

# Flooring Notes

## 1. Keep Dry!

2. **Store inside.** (Do not store outside under a tarp!)

## 3. Must acclimate.

- a. Heating/AC system must already be running.
- b. Stack with sticks/spacers between every layer in the room in which it will be installed.
- c. 5-7 days normally. If you're in an area that's far more humid (beach) or far less humid (desert) then you might give it 10-14 days.

## 4. Moisture barriers.

- a. 6-mil poly or regular 30lb roofing felt paper works fine. (Or two layers of 15lb felt)
- b. Overlap edges at least 4" and touch all walls. If you use 15lb than stagger the seams from one layer to the next.

## 5. Preparing to install over wood joists

- a. Space joists at 16".
- b. Use ¾" plywood subfloor. Leave 1/8" space between panels and use a caulk-type adhesive between the joists and the plywood to eliminate squeaking.
- c. Lay the moisture barrier on top of the plywood.

## 6. Preparing to install over concrete

- a. Make sure your slab is dry. A 6-mil poly moisture barrier should be under the slab so that it's not drawing moisture from the ground. It's recommended that you wait at minimum 60 days before installing flooring on new concrete. You can test your slab's dryness by securing a 2' square sheet of clear poly to the concrete with duct tape on all four sides forming an air-seal. Wait 24 hrs. If condensation develops between the concrete and the poly do not install flooring.
- b. If you're doing a plywood subfloor over concrete first put a moisture barrier down on the concrete. Most folks recommend spreading cold cutback mastic adhesive first, then a layer of felt paper, then another layer of cutback mastic, then the ¾" plywood. Leave ½" gap between each panel and at the walls. Use at least 9 nails per panel nailing the center first then the edges.
- c. If you're wanting to glue the floor directly to the slab then we recommend that you HIRE A PROFESSIONAL FLOORING INSTALLER.

## 7. Installing – nailing into plywood

- a. Normally best to run the boards the same direction as the traffic flow in the room.
- b. Begin with the "starter" piece of flooring alongside an exterior wall. Strike a chalk line one board wide plus ½" from the wall. Put the edge of the board on the chalk line so there's a ½" gap between it and the wall. Use 6d or 8d finishing nails to face-nail the starter piece with the tongue turned away from the wall. (use 4d nails if you're face-nailing into plywood over a slab. Nail every 8" to 10" and double-nail 2" to 3" from ends. It's best to

face-nail the first and final several rows of flooring. You can blind-nail (nail diagonally thru the tongue so that the nail is hidden) on the rest of the floor. Countersink and putty all face nails. Continue to use 8" to 10" spacing even when blind-nailing.

- c. Stagger lengths so that end joints are well spaced.
- d. Sort pieces so that you distribute knots throughout the floor.

## 8. Sanding

- a. The purpose of sanding is primarily to smooth the transition from board to board.
- b. Drum sanders can be rented from box stores like The Home Depot.
- c. Always sand lengthwise in the direction of the boards and never across.
- d. It's recommended that sanding be done in three passes starting with coarse grit, then medium, then fine. Some people just do 1 or 2 sanding passes.

## 9. Staining, Finishing

- a. Remove dust.
- b. If you want to stain your floor then now is the time. Darker colors tend to conceal minor scratches better than lighter colors and are better suited for commercial applications. Lighter colored floors hide dust better and make a room appear larger.
- c. Then you apply clear coats! There are many to choose from, but polyurethanes are the most popular. Oil-based polyurethanes take longer to dry between coats but are more durable. They tend to amber/yellow over time so they work best over dark stains. Water based polyurethanes and polycrylics are less durable but they dry much faster, are easier to work with, and don't amber/yellow. Oil based polys usually require about 3 coats while water-based typically need 4-5 coats.

## 10. Maintenance

- a. Use door mats at entryways. Do not use rubber-backed mats.
- b. Use area rugs in high-traffic areas.
- c. Use furniture coasters beneath furniture.
- d. Avoid wearing high-heeled shoes.
- e. Sweep or dust mop regularly to prevent scratching from dirt and grit.
- f. Do not use household cleaners. The chemicals can remove the finish from your floor.
- g. Avoid using water on wood floors.
- h. Direct sunlight can discolor wood. Use draperies or blinds to shield from direct sunlight.
- i. Use a mild soap that's wood-floor friendly or we've seen folks recommend a solution that's ¼ cup of vinegar to 4 cups of warm water, dipping it with a clean cloth and wringing dry to wipe or mop the floor. Use a second cloth to wipe the floor dry.

**DISCLAIMERS:** This is not an exhaustive list of instructions. Be sure to check with local building codes and read all labels and follow all directions regarding use of sanders, air nailers, etc., and the application of stains, clearcoats, etc... Also, there are many instructional resources online.

**Hope these tips help!** Compliments of Southern Wood Specialties in Flomaton, AL