



FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS ABOUT ENGINEERED TIMBER FLOORS.

“A dynamic forest is a benefit to the atmosphere. A growing tree absorbs carbon dioxide from our air and returns oxygen to the atmosphere in very fast rates. The older the tree is, the slower this process becomes.” “The key component in preserving and keeping a tropical forest is to make sure that these resources maintain an economic value.” “Wood is the only renewable resource to be used as an environmentally correct building material, both during its use and after.”

Dr. Thomas Lovejoy-Assistant Secretary for External Smithsonian institution – Washington D.C

Professionals Prefer HARMONY Engineered timber floors: Because

Quicker & easier to install

Saving timber & the environment

Better Top Coat Finishes

Less costly overall

Traditional look

Can be floated

Can be glued-down

Better Stability, no Warping or twisting

No Sanding-no dust

No moving out, or Toxic Fumes

Long Lasting

Small sections can be repaired

Can walk on almost immediately

Question: Can timber floors be placed directly onto concrete floors?

Answer: Yes- subject to the following conditions. - moisture content of less than 2/4%, to check the humidity moisture hygrometer is used, if this is not available then you can do the following check yourself. Place a clear plastic sheet firmly over the floor, you can check an area of 1 square meter, tape the ends well and create a firm seal, leave this for two days, if moisture has formed underneath the plastic then the floor is too moist and a suitable moisture barrier is required. The recommended moisture barrier is a minimum of 200micron builders plastic, this is placed on the floor, allowing for the ends to go up the wall, which can be later trimmed, the overlap must be at least 300mm and be well taped, ensuring no moisture will escape onto the floor area

Question: What condition must the sub floor be, before installation?

Answer: You can lay good quality engineered timber flooring on most surfaces, as long as they are clean, level and dry; the following are good examples: Such as old concrete, Timber board, Old timber floorboards, Old tiles, as long as they are structurally fixed and not loose.

Question: Does the sub floor have to be perfectly level, before installation

Answer: Most timber floors can be laid on floors that are not perfect, you can get away with a sub floor that has a hollow or high spot of no greater than 3mm over a Three square meter radius, example, if you place a straight edge on the sub floor, and there are slight variations, such as hollows, then you should be able to get away with it, as underlay will take up most of the fill, but if you have a situation where the floor is level and say a nail or stone is sticking out the floor by 3mm, then this has to be removed, the variation must be spread over an area of at least two square meters. There are good leveling compounds that are cement based available at most hardware outlets, these are mixed with water and spread over the low points and are self leveling, meaning that they find a straight level and fill that area, its worth going to the small expense of using a leveling compound on a poor sub floor to bring it up to standard.

Question: Can I use under floor heating with HARMONY

Answer: Yes, under floor heating will not affect the qualities of these brands

Question: Would you install a Timber floor in a kitchen?

Answer: Yes, remember to place a rug in front of the sink be careful when replacing the appliances, such as dishwasher, that they fit, as most floors are 15/18mm higher with the under felt, after installation

Question: If the floor is damaged in a certain area, can it be repaired?

Answer: Yes, it can be repaired by either removing the damaged floorboards and replaced with new, or in some cases with minor scratches, these can be touched up with a special marker pen.

Question: Will a timber floor scratch or indent?

Answer: Timber is only as strong as the species itself. The JANKA test (determines how hard a surface is) it refers to Oak as approximately 1360 hardness with very high durability, this makes for a durable floor, however, as with all species of timber floors, it can be indented or scratched. It is our subjective view that a real timber floor ages with beauty in time, no matter how many scars it bears

. Question: Is it necessary to acclimatize timber floors?

Answer: Yes, with good quality ENGINEERED ply-backed timber floors such as HARMONY the floor is far more stable due to the ply backing which is less likely to move, if the timber has been shipped in from another area, we suggest that two days will be sufficient, by leaving the sealed boxes on the site, it is not necessary to open the boxes.

Question: Will the timber color change, or damage, when exposed to light & sunlight?

Answer: Yes Timber oxidizes from the sunlight as it matures, this occurs naturally & should be of no concern as the variation is slight, never expose your timber floors to prolonged period of sunlight as this can cause fading, cupping, warping & twisting, to extreme climatic conditions, window protection, shades, tinting or blinds are required

Question: Is there a difference between single strip double strip and three strips timber floors

Answer: Yes! There is a huge difference between the three
Single strip is far superior in looks to two or three strip product, the top layer for single strip is made out from a full piece whereas the two and three strips are made up of smaller pieces, which do not have the authentic look about them, with the two and three strips, you can see the join lines that it is not an authentic floor, rather spend a little more to get a better overall look. The end result is what is most important, you have a huge investment in your home, don't cut corners for what's best for your property. And your future returns on your investment.

Question: Is underlay required when installing the timber floor using the floating method?

