



Engineered Hardwood Flooring Installation Instructions

Engineered Planks and Strips can be installed over most subfloors, and are constructed to be dimensionally stable, making them suitable for installation over all grade levels. See all information and installation guidelines below.

ATTENTION INSTALLERS – CAUTION: WOOD DUST Sawing, sanding and machining wood products can produce wood dust. Airborne wood dust can cause respiratory, skin and eye irritation. The International Agency for Research on Cancer (IARC) has classified wood dust as a nasal carcinogen in humans.

Precautionary Measures: Power tools should be equipped with a dust collector. If high dust levels are encountered use an appropriate NIOSH- designated dust mask. Avoid dust contact with skin and eyes.

First Aid Measures in case of irritations: Flush eyes and skin with water for at least 15 minutes.

WARNING! DO NOT MECHANICALLY CHIP OR PULVERIZE EXISTING RESILIENT FLOORING, BACKING, LINING FELT, ASPHALTIC "CUTBACK"

ADHESIVES OR OTHER ADHESIVES. These products may contain either asbestos fibers and/or crystalline silica. Avoid creating dust. Inhalation of such dust is a cancer and respiratory tract hazard. Smoking by individuals exposed to asbestos fibers greatly increases the risk of serious bodily harm. Unless positively certain that the product is a non-asbestos containing material, you must presume it contains asbestos. Regulations may require that the material be tested to determine asbestos content and may govern the removal and disposal of material. See current edition of the Resilient Floor Covering Institute (RFCI) publication "Recommended Work Practices for Removal of Resilient Floor Coverings" for detailed information and instructions on removing all resilient covering structures.

ATTENTION: IT IS THE INSTALLER/OWNER'S RESPONSIBILITY TO inspect ALL materials carefully BEFORE installation. Wood is a natural product containing natural characteristics such as variations in color, tone and grain. Some variation in color is to be expected in a natural wood floor. Even though our product goes through many inspections before it leaves the plant, it is the customer and installer/owner's responsibility for final inspection prior to installation. The warranty DOES NOT cover materials with visible defects once they are installed.

The manufacturer will not be responsible for claims arising from flooring that has a greater range of grain/color variation than found in the showroom display samples.

NECESSARY TOOLS Basic tools and accessories: broom or vacuum, chalk line, tapping block, wood flooring surface cleaner, hand or electric jam saw, miter saw, moisture meter, safety glasses, straight edge, table saw, tape measure, square, utility knife, pry bar. Use a moisture-cured urethane wood flooring adhesive and trowel if gluing. If using a pneumatic floor stapler, use a 20gauge 1" staple with 1/8" crown. When installing a 5" wide product, an 18 gauge, 1 1/4" staple with a 1/4" crown is recommended.

(Note: A 3/8" or 1/2" adapter must be used with some staplers or as appropriate).

Also note: 3/4" thick engineered planks should be nailed or stapled using a 3/4" solid wood flooring nailer or stapler of any brand using the recommended size staple or cleat for 3/4" solid wood installations. The nailing schedule should be 1" to 3" from the ends and 8" to 10" in the field. Caution: Don't use a rubber mallet to engage the tongue and groove system. Use a tapping block instead. A rubber mallet hitting any finished surface will cause abrasive marks (dull spots) and chipped edges.

JOBSITE CONDITIONS The room temperature should be 60 -80° F, with relative humidity of 35 -60%. These environmental conditions are specified as pre-installation requirements and should be maintained for the life of the engineered wood. It is the responsibility of the installer/owner to determine if the job site subfloor and job site conditions are environmentally and structurally acceptable for wood floor installation. The manufacturer declines any responsibility for wood failure resulting from or connected with subfloors, subsurface, job site damage or deficiencies after hardwood flooring has been installed.

SUBFLOOR PREPARATION AND RECOMMENDATIONS FOR ALL INSTALLATIONS Concrete Subfloors New concrete slabs require a minimum of 60 days drying time before covering them with a wood floor.

Concrete subfloors must be dry, smooth (level within 3/16" in a 10' radius 1/8" in 6') and free of structural defects. Hand scrape or sand with a 20-grit

#3-1/2" open face paper to remove loose, flaky concrete. Grind high spots in concrete and fill low spots with a Portland based leveling compound (min. 3,000 psi). Concrete must be free of paint, oil, existing adhesives, wax, grease, dirt and curing compounds. These may be removed mechanically but DO NOT use solvent-based strippers under any circumstances. The use of residual solvents can prohibit the satisfactory bond of flooring adhesives. It is important to ensure a proper bond between the adhesive and the concrete, and planks or strips. Engineered hardwood flooring may be installed on-grade, above grade, as well as below grade where moisture conditions are acceptable.

Lightweight Concrete Lightweight concrete with a dry density of 100 pounds or less per cubic foot is only suitable for engineered wood floors when using the floating installation method. Many products have been developed as self-leveling toppings or floor underlayments. These include cellular concrete, resin-reinforced cementations underlayments, and gypsum-based materials.



Although some of these products may have the necessary qualifications for underlayment for wood flooring installations, others do not. To test for lightweight concrete, scrape a coin or key across the surface of the subfloor. If the surface powders easily or has a dry density of 100 pounds or less per cubic foot, use only the floating installation method.

To ensure a long lasting bond, make sure that the perimeter of the foundation has adequate drainage and vapor barrier.

Wood Subfloors: Wood subfloors need to be well nailed or secured with screws. Nails should be ring shanks and screws need to be counter sunk. The wood subfloor needs to be structurally sound and dry. It should not exceed 13% moisture prior to installation. If the subfloor is single layer, less than 3/4" thick, add a single cross layer for strength and stability (minimum 5/16" thick for a total 1" thickness). This is to reduce the possibility of squeaking. Wood subfloors must be free of paint, oil, existing adhesives, wax, grease, dirt, urethane, varnish, etc. Underlayment grade OSB (not the wax side) is also a suitable subfloor. Particleboard is not an acceptable subfloor for staple or nail down installations but can be used as a subfloor in glue-down installations. When installing over existing wood flooring, install at right angles to the existing floor.

