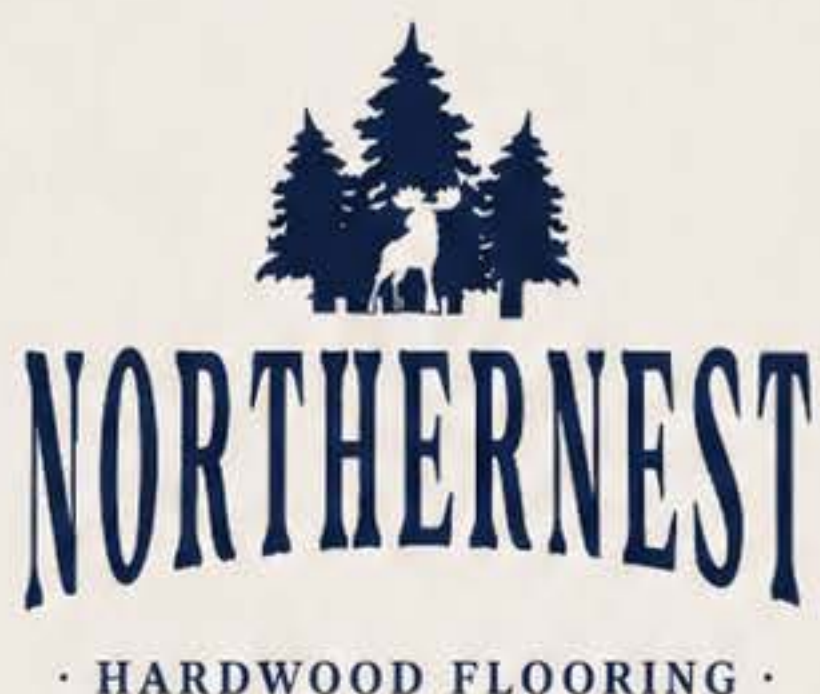


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Engineered Hardwood Installation Guide

STEP-BY-STEP BOOKLET

For floating, glue-down,
and nail-down installations.



Always follow the flooring manufacturer's instructions first.



Before You Get Started



IMPORTANT

Always follow the flooring manufacturer's instructions first. Product-specific requirements for acclimation, adhesive, underlayment, expansion gaps, moisture limits, and warranty conditions may vary.

1



Inspect the Material

- Open several boxes.
- Check for damaged boards or planks, chipped edges, manufacturing defects, and correct product, colour, size, and quantity.
- Mix material from several boxes.
- Do not install damaged material.

2



Prepare the Room

- Remove existing flooring if required.
- Remove baseboards or shoe moulding, old transition strips, staples, nails, glue residue, and debris.
- Remove doors if needed.
- Undercut door jambs and casings.

3



Check the Subfloor

- The subfloor must be clean, dry, flat, structurally sound, free of movement or squeaks, and free of paint, drywall compound, grease, wax, or adhesive lumps.
- Flatness guideline: no more than 3/16 inch over 10 feet and 1/8 inch over 6 feet.

4



Check Moisture

- Check concrete moisture level.
- Check wood subfloor moisture level.
- Check basement humidity, signs of leaks or water damage, and HVAC operation.
- Do not install over wet concrete, damp plywood, active leaks, or moisture-damaged areas.

5



Plan the Layout

- Plan flooring direction, width of first and last rows, and staggering pattern.
- Plan doorways and transitions.
- Plan expansion gaps.
- Plan around obstacles such as cabinets, islands, fireplaces, vents, and stairs.

6



Maintain Expansion Gaps

- Leave space around walls, door frames, columns, pipes, cabinets, stair nosings, built-ins, and heavy fixed objects.
- Do not fasten mouldings through floating floors.
- Attach baseboards and trims to the wall, not the flooring.



