

Luxe • Expert • Trust • Education



Solid Hardwood Flooring Installation Guide

STEP-BY-STEP BOOKLET

For nail-down solid
hardwood installations.



Always follow the flooring manufacturer's instructions first.



NORTHERNEST

• HARDWOOD FLOORING •

Before You Get Started



IMPORTANT

Always follow the flooring manufacturer's instructions first. Product-specific requirements for acclimation, fastening method, underlayment, moisture protection, and expansion gaps may vary.

1



Inspect the Material

- Open several cartons.
- Check for damaged boards, end-matching defects, colour variation, and correct product, size, and quantity.
- Mix boards from several boxes.

2



Acclimate the Flooring

- Store flooring in the installation area as directed.
- Maintain normal living conditions and verify the product has reached jobsite equilibrium moisture content before installation.

3



Prepare the Room

- Remove existing flooring if required.
- Remove baseboards or shoe moulding as needed.
- Remove debris, staples, nails, and glue residue.
- Undercut door jambs and casings where needed.

4



Check the Subfloor

- The subfloor must be clean, dry, flat, structurally sound, and securely fastened.
- Correct squeaks and low spots before installation.

5



Check Moisture

- Test both the wood flooring and the wood subfloor.
- Do not install over damp or moisture-damaged conditions.

6



Plan the Layout

- Plan flooring direction, starter and final row widths, board staggering, and transitions.
- Solid hardwood is commonly installed perpendicular to joists when practical.





Table of Contents

1.	Cover	1
2.	Before You Get Started	2
3.	Table of Contents	3
4.	Tools & Materials	4
5.	Core Installation Steps 1–4	5
6.	Core Installation Steps 5–6	6
7.	Nail-Down Installation Steps 1–5	7
8.	Installation Steps 6–10	8
9.	Finishing Details & Special Areas	9
10.	Final Checklist & Important Reminders	10



SOLID HARDWOOD FLOORING OVERVIEW

Solid hardwood flooring is made from real wood through its full thickness and offers timeless character, warmth, and long-term refinishability.

Most solid hardwood products are installed by nail-down or staple-down methods over approved wood subfloors.

Proper acclimation, moisture control, fastening schedules, and expansion space are essential for a successful installation.





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



Flooring nailer or stapler



Drill/driver



Jigsaw



Rubber mallet



Pull bar



Safety glasses



Knee pads

Solid Hardwood-Specific Materials



Rosin paper or approved underlayment



Flooring cleats or staples



Wood adhesive if required



Wood putty / filler



Transition mouldings



Matching trims



Stair nose



Core Installation Steps 1–4

1

Acclimate the Flooring

Store flooring as directed by the manufacturer and maintain normal living conditions. Verify the flooring has reached the proper moisture condition before installation. Typical interior conditions are about 18°C to 24°C and 35% to 55% RH.



2

Inspect and Mix Boards

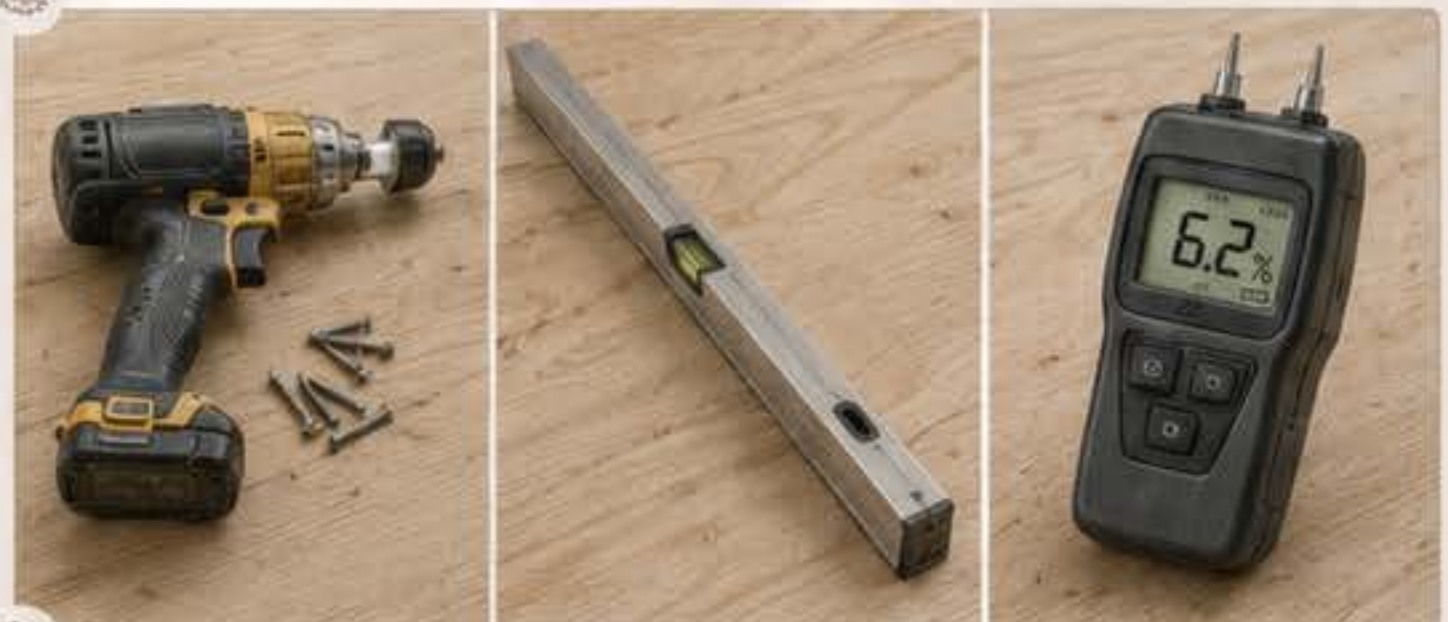
Open several cartons. Check for shade and grain variation, damaged boards, bowed pieces, and end-matching issues. Mix boards from multiple cartons for a natural blend.



