

Installer/Owner Responsibility

Hallmark Hardwoods strives to give the highest quality hardwood flooring. Please carefully read this installation guide to ensure satisfactory results from your Hallmark Hardwoods floor. Carefully, inspect the flooring prior to installation for grade, color, finish and quality. Inspect hardwood in well lit conditions to ensure proper inspection. If flooring is not acceptable contact Hallmark Hardwoods and arrange for replacement. Hallmark Hardwoods will not take responsibility for installation of flooring with visible defects. Prior to installation of any flooring, the installer must ensure jobsite and subfloor conditions meet the requirements of specified flooring for installation. Hallmark Hardwoods is not responsible for flooring failure resulting from unsatisfactory jobsite and/or subfloor conditions.

N.W.F.A., National Wood Flooring Guidelines prevail. A Summary is provided.

Jobsite and Pre-installation Requirements

Hardwood flooring should be one of the last items installed for any new construction or remodel project. Any work involving water or moisture should be completed before hardwood installation. Room temperature and humidity of installation area should be consistent with normal, year round living conditions for at least one week before installation of wood flooring. Room temperature of 60°~80° Fahrenheit and humidity range of 30~50% is recommended.

Installation Requirements (Glue or Nail)

Quality of your floor installation is dependent on quality and preparation of the subfloor. Please read the information carefully. Subfloor must be structurally sound. Clean: Thoroughly swept and free from debris. Free of wax, grease, paint, sealers, old adhesives and other substances. Level: Flat to 3/16" per 10' radius. Dry: Test with a moisture meter or Calcium Chloride Test. Acceptable Subfloor types: Plywood (at least 3/4"), OSB (at least 3/4"), Concrete slabs (glue only).

Installation Tools

Tape measure, pencil, chalk line, power saw, tapping block, pull bar, spacers, hammer, safety glasses
Nail Down: Powercleats 11/2" length, with powernailer
Glue-down: recommended adhesive

Wood Subfloors

Moisture content of wood subfloor must not exceed 8%. There should be no more than a 4% Moisture Content difference between properly acclimated wood flooring and subfloor materials, taking into consideration normal living consideration and equilibrium moisture content (EMC). Subfloor must be dry and well secured. Nail or screw every 6" along joists to avoid squeaking. If not level, sand down high spots and fill low spots with and underlayment patch.

Concrete

Must be fully cured (at least 30 days old). All concrete should be tested for moisture. If calcium chloride or a moisture meter is unavailable, tape a 2'x2' section of clear plastic to concrete slab, creating an airtight seal. If condensation or discoloration appears on plastic after 24~48 hours, moisture content is too high for wood flooring installation. Acceptable moisture for installation is 3 pounds or less for a calcium chloride test.

Radiant Heat

See NWFA installation guidelines. Subfloor should never exceed 80° Fahrenheit; check with manufactures suggested guidelines for correct water temperature inside carrier pipes. Switch off heating unit 48 hours before installation. Room temperature should not vary more than 15 degree year round. Rugs MUST have a breathable foundation. Solid foundations or rubber materials are NOT recommended for Rug foundation under Radiant Heat applications.

Preparing For Installation

Door casings should be undercut or notched out so flooring will fit underneath. Base moldings should be removed and replaced after flooring installation. Since wood expands with any increase in moisture content, always leave at least a ¼" expansion space between flooring and all walls and vertical objects such as pipes or cabinets. This space will be covered once you put on trims and base. When laying flooring always stagger the end joint by at least 8". When cutting the last plank in a row to fit, you can use the cut-off end to start the next row. Do not use pieces less than 6" to begin new row. To pull planks together always use a tapping block and hammer. Tapping block should be used against the tongue only, not against the groove. When near a wall, you can use a pull bar to close the end joints. Take care not to damage edge of flooring.

Getting Started

Wood flooring is often laid parallel to the longest wall for best appearance. We recommend you begin installation next to an outside wall, which is usually the straightest and best reference for establishing a straight working line. Establish your working line by measuring an equal distance from the wall at both ends and snapping a chalk line. The distance you measure from the wall should be the width of a plank plus about ¼" for expansion space. You'll need to scribe cut the first row of hardwood to match the wall to create a straight working line.

Nail Down

See Preparing for Installation and Getting Started.