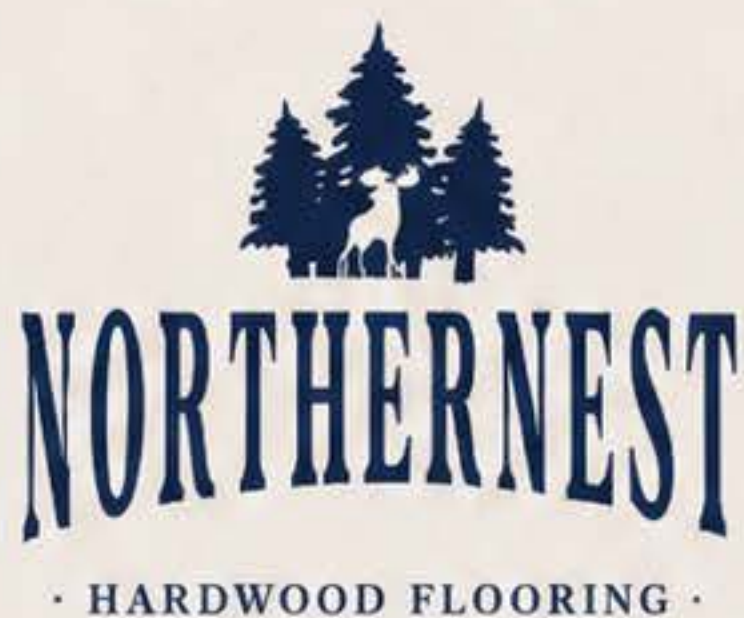


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ENGINEERED HARDWOOD OVERVIEW

Engineered hardwood has a real wood surface layer with a layered core underneath. It is more dimensionally stable than solid hardwood and can often be installed in condos, basements, and over concrete when approved by the manufacturer.

Common installation methods include floating, glue-down, and nail-down or staple-down, depending on the product and subfloor.





Tools & Materials

Gather all tools and materials before starting the installation. Always follow product-specific manufacturer requirements.



Essential Tools



Tape measure



Chalk line



Pencil



Moisture meter



Table saw or mitre saw



Jigsaw



Spacers



Rubber mallet



Tapping block



Pull bar



Pry bar



Safety glasses



Knee pads

By Installation Method

Floating



Underlayment



Vapour barrier if required

Glue-Down



Hardwood adhesive



Correct trowel

Nail-Down



Flooring nailer or stapler



Compressor



Core Installation Steps 1–4

1

Acclimate the Flooring

Place boxes in the installation area. Engineered hardwood usually needs 48 to 72 hours of acclimation, though some products vary. Maintain normal living conditions. Typical conditions are about 18°C to 24°C and 35% to 55% relative humidity. Do not acclimate hardwood in a garage, unfinished basement, or damp area.



18–24°C
35–55% RH



2

Inspect and Mix Boards

Open several cartons. Check for colour variation, finish issues, damaged tongues or grooves, warping, and excessive defects. Mix boards from multiple boxes to spread natural grain and colour variation evenly.



3

Test the Subfloor

Confirm the subfloor is dry, flat, clean, and secure. For wood subfloors: screw down loose panels, fix squeaks, replace damaged plywood, and sand high seams. For concrete: remove adhesive residue, grind high spots, fill low spots, and test moisture.



4

Choose the Installation Method

Use the method approved for the product and subfloor. Floating installation is best for click-lock engineered hardwood, condos, and some concrete jobs. Glue-down is best for concrete, wide boards, premium installs, and areas where a solid feel is desired. Nail or staple installation is best for wood subfloors and above-grade installations. Do not nail engineered hardwood into concrete.

FLOATING



- Click-lock planks
- Condos & apartments
- Above, on, or below grade
- Some concrete jobs

GLUE-DOWN



- Concrete subfloors
- Wide boards
- Premium installations
- Solid feel desired

NAIL-DOWN



- Wood subfloors
- Above-grade only
- Traditional installations





NORTHERNEST

• HARDWOOD FLOORING •

Core Installation Steps 5–6

5

Plan the Layout

Install boards parallel to the longest wall or the main light source. For wood subfloors, hardwood is often installed perpendicular to floor joists for better stability unless the subfloor is properly reinforced.

Measure the first and last rows, avoid narrow final rows, and use chalk lines to keep the floor straight.



6

Leave Expansion Gaps

Engineered hardwood needs expansion space. A common expansion gap is around 1/2 inch, depending on the manufacturer and room size.

Leave space around walls, pipes, cabinets, columns, and door frames.