3

Test the Subfloor

Confirm the subfloor is dry, flat, clean, secure, and properly fastened. Repair squeaks, fill low spots, remove debris, and verify acceptable moisture levels.



4

Install Underlayment / Mark Joists

Install approved rosin paper or underlayment when required. Locate and mark joists or fastening lines so the field rows can be nailed accurately.





NORTHERNEST

• HARDWOOD FLOORING •

Core Installation Steps 5–6

5

Plan the Layout

Install boards parallel to the longest wall or main light source when practical. For many wood-frame floors, solid hardwood is commonly installed perpendicular to joists for added support.

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



HARDWOOD IS COMMONLY INSTALLED PERPENDICULAR TO JOISTS

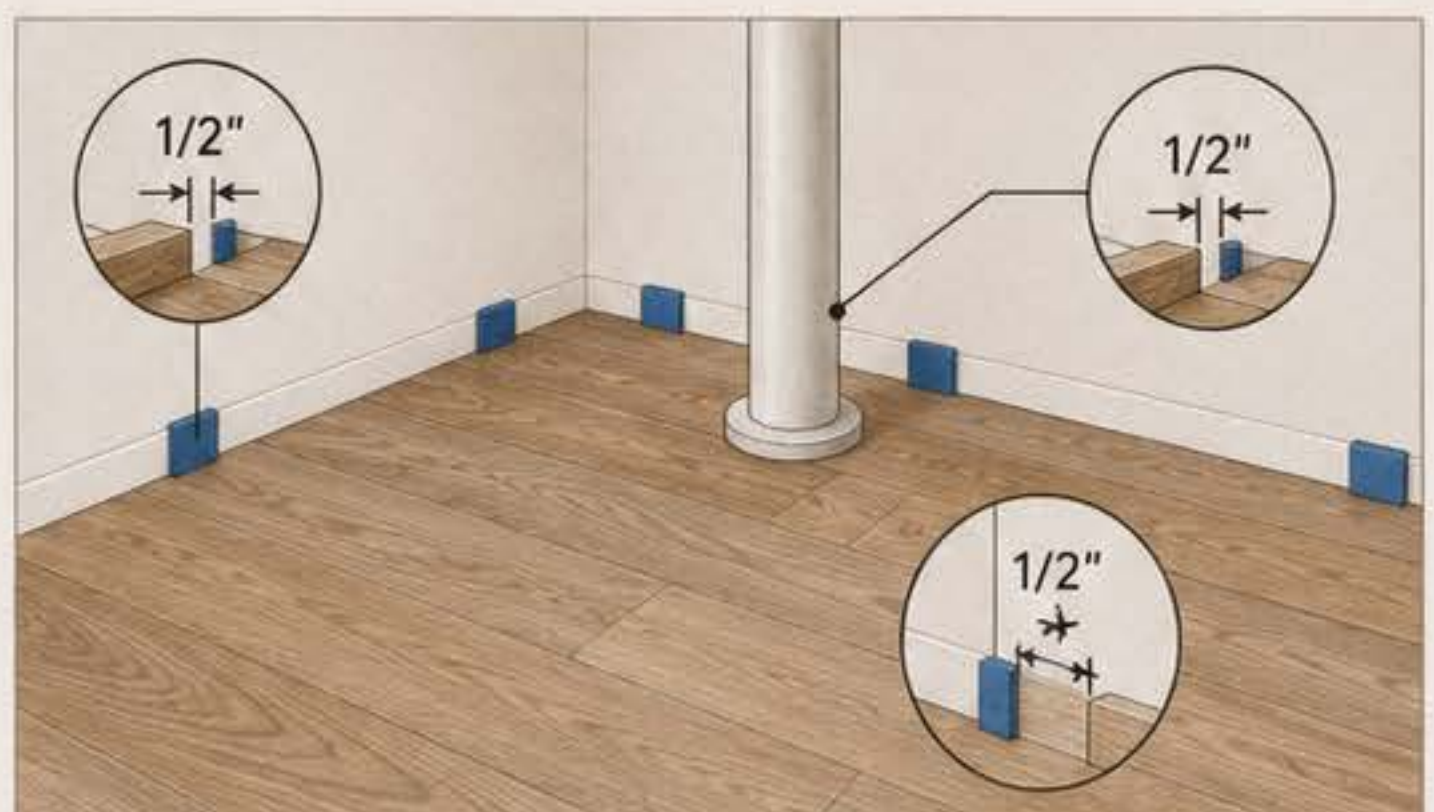


6

Leave Expansion Gaps

Solid hardwood flooring needs expansion space. A typical perimeter gap is about 1/2 inch, or as required by the manufacturer.

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



Installation Notes

- Follow the product-specific fastening schedule.
- Use only approved underlayment and accessories.
- Keep rows straight and joints tight.
- Pre-drill and face-nail starter or final rows if needed.
- Maintain the required expansion gap throughout the room.



Nail-Down Installation Steps 1–5

1 Start the First Row

Place spacers along the wall. Align the first boards carefully to the chalk line and keep the starter row straight.



2 Face-Nail and Blind-Nail Starter Rows

Predrill and face-nail the first row where needed, then blind-nail through the tongue once there is enough room for the nailer.



3 Use the Flooring Nailer

Set the flooring nailer against the board tongue and fasten at the required spacing according to the manufacturer.



4 Stagger the Boards

Use starter cuts and maintain end-joint staggering of at least 6 inches, or as required.



5 Install the Final Rows

Rip the last rows to fit, leave the expansion gap, and predrill/face-nail the final rows as needed.



Installation Steps 6–10



6 Cut Around Obstacles

- Mark and cut carefully around vents, pipes, and other penetrations. Maintain the required expansion space.



7 Install Around Door Jambs

