

Installing a Floating Floor

Preparation of the Sub-Floor

All sub-floors must be level, clean and dry – the maximum deviation from level must not exceed 2mm under a 1.5 metre straight edge. Any deviations greater than 2mm must be filled or lumps removed prior to laying floating flooring.

Concrete/Cement Floors

- Check all floor coverings are securely fixed to the floor, any loose areas must be re-fixed if possible, otherwise, remove the covering completely.
- The sub-floor must be clean and dry, vacuum all dust and debris. Do not wash or expose the sub-floor to water prior to installation.
- Use a moisture barrier such as builder's plastic between the sub-floor and the underlay. Overlap seams by at least 40mm and seal with waterproof tape. Ensure the plastic sheet turns up the wall by 50mm all around the room, trim this excess off after the new floor is laid.
- Use 2-3mm thick high density polythene foam underlay to provide moisture and sound insulation. Lay the underlay in the opposite direction to the flooring, butting seams together and sealing with waterproof tape

If you are a first time installer, you may find it useful to lay a few rows of panels without glue to familiarise yourself with the laying procedure.

1. If using a natural timber floating flooring product, allow for an expansion gap of 10 mm around the room perimeter and around all floor penetrations such as pipes or columns
2. Make a number of wedge shaped spacers from scrap timber to assist in maintaining the expansion gap, otherwise the Quick Step fitting kit comes in very handy. The first row of panels must be laid in a straight line with the tongue facing the wall – use a string line to align the panels.
3. When you are ready to permanently lay the panels, apply an even bead of the recommended adhesive to the lower surface of the groove on the panel
4. Fix the next row of panels using a timber block and hammer to tap the panel into place. Remove glue squeeze-out with a damp cloth, ensuring that all traces of glue are wiped off.
5. When laying the final row of panels or the last panel in a row, you may need to use a pull-iron bar to ensure a tight fit.
6. To install a panel around a pipe or similar protrusion, determine the centre point of the protrusion, mark on the panel and drill or cut a hole at least 10mm larger than the protrusion.
7. Cut the panel across the centreline of the hole and install, gluing the panel together around the protrusion. Ensure that the joined panel is not glued to the protrusion or the sub-floor.

8. When laying panels around architraves, cut the bottom of the architrave to allow the panel to slide underneath. Make this cut using a panel off-cut as a guide.

9. To trim the last panel to size, lay it exactly on top of the second last panel, then lay a third panel on top, butted up against the spacer wedge. Using the edge of this top panel as a guide, mark a line on the last panel indicating where to cut away the excess.

10. Finally, remove all edge spacers and fix a new skirting board in place, ensuring that the new floor can move freely under the skirting board.

Existing Timber Floorboards

- Check the floor for level and remedy any high or low spots to within the tolerance stated above.
- Vacuum the floor thoroughly.
- Fix any loose or creaking floorboards and ensure that all nail heads are punched below the surface.
- Remove existing skirting boards prior to installation of the new floor.

Particleboard or Plywood Floors

- If the floor has an existing covering (such as linoleum, vinyl or cork tiles) check that it is securely fixed. If adhesion is poor, remove the covering completely.
- Ensure the sub-floor is clean and dry.
- Remove existing skirting boards prior to installation of the new floor.

Ceramic Tiles & Flagstones

- Check for level as stated above.
- Ensure the tiles or flagstones are securely fixed to the sub-floor.
- Vacuum clean and ensure the surface is dry.
- Remove existing skirting boards prior to installation of the new floor.