Installation Notes

- Follow the product-specific installation method.
- Use only approved underlayment, adhesives, and fasteners.
- Keep rows straight and joints tight.
- Maintain the required expansion gap throughout the room.



Floating Installation Steps 1–5

1

Install Underlayment

Roll out approved underlayment. Tape seams if required. Over concrete, use a vapour barrier or underlayment with built-in moisture protection if required. Do not overlap underlayment unless the manufacturer says to.



2

Start the First Row

Place spacers along the wall. Lay the first board with the groove or tongue positioned according to the locking system. Connect the end joints. Keep the row straight. Trim the last board while leaving the expansion gap.



3

Stagger the Boards

Use the offcut from the previous row to begin the next row if it is long enough. Stagger end joints by at least 6 inches, or more for wider planks. Avoid repeating patterns.



4

Continue Installing Rows

Angle and lock each board into place. Use a tapping block only if approved. Do not strike hardwood directly with a hammer. Check frequently that rows are straight and joints are tight.



5

Install the Final Row

Measure and rip boards to fit. Leave the required expansion gap. Use a pull bar carefully to lock the final row.



Glue-Down Installation Steps 1–6

1 Choose the Correct Adhesive

Use only the adhesive recommended by the flooring manufacturer. Some adhesives include moisture control and others do not. Use the correct trowel size.



2 Snap a Starting Line

Do not rely on the wall being straight. Snap a chalk line for a straight starting point. Dry lay a few rows first to confirm the layout.



3 Spread Adhesive

Spread adhesive at the correct angle using the proper trowel. Work in small sections. Do not spread more adhesive than can be covered within the adhesive open time.



4 Set the Boards

Place boards into the adhesive, slide them slightly into position if needed, and keep joints tight. Use painter's tape to hold rows together while the adhesive sets. Do not let the tape damage the finish.



5 Clean Adhesive Immediately

Wipe adhesive from the surface right away using the manufacturer-approved cleaner. Dried adhesive is difficult to remove.



6 Roll or Weight the Floor

Some glue-down installations require rolling or weighting. Follow adhesive instructions. Avoid walking on the floor until the adhesive has cured.



Nail-Down Installation Steps 1–6

1 Confirm the Subfloor

The subfloor must be wood, usually plywood or OSB approved by the flooring manufacturer, and thick enough to hold fasteners securely.



2 Install Moisture Retarder

Use approved hardwood paper or moisture retarder over the wood subfloor if required. Overlap seams according to product instructions.



3 Start the First Rows

Because the flooring nailer will not fit close to the wall, the first rows may need to be face-nailed or glued and nailed by hand. Pre-drill holes to avoid splitting and fill visible holes with colour-matched filler.



4 Blind Nail the Boards

Once there is enough room, use a hardwood flooring nailer or stapler. Fasten through the tongue at the proper angle. Follow manufacturer spacing, commonly every 4 to 8 inches, with fasteners near board ends but not too close. Check compressor pressure to avoid damaging tongues.



5 Install the Last Rows

Near the opposite wall, use finish nails, adhesive assist, or hand nailing as approved. Maintain the expansion gap.



6 Install Trim and Transitions

Install baseboards, shoe moulding, reducers, T-mouldings, and stair nosings. Do not pin floating engineered hardwood to the subfloor with trims.





Final Checklist & Important Reminders

BEFORE HANDING OVER THE PROJECT, CONFIRM:

- ☐ Flooring is fully installed and fastened or locked properly.
- ☐ No visible damaged boards.
- ☐ Expansion gaps are covered but not restricted.
- ☐ Transitions are secure.
- ☐ Door clearance is correct.
- ☐ Vents and trims are reinstalled.
- ☐ Floor is clean.
- ☐ Adhesive residue is removed.
- ☐ Baseboards and shoe mouldings are finished.
- ☐ The customer understands maintenance requirements.



IMPORTANT REMINDERS

Always follow the flooring manufacturer's instructions first. Manufacturer requirements for acclimation, adhesive, underlayment, moisture limits, fasteners, and warranty conditions may vary.

Maintain normal indoor living conditions before, during, and after installation.

Use only approved hardwood cleaners and avoid excess moisture.

*Northernest Flooring —
Premium guidance for beautiful installations.*

