby. If fitting over existing floorboards ensure that they are fixed solidly, this will avoid creaking.



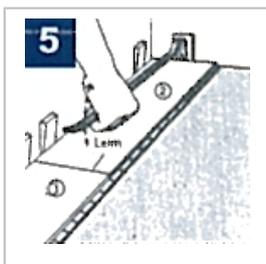
Lay out the first board ensuring the groove is towards the wall. Place a wedge between the end of the boards and the wall, this will ensure that you have an expansion gap (minimum 12mm). Complete the first line of the boards, do not glue the boards at this stage.



Turn over the last board of the first row, its tongue facing the tongue of the preceding board. Mark the cutting line on the back of the board and cut to length. Fit the board without glue.

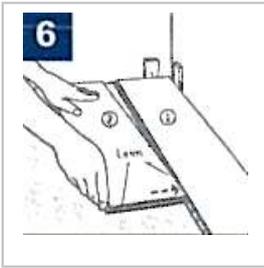


It is important that the boards follow the line of the wall. If the wall is not square, make a line parallel to the wall and cut the board accordingly.

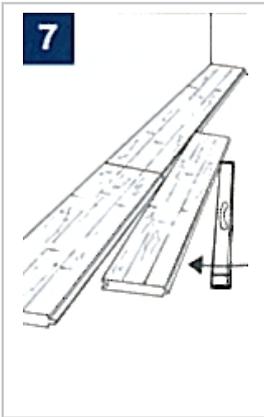


Lay out the boards along the wall (groove facing the wall) and insert wedges between the boards and the wall. P.V.A. adhesive should be put into the groove on the header joints (end of the board). The final board will need to be fitted using a pull bar; this should be fitted over the end of the board and then tapped into place.

**Laying Guidelines  
Floating Installations (Multi-Layer Hardwood Flooring).**



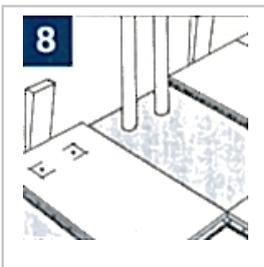
Providing the off cut from the first row is at least 300mm in length, this should now be used to start the second row. Care should be taken that the header joints are staggered across the floor.



A continuous bead of P.V.A. adhesive should be placed on the upper edge of the groove on the board; the header joint should also be glued. Join the boards by placing the tongue into the groove of the previous board; ensuring that the header joint is closed, they should now be knocked home with the use of a (600mm) knocking block.

The knocking block should be used on the tongue in a flicking action. Hold one end of the block against the board, the other should be at an angle of approximately 45° away from the board. Flick the block against the tongue with a sharp action, this will knock the board up; continue down the full length of the board, if necessary tap the board home using a hammer on the knocking block.

Continue across the floor making sure to clean any P.V.A. adhesive off the face of the floor with a damp cloth.



Wherever there is a central heating pipe or anything else protruding from the floor, place a board into the next row, take exact measurements and mark the sections to be cut on the back of the board.



Drill or cut out the area needed, remembering to leave an expansion gap.



Cut the board at an angle of 45°.



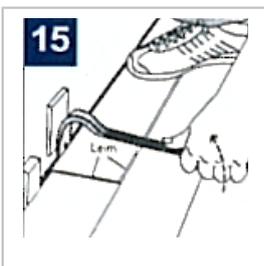
Apply P.V.A. adhesive to the edges of the cut board and fit into place. Care should be taken to leave an expansion gap between the board and the wall.



Door frames and other wooden elements should be sawn off to allow the board to slide underneath.



To calculate the exact width of the last board, lay the board over the last but one line of boards (tongue facing the wall). Place another board face down over the board to be cut, remembering to leave the expansion gap, mark the board to be cut.



Place the last line in place and knock up using a professional pull bar.

## SPECIAL CIRCUMSTANCES

It is important to leave expansion gaps around the perimeter of the room, in doorways between rooms and at all vertical surfaces.

### PERIMETER OF THE ROOM

If the skirting board has not been removed, the expansion gap can be covered using a Scotia or Quadrant moulding.

### DOORWAYS

At doorways the floor should be broken with an expansion gap. The expansion gap should be covered with a Twin or Ramp moulding this will allow individual rooms to expand and contract within their own areas. Which moulding to use is determined by the floor covering on the other side of the doorway. Floors equal in height a Twin should be used, if floors have differing heights a ramp should be used.

### PIPES, VENTS AND OTHER FIXED OBJECTS

Each can be unique, but the general rule is to measure very carefully before you cut and remember to leave a 12-18mm expansion gap between the object and the flooring. Cover the expansion gap with mouldings, vent covers or pipe rings when the floor is complete.

### INSTALLATIONS ON STAIRS

Flooring on stairs must be fully nailed to the stairs. Stair Nosing mouldings should be installed using either screw type fasteners or nails.

A FULL RANGE OF HARDWOOD TRIMS ARE AVAILABLE FROM ATKINSON & KIRBY TO FINISH YOUR FLOOR.