Subfloor Moisture Check: Engineered hardwood flooring may be used for above-, on-, and below-grade applications. On all common substrates, on-and below-grade applications are susceptible to moisture and should be tested for moisture prior to installation in several locations within the installation area. Acceptable conditions for above-, on-, and below-grade applications are:

- Less than 3 lbs. /1000 SF / 24 hrs. on a calcium chloride test
- Or an acceptable reading on an electronic concrete moisture meter
- Wood substrates must have a moisture reading of less than 13% when using an electronic wood moisture meter

To correct any subfloor problems concerning moisture, either wait until the subfloor dries to meet specifications or use an appropriate moisture barrier. Subfloors other than Wood or Concrete Note: Perimeter glued resilient vinyl and rubber tiles are unacceptable underlayments and must be removed.

Terrazzo, tile and any other hard surfaces that are dry, structurally sound and level, as described above, are suitable as a subfloor for installation of engineered hardwood flooring. As above, the surface must be sound, tight and free of paint, oil, existing adhesives, wax, grease and dirt.

Warning! Do not sand existing resilient tile, sheet flooring, and backing or felt linings. These products may contain asbestos fibers that are not readily identifiable. Inhalation of asbestos dust can cause asbestosis or other serious bodily harm. Check with local state and federal laws for handling hazardous material before attempting the removal of these floors.

Radiant Heated Subfloors: Prior to the installation of engineered hardwood flooring over a radiant heated flooring system the following guidelines must be followed in order to prevent unsatisfactory results for the flooring:

Previously noted concrete subfloor requirements apply.

It is highly recommended that the radiant heat system be designed to accept a wood floor. Use only the floating installation method.

Relative humidity of the jobsite must be maintained between 35 – 55%. Use of a humidification system may be required to maintain the proper humidity level. Failure to maintain the humidity range noted can result in excessive drying of the flooring which may lead to surface checking.

The radiant heat system should be set to run at 2/3 maximum output for a minimum of 2 weeks prior to installation of flooring to further allow moisture dissipation from the concrete slab. This must be done in both warm and cold seasons.

STORING & HANDLING:

Material should be on the job at least 72 hours before being installed. Open the cartons, but do not remove the product from the cartons. Make sure the heating/cooling is set within the normal temperature range. The flooring is acclimated and ready for installation when it has reached a moisture level consistent with the job site and normal living conditions. On wider width flooring, Installer-Owner must ensure the moisture levels meet and remain consistent with all manufacturers' recommendations to avoid cupping/crowning.

Before installation (5 days) reduce the temperature to 65° F and maintain temperature range of 64 -68° F during the installation.

After completion of the installation, wait 48 hours and then gradually raise the temperature of the heating system 2 -3° F per day over a five day period until the preferred setting is reached.

Caution: The floor surface must never exceed 80° F in temperature.

Room temperature should not vary more than 15° F from season to season. Seasonal gapping should be expected.



PREPARATION

Remove all moldings and wall-base, and undercut all door casings with a hand or power jam saw using a scrap piece of flooring as a guide.

Racking the Floor - Whether you choose to install the floor with glue or staples, start by using random length planks from the carton or by cutting four to five planks in random lengths, differing by at least 6". As you continue working across the floor, be sure to maintain the 6" minimum between end joints on all adjacent rows. Never waste material; use the leftover pieces from the fill cuts to start the next row or to complete a row. Note: When installing a pre-finished wood floor be sure to blend the wood from several cartons to ensure a good grain and shading mixture throughout the installation.

Always stagger boards 12" – 24" between end joints of adjacent board rows.

GLUE DOWN INSTALLATION GUIDELINES

There are two ways to install when using a moisture cured urethane wood flooring adhesive (wet lay; meaning to lay directly into wet adhesive and dry- lay method; meaning to allow the adhesive to flash or to tack up.)

Caution: Whether you choose to install using the dry or wet method, follow all guidelines set by the adhesive manufacturer and the instructions below. By not adhering to the guidelines the warranty on the floor can be voided.

Wet Lay Method - Step 1

Select a starter wall. It is recommended to start the installation along an exterior wall because it's more likely to be straight and square with the room. Measure out from the wall the width of two planks and mark each end of the room and snap your chalk line.



Wet Lay Method - Step 2

Spread the moisture cured urethane wood flooring adhesive from the chalk line to the starter wall using the recommended trowel size specified by the glue manufacturer. It is important to use the correct trowel at a 45° angle to get the proper spread of adhesive applied to the subfloor, which will produce a proper and permanent bond. Improper bonding can cause loose or hollow spots.



Note: Change the trowel every 2,000 to 3,000 SF due to wear down of the notches. This assures the proper spread of adhesive.

Wet Lay Method - Step 3

Install the first row of starter planks with the tongue facing the starter wall and secure into position. Alignment is critical and can be achieved by securing a straight edge along the chalk line (2x4's work well), or by top nailing the first row with finishing nails (wood subfloor), or sprig/pin nails (concrete subfloor). This prevents slippage of the planks that can cause misalignment.

Note: The planks along the wall may have to be scribed and cut to fit in order to maintain a consistent expansion space since most walls are not straight.

Wet Lay Method - Step 4

Once the starter rows are secure, spread 2 1/2" to 3 feet of adhesive the length of the room. (Never lay more adhesive than can be covered in approximately 2 hrs.) Place tongue into groove of plank or strips and press firmly into adhesive; never slide planks or strips through adhesive. (Note: Do not use a rubber mallet to butt the ends of the material together as it can burnish the finish and cause marring). Use a tapping block to fit planks snugly together at side and butt ends.

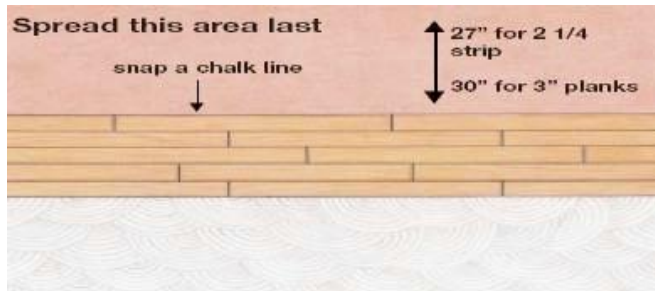
Clean any adhesive off the surface before it cures using clean terry cloth towels, mineral spirits or adhesive manufacturer's glue removal product. Use straps to hold planks securely in place as you are installing and continue the process throughout the installation.



Note: Never work on top of the flooring when installing with the wet lay method.

Dry Lay Method – Step 1

Start by selecting your starter wall and measure out from the wall 27" when installing 2 1/4" strip flooring and 30" when installing 3" planks. This will allow adequate working space. Snap a chalk line.