Answer: Yes, Underlay is used to take out the unevenness in the sub floor; there are always slight highs & lows, in a sub floor. It will also reduce the drumming sound or noise effect made by foot traffic, it must also be present to validate the manufactures warranty, if the direct glue-down method was applied, then it would not be necessary to use an underlayment, as the polyurethane adhesive is a pliable drying glue and will take up most areas of unevenness.

Question: Why do some species of timber vary so much, can I choose all the same looking boards?

Answer: Timber is a natural product made by nature, variations occur differently in different species of timber, this is why timber is so beautiful, because each piece is an individual, and the overall effect tells the story of why timber is today becoming so popular. The floors are made up from how the tree has been cut; to sort colors would be a difficult task, however. There are a few species of timber that do not have as extreme color changes, such as Spotted Gum ,

Question: Why is it important to leave room for expansion when laying the floor?

MORE EXPANTION IS BETTER THAN LESS, NEVER UNDERSETIMATE ALWAYS ALLOW MORE

Answer: Timber like all materials expands and contracts, however Engineered Timber, constructed on a cross-ply base, does not absorb as much moisture as a solid timber floor would, therefore is more stable in its movement, it is required that at least 10mm expansion joint is left on the perimeter of the floor, which is covered either with a Scotia or skirting (wall trim), for greater areas we suggest you use a 20mm Scotia as well. Timber also expands more in the width, rather than the length, this is why solid timber sometimes leaves evidence of grooves where they have been joined, these appear as if they have slightly cupped if you look down the length of the floor.
For larger floors of over 8 meters we recommend 1.4mm per meter gap, example 8x 1.4 = 13.6 or 14mm. Refer to instructions.

Question: Is it cost effective to select a timber floor over less costly material?

Answer: Yes! A survey taken in the USA, and we quote the following:

According to the 'NATIONAL WOOD FLOORING ASSOCIATION (NWFA)' and 'residential REAL ESTATE AGENTS', say that: Homes with real timber floors hold their value better, they sell faster and they fetch higher prices, 58% of real estate agents said that a house with timber floors would fetch a higher price timber floors are a true investment, which will be enjoyed for many generations

Question: What is a laminate floor and is this timber?

Answer: No, a laminate is not a timber floor, a laminate floor is a product which is made to look like timber, a foil paper image is laminated to a reconstructed timber (MDF), the product is a lot cheaper than a genuine timber engineered floor, the laminate top is in most cases very strong and resistant to burns, but its very difficult to replicate "real wood", most laminates have a click system of fitting and do not use glue as a fixing agent, this can cause problems as moisture will expand the joints after time, engineered floors that are laid the floating method use a D3 water resistant adhesive, which creates a water resistant top floor barrier protecting your floor from damage after a spill

Laminate are a cheap alternative, with today's options, with a little more money you can get a real timber floor

Real Timber Floors are floors for a lifetime.

Question: What is a floating Floor?

Answer: A floating floor is a floor that is placed by either clicking or gluing the boards together on an underlay foam cushion, generally 2mm to 3mm thick. The whole floor floats as one floor allowing for less distortion from movement such as expansion & contraction, today Floating is becoming the preferred way, however because of cheaper laminates, a portion of the public think that floating floors means a laminate floor, this of coarse is not true, if a quality floor has been laid well using the floating method, then you have a good product .A floating floor is none structural. Floating has been used in Europe since 1947 and soon will be the preferred way of installing. To lay a quality floating Floor: --Use a quality engineered timber floor--Prepare the sub floor, clean and make sure its dry--Use a quality underlay material--Use a quality D3 Adhesive in the joints--always leave sufficient expansion gaps against the walls and perimeter of the floor.

Question: What does pre-finished mean?

Answer: Pre-finished Engineered Timber Flooring is a floor that has been made using natural timber to reconstruct the floor. Pre-finished floors are made in a factory production line, and mostly are coated with superior Ultra Violet quick drying lacquers, good quality floors will have seven or more coats of lacquer applied, most companies are today using the latest technology in coatings by applying "aluminum Oxide with Ceramic" as a final coating to give additional wear protection to the floor, the aluminum and ceramic, make the floor much stronger and wear less under normal traffic, that's why quality floor companies can offer from 15 to 25 years wear surface guarantees. See Pamphlet for more info. A pre-finished floor is also "ready to lay" and ready to walk on, making it a much quicker option in today's sophisticated market

Question: What about man cutting down all the trees, will we run out?

Answer: Timber comes from a natural resource, which is sustainable: the days have gone when timber was cut down with little thought for the long term consequences on **Nature's** Forest's.

Today Timber is cut from forests that are carefully managed, to ensure continued resources for future generations.

A fact from the USA Forest Services Figures show that: "Almost twice as much timber is added each year through new growth as it is harvested, additionally there is more timber standing today than there was 50 years ago."

Using timber floors actually improves the environment, because we are encouraged to grow more trees, these trees pump out more oxygen for a better and healthier lifestyle.