- Undercut jambs and slide flooring neatly underneath while preserving movement space.



8 Install Transitions and Trims

- Install T-mouldings, reducers, end caps, and stair nosings as required. Fasten transitions according to manufacturer instructions.



9 Reinstall Baseboards and Vents

- Reinstall baseboards, shoe moulding if used, and floor registers. Attach trims to the wall or substructure, not through the flooring field.



10 Clean and Inspect the Floor

- Remove spacers, vacuum the floor, wipe away dust, and inspect all joints, fasteners, and transitions.





NORTHERNEST

• HARDWOOD FLOORING •

Finishing Details & Special Areas



1 Doorways & T-Mouldings

- Use transition mouldings where wood floors meet adjoining surfaces or large openings.



2 Reducers & End Caps

- Use the correct profile where floor height changes or where the flooring terminates.



3 Pipes & Radiators

- Cut neatly around penetrations and cover with collars or trim pieces while preserving expansion space.



4 Floor Vents

- Cut openings carefully and reinstall registers without restricting floor movement.



5 Stairs & Stair Nose

- Use approved stair nosings and trim systems where solid hardwood is used near stair edges.



6 Fixed Cabinets & Islands

- Do not trap the flooring field under fixed cabinets, islands, or heavy built-ins unless specifically approved.





Final Checklist & Important Reminders

BEFORE HANDING OVER THE PROJECT, CONFIRM:

- ☐ Flooring is fully installed and fastened properly.
- ☐ No visible damaged boards.
- ☐ Expansion gaps are covered but not restricted.
- ☐ Transitions are secure.
- ☐ Face-nail holes are filled where applicable.
- ☐ Vents and trims are reinstalled.
- ☐ Floor is clean and dry.
- ☐ Debris and installation scraps are removed.
- ☐ The customer understands care requirements.
- ☐ Humidity and moisture precautions are explained.



IMPORTANT REMINDERS

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

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

Use approved hardwood floor cleaners and felt protectors, and avoid excessive moisture or standing water.

*Northernest Flooring —
Premium guidance for beautiful installations.*