Dry Lay Method – Step 2

Apply adhesive from the chalk line out 2 1/2 to 3 feet. Allow adhesive to flash as per the instructions affixed to the adhesive container. Note: Variations in humidity may affect the flash times. Check adhesive specifications for additional information. Secure your starter rows with a straight edge (2x4's). Install planks and fasten with straps as you continue throughout your installation. If you must work on top of the newly laid flooring use a kneeling board.

Once the remainder of the floor has been installed, go back to the beginning and remove the straight edges and spread adhesive on the remainder of the open subfloor. Allow to flash for the appropriate time and lay flooring as instructed. Remember that the planks closest to the wall may have to be scribed and cut to fit due to irregularities along the wall. Roll the floor per adhesive manufacturer's recommendations.

Clean Up Use clean white terry cloth towels to clean as you go along with mineral spirits. Both are easy and convenient to use. Adhesive that has cured on the surface of the flooring can be difficult to remove and will require the use of a urethane remover. Use a product that has been recommended by the adhesive manufacturer and is safe for the finish of your pre-finished engineered hardwood floor.

Light foot traffic is allowed after 12 hours but wait 24 hours after installation to remove straps or edge spacers.

STAPLE OR NAIL-DOWN INSTALLATIONS

Engineered hardwood floors may be installed over wood subfloors using staples or flooring cleats. When installing engineered wood planks or strips by nailing or stapling, it is necessary to use the proper type of flooring stapler or nailer made for the thickness of the engineered wood flooring that is being installed.

Recommended Pneumatic Floor Stapler: When stapling, use a 20 gauge, 1" staple with a 1/8" crown on products up to 3" wide and 1/2" thick. When installing a 5" wide product, use an 18 gauge 1-1/4" staple or longer with a 1/4" crown. Note: you must use an appropriate adapter for the thickness of the wood on some flooring staplers. Also note: 3/4" thick, engineered planks should be nailed or stapled using a 3/4" solid wood flooring nailer or stapler of any brand. You must use the recommended size staple or cleat for 3/4" solid wood installations; you must also use the recommended nailing schedule, which is 1" to 3" from the ends, and 8" to 10" in the field.

Staple/Nail Method: You must staple or nail 1" to 2" from the ends and every 4" to 6" along the edges on engineered wood products that are 3" wide or less. This will help insure a satisfactory installation. It is recommended to initially set the compressor at 80 PSI and adjust the pressure as needed in order to properly set the fastener and keep the staples from going through or breaking the tongues. Improper stapling techniques can cause squeaks in the floor.

Adjustments may be necessary to provide adequate penetration of the nail or staple into the nail bed. It must be flush in the nail pocket. Use a scrap piece of flooring material to set tools properly before installation.

Note: Before installation of the engineered flooring begins, install a 6-mil polyethylene layer to completely cover the ground. Install approximately 6" up the foundation walls when installing on a wood subfloor with a crawlspace. The seams of the 6-mil poly should overlap 4" to 6" and should be taped to the foundation walls using an aggressive tape such as Duct tape. This will retard moisture from below that is emitted from the soil.

In addition to the ground cover in the crawlspace, a 6-mil polyethylene layer or a 15 lb felt or resin paper must be installed over the subfloor prior to the installation of the engineered wood flooring. This reduces squeaks and noises created by the opposing floors.

Installing 6-mil Polyethylene Install the polyethylene parallel to the direction of the flooring and allow a 3" overhang at the perimeter. Make sure each run of polyethylene overlaps the previous run by 6" or more.



Layout the job Measure out from the ends of your starting wall, 2 3/4" when installing 2 1/4" strip flooring or 3 1/2" when installing 3" planks. Mark both ends. Where possible, lay the flooring at 90° angles to the floor joists. Make a chalk line along the starting wall using the marks you made.

Beginning Installation Note: Expansion space is required along the perimeter of room(s) of intended installation. Expansion space is dictated by the thickness of the product; for example, 3/8" thick floor requires 3/8" expansion space, 1/2" thick floor requires 1/2" expansion space, 3/4" thick floor requires 3/4" expansion space.

Place the planks with the tongue facing away from the wall and along your chalk line. Use brads or small finishing nails to secure the first starter row along the wall edge 1" to 2" from the ends and every 4" to 6" along the side. Counter sink the nails and fill with wood filler that blends with the flooring installed. Place the nails in a dark grain spot in the board. The base or shoe molding will cover the nails when installed after completion of the installation.

Blind nail at a 45° angle through the tongues. It will be easier IF YOU PRE-DRILL THE HOLES IN THE TONGUES. Nail 1" to 2" from the ends and every 4" to 6" along the sides. It will be necessary to blind nail the next 2 rows. A brad nailer with 1" to 1 3/8" brads can also be used to blind nail and no predrilling is needed.

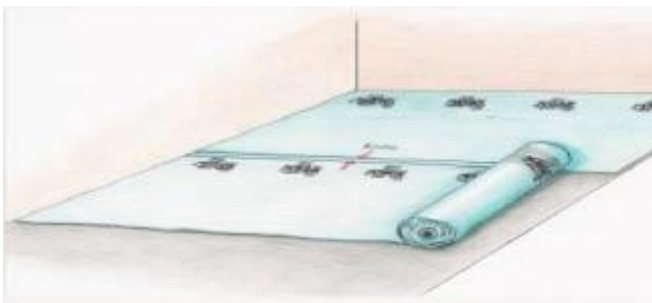
Continue the installation using an engineered wood flooring stapler, using staples or nails recommended by the nailer or stapler manufacturer. Nail or staple the flooring 1" to 2" from the ends and every 4" to 6" along the edge tongues.

INSTALLING AS A FLOATING FLOOR *Only engineered styles with 5 plies or more are approved for floating installation* Subfloor Preparation:

Preparation of a subfloor is more critical for a floating engineered floor than for a staple or glue down application, the floor must be flat to 3/16" in a 10' radius. If the floor requires correction, the high areas can be ground down and the low areas may be filled by floating latex fortified Portland leveling compound. The leveling compound must be allowed to dry according to the manufacturer's instructions before the floor is installed over it. The use of sand or extra padding to fill low areas is not acceptable.

Important: Do not install cabinets or walls on top of the flooring when using the floating installation method.

Floating Floor Underlayment Floating installation requires the use of poly-foam underlayment designed for engineered hardwood floating floors, with a minimum thickness of 1/8" and a 2.0# density. Underlayment requirements are very critical in a floating installation. Excessive pad compression or compaction is a common cause of seam failure.