Question: Why are timber floors Healthy?

Answer: The Environmental Protection agency, has said that "Indoor Air Quality is one of the top health threats in the world today." Timber floors installed in a home help contribute to a cleaner healthy living environment; timber floors
DO NOT HARBOUR DUST MITES OR MOULDS, Creating a better air quality for all inhabitants.

ENGINEERED TIMBER / VERSUS SOLID TIMBER, THE TRUTH.

Question What is engineered timber?

Answer HARMONY wood flooring is made up as a sandwich of alternating wood layers, commonly known as ply wood, which is designed to provide stability and strength, it's basically a solid-wood top "wear layer" that is permanently bonded to ply-wood, therefore allowing it to be installed directly over most sub floors such as concrete and timber. An engineered plywood floor has approximately **one sixth the seasonal movement** of a solid timber floor, of the same species and size.

Engineered timber makes good use of the timber resources by applying the best grade of timber on the surface layer. Engineered floors in most cases are a more expensive product than solid timber, that is before laying, wood for wood, due to the manufacturing process, however the benefits are far greater than that of a solid timber floor, as the floor does not absorb excess moisture and then contracts when the moisture in the air is lost due to climatic conditions, all timber solid or engineered reacts to climatic changes, the benefit of the engineered is that it is more stable during these changes in the atmosphere. Engineered timber floors can be laid as a floating floor, a solid cannot/or should not be laid as a floating floor, because it will move too much creating problems

The question is often asked- Can I re-sand my timber floor?

Yes most engineered timber floors can be sanded, how many times depends really on the timber top thickness, but the facts are that the only time a timber floor needs re-sanding is when it has been abused and not properly looked after, or in 99% of the time, when a renovation is taking place and you discover that there is quality timber under the old carpet, this of course has to be sanded because of all the old nails that have been driven in to hold the carpet, we suggest you call in a professional

Another common question- how long will my timber floor last?

Well, Pine is one of the softest of timbers, you will find many old farm houses around the world that are more than 100 years old with pine floors which have withstood the test of time, you can rest assured that it will take several lifetimes to wear through an engineered timber floor with a 2mm, 3mm or 4mm top wear surface.

As timber ages it develops its own identity and uniqueness, this is why we love true timber floors.

The most important thing that you can do for your floor is to regularly dust and clean the floor, never expose any timber floor to excessive water, as timber will swell, when cleaning use the "Mist Spray Method" and you will Have a floor that will last many, many years.

There are timber floor polishes available, which are not waxed, based two coats applied will add to protecting your floor

Remember: Wipe spills promptly, before they seep into the floor

Dry dust mop and vacuum (ensure that your vacuum has a setting that will not scratch your floors,

Use only approved hardwood cleaners

Put protective felt under all the legs of furniture

Maintain a relative humidity of between 35-60 percent; this is the most comfortable for humans as well.

Place mats at all entry points of the house, remember timber floors are an investment, and you have a responsibly, you have to maintain them if you want them to last, like most things in life.

NEVER STEAM MOP A TIMBER FLOOR. Or clean with hot water

Question Why is a plywood-engineered floor better than Solid Timber floors.

Answer Plywood is proven to be, more stable, stronger & structurally better than solid timber

Plywood is used in the manufacture of Aircraft, Marine and in the building industry.

Plywood Offers Dimensional stability: Due to Cross lamination of the timber veneer layers which restricts the veneer movement across the grain from moisture and temperature changes, this makes the dimensional stability far more stable than traditional hardwood

Thermal expansion: wood and plywood expand upon heating, as do all solids. The thermal expansion of plywood is quite minimal, whereas the thermal expansion of solid timber is far greater.

Moisture Expansion: wood and plywood are hydroscopic; they absorb moisture from the atmosphere, as do all timbers. The expansion of plywood is very small, whereas the expansion of solid timber is far greater.

Wood species relative hardness table –JANKA TEST

Below are numerous timbers used in flooring, the ratings are rated using the Janka Test, this test is an international test that is recognized world wide. The test measures the force needed to embed a .444 inch steel ball to half its diameter in a piece of timber. The higher the number the harder the wood. This is used as a guide for the performance of the timber top. The overall construction of the floor is as important, particularly the center core as a ply core is far better constructed for better overall performance of the floor if compared with a soft timber core, which is used as filler.

Specie	Rating
Merbau	1950
Kempas	1710
Maple	1450
White Oak	1360
Spotted Gum	2800
Blackbutt	2200

You cannot sand below the surface line of the tongue & groove on both floors, therefore both floors have the same surface wear area

Engineered timber floor with 4mm solid timber top

Solid timber floor

Wear surface area

Wear surface area



Ply center core for better stability

Consistent coloration and appearance Non-allergenic, natural product, no preservatives or irritabile chemicals High resistance to fading and colour change, ultraviolet radiation resistant