Lay flooring perpendicular to floor joists or parallel to the floor joists only if the subfloor has been strengthened for support. Lay first plank inside chalk line with grooved edge toward wall. Pre-drill ½" from grooved edge about 8" apart and secure planks with finish nails. Use nail punch to sink nails below surface and fill with wood filler. Repeat on tongue edge of plank. Install entire first and second row in same manner. Always leave at least a ¼" expansion around walls and vertical objects. Use wood or plastic spacers during installation to maintain this expansion space. Lay subsequent rows by using floor nailer to blind nail top inside edge of tongue at 45 degree angle. Nail each board every 8" and within 2" of each end. Remember to stagger end joints from row to row and use tapping block to snug board together. You may need to face nail tightens around (doorways) and the last 2~3 rows where the nails will not fit. Staples or Nails should be a minimum of 1-3/8 in length.

Glue Down

See Preparing for Installation and Getting Started.

Read adhesive instructions carefully for proper trowel size, adhesive set time, and angle to spread adhesive.

Urethane Adhesive is required for warranty. Bostic Best or equivalent per Hallmark guidelines sheet.

WARNING: Always allow for adequate cross ventilation when working with flooring adhesive. Once adhesive has been troweled, lay the first row of flooring with groove facing the wall; and continue laying flooring until adhesive is covered. Always check your working lines to be sure the floor is still aligned. Use tapping block to snug planks. Be careful not to let installed floor move on the wet adhesive while you are working. When first section is finished, continue to spread adhesive and lay flooring section by section until installation is complete. Use a damp cloth to immediately remove any adhesive that gets on flooring surface. Remember to stagger end joints from row to row. Always leave a ¼" expansion around walls and vertical objects. Use wood or plastic spacers during installation to maintain this expansion space. Work each section of flooring foot-by-foot within the adhesive working time to ensure a solid bond with the adhesive. Flooring planks on perimeter of room may require weight on them until adhesive cures enough to hold them down.

Float In

See Preparing for Installation and Getting Started.

Allow for 1/2" or greater expansion at all areas. NEVER net fit, pin down or nail anything into a floating floor as it prevents the normal expansion and contraction the floor has to have. Always leave at least a 1/2" expansion around walls and vertical objects. Use a D3 or equivalent Adhesive on both side and end groove bottom of groove application of adhesive. A minimum of 6-mil poly sheeting overlapped 6 inches and taped is required for underlayment.

Finishing The Job For All Applications

Remove expansion spacers and reinstall base and/or quarter round moldings to cover expansion space.

Install any transition pieces that may be needed.

Do not allow foot traffic or heavy furniture on floor for 24 hours (if gluing)

Dust mop or vacuum your floor to remove any dirt or debris

Floor Care Guidelines

Hallmark Hardwoods flooring is an excellent choice for easy maintenance and long-lasting beauty.

- Cleaning your hardwood floor is simple – dirt and dust are easily removed with a vacuum featuring a hard-surface attachment, beater bar turned off or a broom. Grit control is your best defense to keep a wood floor looking great for many years.
- For more difficult-to-remove soil, use a cloth moistened very lightly with plain water. Then wipe the surface with a clean, dry cloth. **Under no circumstances should the floor be wet-mopped.**
- Heavier stains, such as crayon, felt-tip markers, etc., may be removed with a standard wood floor cleaner designed for Urethane finish products.
- Hallmark hardwoods flooring needs no special treatment – never use soap solutions, sealers, polishes, or any abrasive materials.
- Protect the flooring in high traffic areas and from excessive tracking of outside dirt and soil with walk-off mats at all entrances. Rubber Mats are to be avoided as they oxidize finish and result in discoloration.
- Hardwood is a natural product that is affected by light overtime. Rearrange rugs and furniture periodically to help minimize the effect that sunlight and direct lighting can have the color tone of the hardwood floor.
- Use quality floor protectors, such as felt pads, beneath furniture legs to help protect the flooring surface.
- Hallmark hardwoods flooring is best maintained in a balanced room climate with 30~50%relative humidity at normal room temperature (60°~80° Fahrenheit).
- Chemical spills such as acids, alkalis or petrochemicals should be removed. The floor should then be cleaned with a wood cleaner and dried with a soft absorbent cloth to prevent any residue from remaining on the flooring surface.
- If you have any questions regarding the installation or care of your new Hallmark Hardwoods floor, please call our technical support hotline for assistance: 1-888-551-0888.