Floating Floor Expansion Space: An expansion space of at least 1/2" must be maintained around the perimeter of the room, all pipes, counters, cabinets, fireplace hearths, doorframes and any other fixed vertical objects in the room.

Floating Floor Glue and Glue Placement: Use recommended floating floor glue for use with engineered hardwood floors for installation.

Glue placement is very important. The glue must be placed along the topside of the groove the full length of the grooved side and end. This can be accomplished by inverting the plank and applying a bead of glue (3/32") to the topside of the groove (side of the groove nearest the face of the plank). When the plank is turned back over the glue will run down the back of the groove giving total coverage. Apply only a 3/32" bead of glue; if the groove is filled with glue it will be difficult to close the seam will not allowing a tight fit.



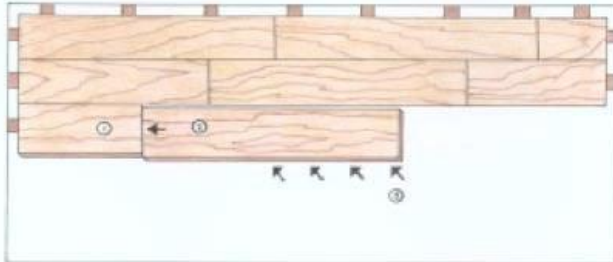
*Apply a bead of glue to the
inside edge of all grooves*



Floating Floor Getting Started: The installation begins in the left hand corner of the room with the long direction parallel to the longest wall of the room. Install three rows of flooring glued together and held in place with blue painter's tape with the groove side facing the wall. Tap boards together with a hammer and tapping block against the tongue side only. Spacers must be used to establish the minimum 1/2" expansion space from the walls.



Place spacers against the wall every 2 – 3" and at each plank end joint connection. The three rows must be straight, square and in rack because they establish the alignment for the rest of the floor. After putting these three rows together, allow the glue to set (15 to 45 minutes) before proceeding with the installation. With the tongue facing out, the planks can be tapped together with a tapping block on the tongue to make a snug fit. After installing 8 or 10 rows of flooring, stand back and check for crowning or heaving due to tension strapping or any damage caused by improper tapping.



CLEAN AS YOU GO

If any glue squeezes out of the seam between the planks, wipe away with a damp cloth immediately, as dried glue is more difficult to remove. If glue has dried, then lightly scrape it away with a plastic scraper or other method recommended by the glue manufacturer.

Floating Floor Final Touches Install the proper trim molding at the doorways to achieve the transition and along the walls to cover the edges of any gaps along the wall due to irregularity.

Complete the job by using wood filler that coordinates with the installed engineered flooring to fill any gapping along the joints or areas where brad nails were used in the trim or the flooring. Clean the finished floor with cleaner specifically designed for use with urethane coated wood floors



DROP LOCK INSTALLATION INSTRUCTIONS - Mericana Collection

The Engineered Drop Lock flooring can be installed over most subfloors and is constructed to be dimensionally stable, making it suitable for installation over all grade levels. See all information and installation guidelines below.

ATTN: INSTALLERS - CAUTION: WOOD DUST

Sawing, sanding and machining wood products can produce wood dust. Airborne wood dust can cause respiratory, skin and eye irritation. The International Agency for Research on Cancer (IARC) has classified wood dust as a nasal carcinogen in humans.

Precautionary Measures: Power tools should be equipped with a dust collector. If high dust levels are encountered, use an appropriate NIOSH- designated dust mask. Avoid dust contact with skin and eyes.

First Aid Measures in case of irritations: Flush eyes and skin with water for at least 15 minutes.

WARNING! DO NOT MECHANICALLY CHIP OR PULVERIZE EXISTING RESILIENT FLOORING, BACKING, LINING FELT, ASPHALTIC "CUTBACK" ADHESIVES OR OTHER ADHESIVES.

These products may contain either asbestos fibers and/or crystalline silica. Avoid creating dust. Inhalation of such dust is a cancer and respiratory tract hazard. Smoking by individuals exposed to asbestos fibers, greatly increases the risk of serious bodily harm. Unless positively certain that the product is a non-asbestos containing material, you must presume it contains asbestos. Regulations may require that the material be tested to determine asbestos content and may govern the removal and disposal of material. See current edition of the Resilient Floor Covering Institute (RFCI) publication "Recommended Work Practices for Removal of Resilient Floor Coverings" for detailed information and instructions on removing all resilient covering structures.

IMPORTANT HEALTH NOTICE:

THESE BUILDING MATERIALS EMIT FORMALDEHYDE. EYE, NOSE, AND THROAT IRRITATION, HEADACHE, NAUSEA AND A VARIETY OF ASTHMALIKE SYMPTOMS, INCLUDING SHORTNESS OF BREATH, HAVE BEEN REPORTED AS A RESULT OF FORMALDEHYDE EXPOSURE. ELDERLY PERSONS AND YOUNG CHILDREN, AS WELL AS ANYONE WITH A HISTORY OF ASTHMA, ALLERGIES, OR LUNG PROBLEMS, MAY BE AT GREATER RISK. RESEARCH IS CONTINUING ON THE POSSIBLE LONGTERM EFFECTS OF EXPOSURE TO FORMALDEHYDE.

REDUCED VENTILATION MAY ALLOW FORMALDEHYDE AND OTHER CONTAMINANTS TO ACCUMULATE IN THE INDOOR AIR. HIGH INDOOR

TEMPERATURES AND HUMIDITY RAISE FORMALDEHYDE LEVELS. WHEN A HOME IS TO BE LOCATED IN AREAS SUBJECT TO EXTREME SUMMER

TEMPERATURES, AN AIRCONDITIONING SYSTEM CAN BE USED TO CONTROL INDOOR TEMPERATURE LEVELS, OTHER MEANS OF CONTROLLED MECHANICAL VENTILATION CAN BE USED TO REDUCE LEVELS OF FORMALDEHYDE AND OTHER INDOOR AIR CONTAMINANTS.

IF YOU HAVE ANY QUESTIONS REGARDING THE HEALTH EFFECTS OF FORMALDEHYDE, CONSULT YOUR DOCTOR OR CALL LOCAL HEALTH DEPARTMENT.

