

Flooring preparation & installation

To ensure that you get the best out of your floor, it is important that it is correctly fitted, finished and maintained. Using our extensive timber knowledge and experience we are able to guide you every step of the way.

Preparation

1. Complete wet trades

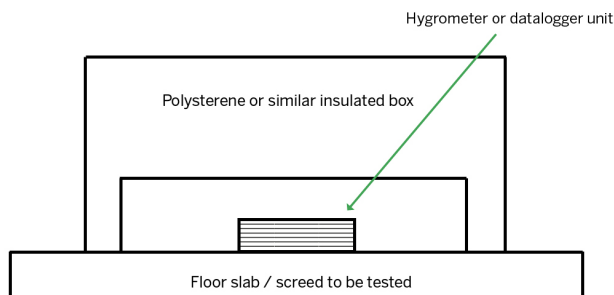
Firstly, it is vitally important that the heating is on and the air humidity levels are approximately 40-65% relative humidity. Also, please ensure that all wet trades (i.e. plastering, painting and plumbing) are complete prior to introducing the floor to the room.

2. Ensure that the concrete is dry

It is essential that the floor slab is completely dry before installation. This means that if it is a new floor, it must be given enough time to dry out. It also means that there are no on-going moisture sources that will allow the floor slab or screed to get wet.

The base slab and screed must be tested to ensure that the whole sub-structure is completely dry. The easiest way to do this properly is to test the "water activity" of the base. This is done by measuring the relative humidity in insulated pockets above the base. A hygrometer unit is placed in an insulated chamber above the base and allowed to come to equilibrium. This takes about 72 hours. It is also important to measure the temperature, or else the results are not comparable.

This should be done at several locations around the slab/screed. A typical test arrangement is illustrated below.



3. Acclimatise flooring

It is important that the flooring is stored correctly after purchase and allowed to acclimatise before laying. In all cases we would recommend that the flooring is first unwrapped from ALL polythene and then lattice/criss-cross stacked in order to allow air flow (it is not necessary to separate every individual board).

Flooring should then be acclimatised in the room that it is being laid (or a room with the same room temperature and relative humidity) for 1-2 weeks for engineered oak flooring, or 2-3 for solid flooring, so that it can reach an equilibrium with its surroundings.

Regardless of the fitting method selected an expansion gap of at least 10-15 mm should be left all around the perimeter of the floor to allow for seasonal variations in temperature and different levels of heating. If the room is greater than 10 metres in length, please contact us for more details on internal expansion gaps.

4. Additional guidelines for fitting onto underfloor heating

All of our engineered boards are suitable for use with underfloor heating. If solid boards are being considered for use with underfloor heating, we recommend no wider than 150mm.

Special care must be taken at the preparation stage to ensure that the installation is successful. This care should include acclimatising the floor for one additional week whilst the underfloor heating is turned on. Please contact us to discuss further.

The heating should be turned off for two to three days before laying (if possible, maintain room temperature when the heating is off using another heat source). A period of 24 hours must be allowed prior to re-starting the heating.

For re-starting the heating after installation, it should be left at a low temperature (15°C) for the first week. The following week it may be adjusted according to your supplier's recommendations. Note that the maximum floor surface temperature should not exceed 26°C and there should not be hot and cold areas within the same floor.

When underfloor heating is used it is normal for the floor to be laid directly onto the surface of the screed. This allows better transmission of the heat into the room. There are special adhesives manufactured for this purpose. The adhesive must not act as a vapour barrier, its only function is to bond the wood to the screed. Tovercol MS Adhesive is an example of a suitable adhesive. We recommend using Tover Nano-Fix Primer to prime the concrete prior to application of the adhesive.

Installation methods

What is the best installation method for your subfloor?

	Fully bonded	Semi-floating	Bonded acoustic	Secret nail
Screed with UFH	✓			
Screed without UFH	✓	✓	✓	
Joists / Battens				✓
Plywood	✓	✓	✓	✓
Existing timber floor	✓	✓	✓	✓

Fully bonded

Tover Tovcol MS Adhesive can be used to affix flooring directly to screed, plywood or existing wooden floors, giving a secure bond to the subfloor and a solid feel underfoot whilst enabling natural seasonal movement.

Coverage: Approx 15m² per tub. Recommended trowel for application included.



Tover Nano-Fix Primer is a water-based acrylic primer formulated with resins composed of nano-metric particles that guarantee optimal penetration even in poorly absorbent subfloors. Can be used as a dust-proof primer and surface consolidator on absorbent substrates based on cement, gypsum, anhydrite and similar. Enables bonding with any type of adhesive.



Coverage: Approx 5-10 m² per litre. Supplied in 5L or 10L tubs.

Secret nail

Nailing is the traditional form of laying a wooden floor, and is more cost-effective and potentially less messy than using a flexible adhesive. However, once the floor has been laid there is no flexibility in it, and this can mean that there can be occasional squeak in the boards (this is unlikely when using flexible adhesive).



Acoustalay 300 Underlay is a high quality, cross-linked polyolefin foam underlay which provides a barrier between the flooring and the sub floor. It can be used on top of a solid sub floor for spot levelling and to reduce contact sound.

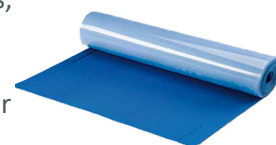
Coverage: 10m² rolls



Semi floating

Acoustalay 300 Adhesive Underlay is a high quality, cross-linked polyolefin foam underlay which represents a versatile solution designed for use on any smooth subfloor. The floor is adhered to the underlay, rather than the subfloor, and renders the use of screws, nails, glue or clips as unnecessary during the laying process. If laid on a concrete subfloor a separate vapour barrier should be used.

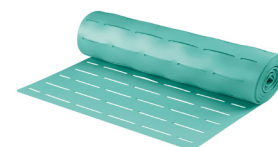
Coverage: 10m² rolls



Bonded acoustic

Acoustalay 250 Slatted Underlay is a high quality, fire retardant, cross-linked polyolefin foam underlay enables floor to be glued directly to the subfloor using Tover Sigil MS. The pre-cut slots ensure minimum adhesive is used, while Acoustalay provides for perfect spot levelling.

Coverage: 16.5m² rolls



Floor protection

We strongly recommend that flooring is one of the last installations to be fitted. If there are still works to be carried out, protecting your floor is essential. In our experience plaster dust can migrate through dust sheets onto the flooring causing permanent surface damage. A simple and effective way to do this is by using recyclable builder's paper. It is available in various thicknesses, so if there is still a considerable amount of work to be done, a thicker paper is recommended. Ensure the floor is clean before applying, as dirt caught between the paper and floor may cause friction which can result in surface damage to your floor. We strongly advise against plastic sheeting and sealing the protection down, as this can cause the floor to sweat (if underfloor heating is on) and leave staining on the surface.

Installation products are available for purchase on our online shop or please contact our flooring team for further information.