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TOOLS

Basic tools and accessories: broom or vacuum, chalk line, tapping block, pull bar, hammer, wood flooring surface cleaner, hand or electric jam saw, miter saw, moisture meter, safety glasses, straight edge, table saw, tape measure, square, utility knife, pry bar, PVA wood glue and underlayment with attached moisture barrier.

Caution: Don't use a rubber mallet to engage the locking system. Use a tapping block instead. A rubber mallet hitting any finished surface will cause abrasive marks (dull spots) and chipped edges.

JOBSITE CONDITIONS The room temperature should be 60 -80° F, with relative humidity of 35 -60%. These environmental conditions are specified as pre-installation requirements and should be maintained for the life of the engineered wood.

It is the responsibility of the installers/owner to determine if the job site subfloor and job site conditions are environmentally and structurally acceptable for wood floor installation. The manufacturer declines any responsibility for wood failure resulting from or connected with subfloors, subsurface, job site damage or deficiencies after hardwood flooring has been installed.

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or sand with a 20-grit #3-1/2" open face paper to remove loose, flaky concrete. Grind high spots in concrete and fill low spots with a Portland based leveling compound (min. 3,000 psi).

Concrete must be free of paint, oil, existing adhesives, wax, grease, dirt and curing compounds. These may be removed mechanically but do not use solvent-based strippers under any circumstances. The use of residual solvents can prohibit the satisfactory bond of flooring adhesives. It is important to ensure a proper bond between the adhesive and the concrete, and planks or strips. Engineered hardwood flooring may be installed on-grade, above grade, as well as below grade where moisture conditions are acceptable.

Light Weight Concrete: Light weight concrete that has a dry density of 100 pounds or less per cubic foot is only suitable for engineered wood floors when using the floating installation method. Many products have been developed as self-leveling toppings or floor underlayments. These include cellular concrete, resin-reinforced cementation underlayments, and gypsum-based materials. Although some of these products may have the necessary qualifications of underlayment for wood flooring installations, others do not. To test for lightweight concrete, scrape a coin or key across the surface of the sub floor. If the surface powders easily or has a dry density of 100 pounds or less per cubic foot, use only the floating installation method. **Wood Subfloors:** Wood subfloors need to be well nailed or secured with screws. Nails should be ring shanks and screws need to be counter sunk. The wood subfloor needs to be structurally sound and dry. It should not exceed 13% moisture prior to installation. If the subfloor is single layer, less than 3/4" thick, add a single cross layer for strength and stability (minimum 5/16" thick for a total 1" thickness). This is to reduce the possibility of squeaking. Wood subfloors must be free of paint, oil, existing adhesives, wax, grease, dirt, urethane, varnish, etc. Underlayment grade OSB (not the wax side) is also a suitable sub-floor. Particleboard is not an acceptable sub-floor for staple or nail down installations but can be used as a subfloor in glue-down installations. When installing over existing wood flooring, install at right angles to the existing floor.

Subfloor Moisture Check: Engineered hardwood flooring may be used for above, on, and below grade applications and on all common substrates, on and below grade applications are susceptible to moisture and should be tested for moisture prior to installation in several locations within the installation area. Acceptable conditions for above-on-and below grade applications are:

- Less than 3 lbs /1000 SF / 24 hrs. on a calcium chloride test.
- Or an acceptable reading on an electronic concrete moisture meter.
- Wood substrates must have a moisture reading of less than 13% when using an electronic wood moisture meter. To correct any subfloor problems concerning moisture, either wait until the subfloor dries to meet specifications or use an appropriate moisture barrier.

Radiant Heated Subfloors: The last row should never be narrower than 2". Prior to the installation of engineered hardwood flooring over a radiant heated flooring system the following guidelines must be followed in order to prevent unsatisfactory results for the flooring. Previously noted concrete subfloor requirements will apply. It is highly recommended that the radiant heat system be designed to accept a wood floor. Use only the floating installation method. Relative humidity of the jobsite must be maintained between 35 – 60%. Use of a humidification system may be required to maintain the proper humidity level. Failure to maintain the humidity range noted can result in excessive dryness of the flooring which may lead to surface checking. The radiant heat system should be set to run at 2/3 maximum output for a minimum of 2 weeks prior to installation of flooring to further allow moisture dissipation from the concrete slab. This must be done in both warm and cold seasons. Before installation (5 days) reduce the temperature to 65°F and maintain temperature range of 64 -68°F during the installation. After completion of the installation, wait 48 hours and then gradually raise the temperature of the heating system 2 -3° per day over a five day period until the preferred setting is reached. Caution: The floor surface must never exceed 80° F in temperature. Room temperature should not vary more than 15° from season to season. Seasonal gapping should be expected.

Please note: A radiant heat system will dry out all woods. Therefore, the home MUST maintain a year-round relative humidity of 35-60%. If you are unable to maintain proper humidity year-round, do not install the flooring. The warranty will not cover extreme heat or dryness.

Subfloors other than Wood or Concrete Note: Perimeter glued resilient vinyl and rubber tiles are unacceptable underlayments and must be removed. Terrazzo, tile and any other hard surfaces that are dry, structurally sound and level, as described above, are suitable as a subfloor for installation of engineered hardwood flooring. As above, the surface must be sound, tight and free of paint, oil, existing adhesives, wax, grease and dirt. Terrazzo and ceramic tile must be scuffed to assure adhesion.

Warning! Do not sand existing resilient tile, sheet flooring, and backing or felt linings. These products may contain asbestos fibers that are not readily identifiable. Inhalation of asbestos dust can cause asbestosis or other serious bodily harm. Check with local state and federal laws for handling hazardous material before attempting the removal of these floors.

PREPARATION

Remove all moldings and wall-base, and undercut all door casings with a hand or power jam saw using a scrap piece of flooring as a guide. "Racking the Floor": start by using random length planks from the carton or by cutting four to five planks in random lengths, differing by at least 6". As you continue working across the floor, be sure to maintain the 6" minimum between end joints on all adjacent rows. Never waste material; use the left over pieces from the fill cuts to start the next row or to complete a row. Note: When installing a pre-finished wood floor be sure to blend the wood from several cartons to ensure a good grain and shading mixture throughout the installation. Always stagger boards 12" – 24" between end joints of adjacent board rows.



Radiant Heated Subfloors The last row should never be narrower than 2".

INSTALLING AS A FLOATING FLOOR

Subfloor Preparation: Preparation of a subfloor is critical for a floating engineered floor. The sub-floor must be flat to 3/16" in a 10' radius. If the floor requires correction, the high areas can be ground down and the low areas may be filled by floating latex fortified Portland leveling compound. The leveling compound must be allowed to dry according to the manufacturer's instructions before the floor is installed over it. The use of sand or extra padding to fill low areas is not acceptable. Important: Do not install cabinets or walls on top of the flooring when using the floating installation method. Underlayment Floating installation requires the use of poly-foam underlayment designed for engineered hardwood floating floors, with a minimum thickness of 1/8" and a 2.0# density. Underlayment requirements are very critical in a floating installation. Excessive pad compression or compaction is a common cause of seam failure. Underlayment should be installed perpendicular to the direction of the flooring (Figure 1). Butt ends together and do not overlap. Tape seams with duct tape.

Getting Started Begin installation of the first row by selecting the longest length board available. The first board should be placed on the right side of the room with the long direction parallel to the wall. It is recommended to use the longest wall in the room. If necessary, cut the first row lengthwise to ensure that the last row will not have a width of less than 2".

Start by placing the tongue side of the first board towards the wall. Insert spacers between the wall and the first board to ensure an expansion gap of 1/2" along the wall (Figure 2). Expansion gap may vary due to irregularities in the wall. Align the next board and drop the end joint into place against the end of the first board, interlocking the tongue and groove by pushing down. Some slight adjustment of the board may be necessary to assure a proper fit that is in line with the initial board. Again, place spacers as necessary to minimize movement.

Continue as previously noted until first row has been completed. Cut the last board in the row to length (allowing for expansion space on the end) and drop it into place. **Installing Remaining Rows** Begin the second row with the cut piece from the first row. If the cut piece is shorter than 8", do not use it. Instead, begin with a new board that exceeds 8" length and allows at least 6" of spacing between the end joints. Place the first board in place by angling it up slightly, pushing forward and interlocking the side tongue (Figure 3). Carefully push the board down until the tongue and groove locks together. A slight tap with a nylon-tapping block may be required. Continue installing all remaining boards in the same manner noted above, ensuring at all times, that planks are laid with their end joints staggered by at least 6". Do not forget to insert a spacer at the beginning and end of each row to ensure the correct expansion gap and also to act as a brace to allow you to tap the short ends into place when necessary. Under no circumstances should the board edges be hit directly by a mallet or hammer – always use a tapping block.

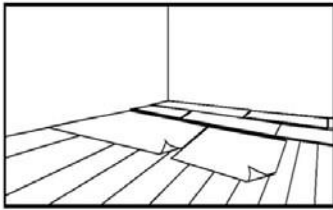


figure 1

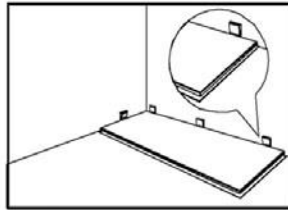


figure 2

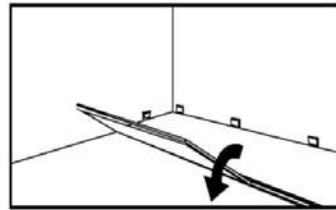


figure 3

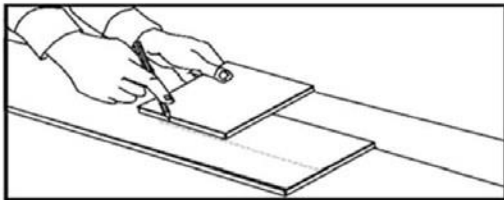


figure 4

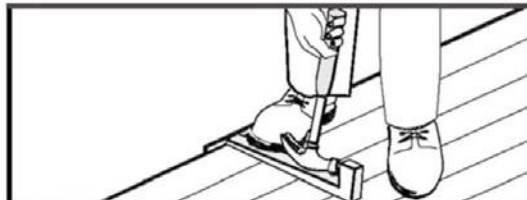


figure 5

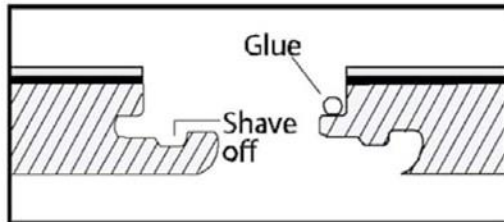


figure 6

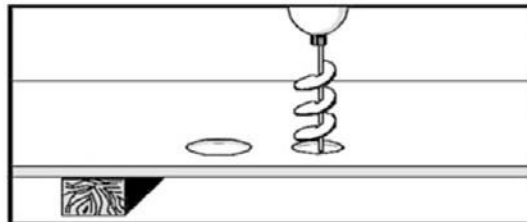


figure 7

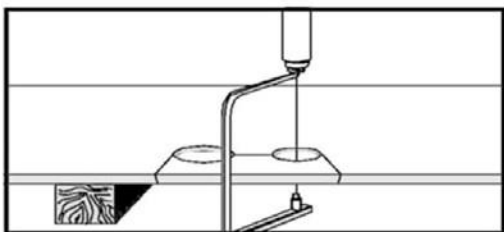


figure 8

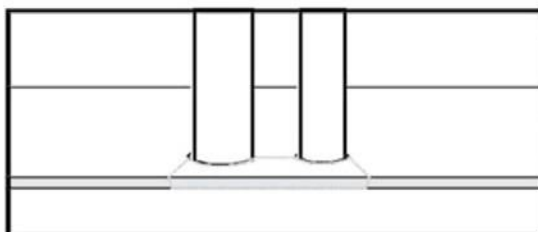


figure 9

Installing the Last Row

The last row of boards might have to be cut lengthwise to fit. If necessary, place a board on the second-to-last row of boards and scribe the cutting line (Figure 4) -Do not forget to allow for the expansion gap. After the last row has been cut, lock the board into place using the pull bar. (Figure 5).

Installing Under a Door Frame

If fitting part of the last row under a doorframe, you will first have had to shave off the bottom cheek of the groove on the previous row (Figure 6). Doing this will allow you to slide the last row under the door frame and then, having applied a bead of PVA wood glue into the groove, tap this board back into the groove using a tapping block and/or pull bar. This will ensure a solid joint in this area while also allowing you to neatly finish the doorframe area. This system can also be used where the last row is fitted under a radiator for example.

Installing Near Pipes Figure 7: To drill holes for heating pipes, use a bit at least 3/4" wider than the diameter of each pipe. Figure 8: Cut holes as illustrated.

Figure 9: Glue the cut piece in place. Fit pipe collars around the pipes.

- Completing the Installation
- Remove all wedges.
- Install any transition pieces that may be needed, such as reducer strips, T-moldings, or thresholds.
- Re-install all base and/or quarter round moldings. Nail moldings into the wall, not the floor.
- Clean floor.
- Do not cover the floor with a non-breathable material such as plastic.



- To prevent surface damage avoid rolling heavy appliances or furniture on the floor without sufficient protection.

GLUE DOWN INSTALLATION GUIDELINES

There several ways to install using a glue down method such as wet lay or tacked. Caution: It is important to follow all guidelines set by the adhesive manufacturer for the glue down method you choose. By not adhering to the guidelines you can void your flooring warranties.

Step 1: Select a starter wall. It is recommended to start the installation along an exterior wall; it's more likely to be straight and square with the room. Measure out from the wall the width of two strips plus 1/4" and mark each end of the room and snap your chalk line.

Step 2: Spread "adhesive" from the chalk line to the starter wall using the adhesive manufacturer's recommended trowel. It is important to use the correct trowel at an angle to get the proper spread of adhesive applied to the sub-floor, which will produce a proper and permanent bond. Improper bonding can cause loose or hollow spots. Note: Change the trowel every 2000 to 3000 square feet due to wear down of the notches. This assures you always get the proper spread of adhesive.

Step 3: Install the first row of starter strips with the tongue facing the starter wall and secure into position. Alignment is critical and can be achieved by top nailing the first row with finishing nails (wood installation instructions: engineered floor sub-floor), or sprig/pin nails (concrete sub-floor). This prevents slippage of the strips that can cause misalignment. Note: The strips along the wall may have to be cut to fit since most walls are not straight, and leaving an expansion space is not necessary with engineered wood strips installed with the glue-down method.

Step 4: Once the starter rows are secure, spread 2-1/2 to 3 feet of adhesive the length of the room. (Never lay more adhesive than can be covered in approximately 2 hours.) Place the tongue into the groove of the strips and press firmly into adhesive. Never slide strips through adhesive. Test for proper bond by occasionally lifting a board and looking for good coverage (90%), and then replace it into the adhesive. Clean any adhesive off the surface before it cures using water. Use mineral spirits after it cures.

Note: *Never work on top of the flooring when installing with glue down method. Light foot traffic is allowed after 12 hours but wait 24 hours after installation.*

MAINTENANCE

Engineered Hardwood Floors are very easily maintained. No wax, no mess. Simply use a cleaner made for use with urethane coated hardwood floors and a terry cloth flooring mop.

Step 1: Sweep your floor to remove any particles that could scratch your floor. Warning: Vacuums with a beater bar or power rotary brush head can damage a wood floor and never should be used.

Step 2: Apply hardwood surface cleaner directly to the terry cloth flooring mop, instead of the floor!

Step 3: Use a back and forth motion with the mop. When the terry cloth cover becomes soiled, simply replace it with a clean one. Cleaning the floor with a soiled cover could cause streaking. The covers are re-usable, so wash and dry the covers periodically as you would a normal towel.

Tips & Warnings Neglect will void the warranty – Maintain a normal indoor relative humidity level (35 – 60 %) throughout the year to minimize the natural expansion and contraction of the wood. I. Heating Season (Dry): A humidifier is recommended to prevent excess shrinkage due to low humidity levels. Wood stoves and electric heat tend to create very dry conditions. II. Non Heating Season (Wet): An air conditioner, dehumidifier, or periodically turning on your heating will help to maintain humidity levels during summer months.

- Sweep regularly
- Remove spills promptly using wood flooring cleaner and a clean white cloth
- Use felt protectors under heavy pieces of furniture and chairs
- Use protective mats at all exterior entrances
- Spiked heels or shoes in need of repair can severely damage your floor.
- Never wet or damp mop your wood floors. Water can cause damage to wood flooring
- Never use oil soaps, wax, abrasive cleaners, steel wool or strong ammoniated or chlorinated type products to clean your floor
- The sun's UV rays can change the color of your floor
- Keep animal nails trimmed
- Protect your floor with a 1/4" piece of plywood or Masonite when using a dolly for moving furniture or appliances.
- Never slide or roll heavy furniture or appliances across the floor
- If your floor becomes scratched or dull, repairs can often be made using repair accessories

Drop Lock Installation Instructions - Lindau Collection

Preparations

Now that you are aware of the most basic regulations and requirements and after the underlay has been installed, let us come to the installation of the flooring planks: In order to achieve a similar appearance of the first and last rows, measure the width of the room transversely to the installation direction and center the width of the flooring planks. Mix the contents of several packages together throughout the installation process to achieve a natural, even look of the flooring area overall. The last flooring plank of each row is cut to size and the sawn-off piece - as long as it is not shorter than 20cm - is used to start the next row. Between rows the cross joints should be staggered by at least 40 cm (min. 15 cm with Trendtime 2) forming a "random connection". Please inspect all planks prior to installation and use only impeccable planks for your flooring.

Installation Sequence

Fig. 1: If you don't have to narrow the width of your first row of planks anyway, begin by sawing off the longitudinal tongues of the entire first row of planks. Start laying the first row in the left hand corner of the room with the sawn longitudinal side facing the wall.

Fig. 2 + 3: Begin the second row on the left side by clicking the longitudinal tongue of the first board into the groove of the first row. To do so, insert the tongue into the groove at an angle of approx. 25° and lower the board. As it is lowered the board snaps into place tightly giving you a press fit.

Fig. 4: The next board - and all the others that follow - is inserted lengthwise as described above and before lowering the short end side is positioned flush with the previous board. The solid upper wear layers need to be touching each other!

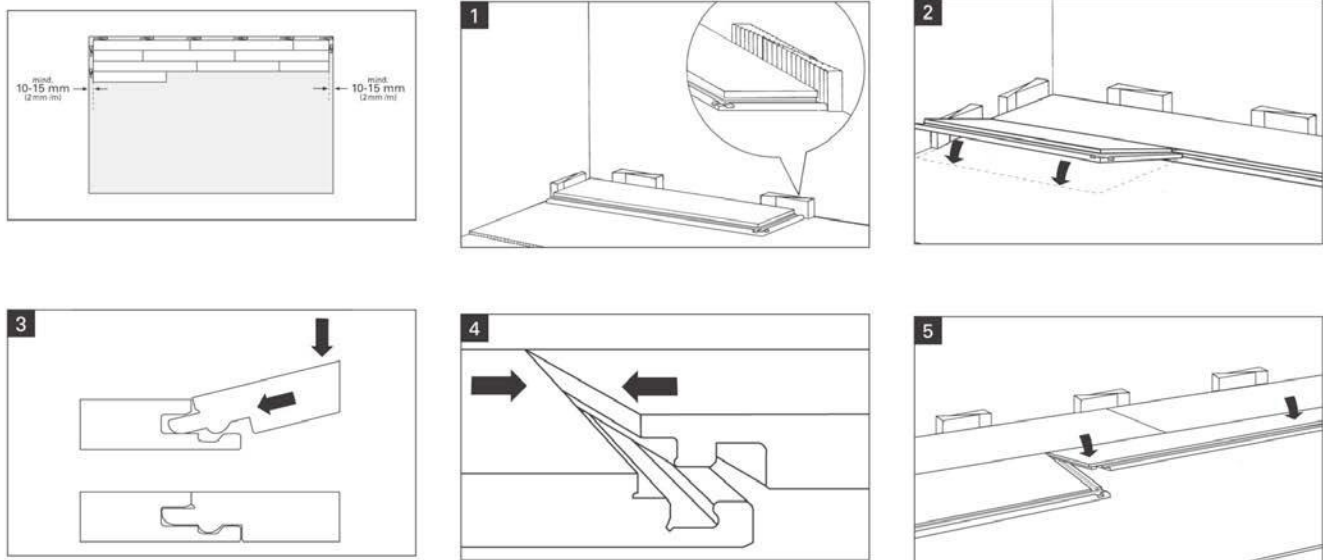


Fig. 5 + 6 + 7: The longitudinal joint of the plank is then locked by simply pressing the two boards together and pushing downwards (fig. 3). Before locking the short-end joint, always make sure that the longitudinal joint is locked completely along the entire length of the board. The short-end joint is then locked using a hammer and the hammering protection. (Always make sure that the short-end sides are positioned very closely together as locking is not possible otherwise, see fig. 4) Install all further flooring planks likewise.

Fig. 8: To disassemble, lift off the entire row of boards and pull them out of the previous row diagonally, then pull the end joints apart. To do so it is recommended to use a piece of residual board between the rows of boards and knock the boards apart with a hammer and hammering block. After just a few hits with the hammering block, the connection can be pulled further apart by

hand. In this way, the locking mechanism remains intact and the boards can be reused. Important: avoid twisting the boards as this can damage the locking mechanism.

Fig. 9: Measure the end piece with a try square (lay the board down with the groove side facing the previous row) and cut to length. Don't forget the expansion space to the wall! If you are using a jig saw, have the top surface of the board face downwards, if you are using a table saw, let it face upwards.

Fig. 10: Use a piece of residual board to help fit the last row. Remember to keep an expansion space of 10-15mm to the wall.

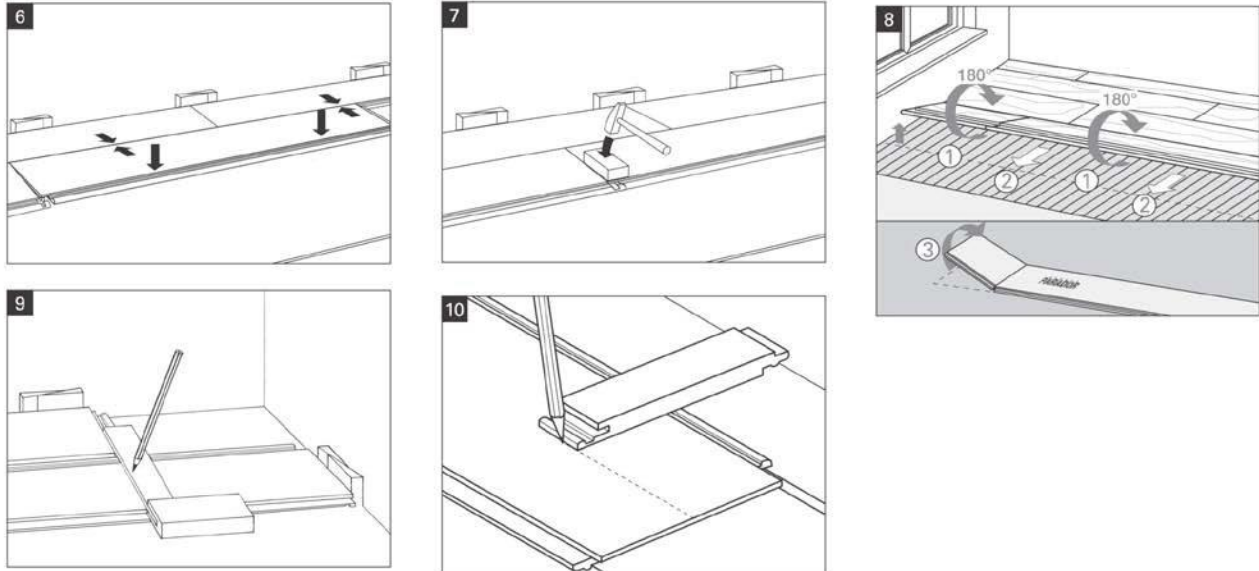


Fig. 12: The floor is ready for use as soon as the installation is complete. Remove the spacer wedges and attach the Parador skirtings with patented Clip-technique.

Fig. 13: If the wall is not straight align the first row in a straight line and follow the course of the wall. Saw the boards off accordingly.

Fig. 14: How to shorten a door frame place a piece of residual board (on the suitable subfloor/underlay) against the frame and saw the frame off along the board.

Fig. 15: How to fit your floor around heating pipes: the diameter of the hole in the board should be 20 mm larger than the pipe itself. Mark the spot, drill the holes and saw off at an angle of 45° as shown in the illustration. Glue in the sawn off piece. Don't forget the expansion gap here either.

Fig. 16: Installation in inaccessible areas: whenever the boards cannot be swiveled in and clicked together, it is recommended to remove the catch-mechanism on the backside of the tongue and glue the boards together. Apply the glue onto the lower part of the groove and join the boards together horizontally (conventional tongue-groove principle).

Fig. 17: Glue application. Flooring planks with *AUTOMATIC-CLICK* system may additionally be glued together. To do so, apply the glue onto the lower part of the groove all along the longitudinal sides of the flooring board.

