Howdens Joinery Flooring Pocket Guide





January 2023

Contents

Sub-floor suitability	Page 3			
Product suitability				
General storage & fitting				
Key installation points	Page 6			
 Howdens Engineered Real Wood Flooring Howdens Engineered Real Wood Herringbone Flooring Howdens Rigid Vinyl Flooring Oake & Gray Rigid Vinyl Flooring Howdens Laminate Flooring Howdens Laminate Herringbone Flooring 	Page 6 Page 7 Page 8 Page 9 Page 10 Page 11			
General care & maintenance	Page 12			
Common installation issues				

Follow the key below on each of the product pages



Before you start

Preparation

Fitting



ye 3 ye 4 ye 5 ye 6

QR codes

Scan the QR code on the product pages using your smart device, to access the installation leaflet for the specified flooring. You don't need a special App to scan a QR code, simply put your phone onto camera mode and hover over the QR code. You'll then be prompted to view the page.

age 13 Scan the QR code below for an electronic copy of this pocket guide





Sub-Floor Preparation





Is your sub-floor fit for purpose?

Preparation is key

Sub-floor preparation is the key to ensuring the flooring is laid in the correct way. If the sub-floor isn't within the specifications laid out on the instructions of the flooring, you can expect to see issues down the line.



Sub-floor must be smooth, level, clean, and permanently dry. Level to 3mm over 2m.

Note: The £1 coin rule! A pound coin is almost 3mm in thickness. If you can fit it under a 2m straight edge that's laid across the sub-floor then your floor needs levelling.



2
3

If the floor is not level - nail or screw floorboards, use ply board, or a levelling compound to bring your sub-floor within specification for the floor being laid.

If there is a risk that the sub-floor isn't permanently dry, an appropriate moisture barrier must be used.

- DPM for mineral sub-floors
- Bitumen Moisture Barrier Paper for timber sub-floors

Have you chosen the right underlay?

	1. Choose your floor								
	Real Wood Engineered and Laminate		Real Wood Engineered, Herringbone and Laminate Herringbone		Rigid Luxury Vinyl		Oake & Gray Rigid Luxury Vinyl with Underlay (inc. Herringbone)		
2. Identify Sub-floor	Concrete and Screeds	Timber	Concrete and Screeds	Timber	Concrete and Screeds	Timber	Concrete and Screeds	Timber	
2. Select Underlay	Foam XPS 4 in 1	Foam XPS	Foam		Howdens Vinyl Underlay**		Not Required - using additional underlay will damage the joints of the flooring		
membrane or moisture barrier*	DPM or Paintable DMP Not Required	Bitumen Moisture Barrier Paper	DPM or Paintable DMP	Bitumen Moisture Barrier Paper	DPM or Paintable DMP	Bitumen Moisture Barrier Paper	DPM or Paintable DMP	Bitumen Moisture Barrier Paper	

*If required

**Additional steps must be taken when installing in rooms with areas of prolonged intensive sunlight, Sun heat underlay SDH0927 available for use with Quick-Step Vinyl and Howdens Rigid Vinyl in this scenario

Read instructions thoroughly before starting to ensure compatibility of all installation components. Always check fitting instructions to be sure of under floor heating compatibility.

Product Suitability



Where is your floor being laid?

Flooring for every application

Howdens Joinery offers flooring solutions for all rooms in the home. The guide below visually shows the suitability of the flooring type for each room. In addition to the flooring, a range of underfloor protection is available and required as shown below.





Flooring is not suitable in unheated rooms such as garden rooms, garages and sheds.

General Storage & Fitting



Before you start!

Checklist

The inlay sheet provided should always be followed to give the specific laying instructions for your flooring. The tips below are general advice for all flooring installations.



Do not install cabinets (or any fixed furnitire) over the flooring, including kitchen



distribution of colour/finish. Note: For engineered flooring made with a real wood top layer, the natural characteristics of the tree such as knots and colour variation will be seen from plank to plank.



Exposure to extreme sunlight can cause changes to your floor, managing exposure will extend the life of your product.



Packs are to be stored flat on the floor with at least 50cm between packs and



All heating/air conditioning systems should be commissioned and operating for a minimum of 2 weeks prior to installation.

Note: Check underfloor heating requirements before installation and refer to UFH manufacturers guidance where applicable.



The sub-floor must be absolutely level, dry, clean and firm in order for the flooring to be laid. Any unevenness in the floor over a set span must be properly



Do not open packs until you are ready to install the flooring. Once open, inspect each plank/tile for any damage, visual defects or colour variation prior to

A selection of Howdens flooring needs to be acclimatised in the room where it will be installed for a minimum of 48hrs prior to fitting.

Howdens Engineered Real Wood

8 Key Installation Points





Howdens Engineered Real Wood Herringbone Flooring

8 Key Installation Points





Howdens Rigid Vinyl Flooring

11 Key Installation Points





Oake & Gray Rigid Vinyl Flooring (inc Herringbone)



11 Key Installation Points





Howdens Laminate Flooring

9 Key Installation Points

Use the key points below in conjunction with your installation inlay sheet to ensure your flooring is fitted correctly.





Please note: The Howdens range of laminates are sourced from multiple suppliers, please refer to the fitting instructions to ensure the correct fitting method is used.

Howdens Laminate Herringbone Flooring

9 Key Installation Points





General Care & Maintenance



How do I look after my floor?

All flooring types

Care and regular maintenance/cleaning will ensure the flooring lasts for many years. Below are some helpful tips to maintain flooring.



Common Installation Issues



What to watch out for?

All flooring types

The correct installation of flooring is essential to product performance. The main product issues that may arise after an installation are shown below, with details of specific questions that should be asked when dealing with a claim. When answered, these questions will enable some guarantee claims to be swiftly dealt with at Depot level, improving the service given to Howdens Joinery customers.

There are four main installation issues which are each directly related to the environment in which the flooring has been installed; Cupping, Splitting/Cracking, Bridging/Lifting & Creaking/Squeaking.

Cupping (affects Laminate, Real Wood)

The term cupping relates to the board becoming concave in appearance with the edges of the board becoming raised. This is not a result of a product defect but is caused by the environmental conditions where installed.

Cause: The issue occurs when the underside of the board absorbs moisture faster than the topside of the board.

Solution: It is essential to test the suitability of the environmental conditions prior to any installation of flooring. Suitable conditions of temperature and humidity during the product's life span are essential. In addition to this, a suitable moisture barrier should be used.



Splitting/Cracking (Real Wood)

Splitting or cracking can be a variety of small openings in the timber surface, where there is a separation of the wood within its structure.

Cause: Humidity levels and underfloor heating are often the causes of splitting. Exposed to heat, timber flooring can become excessively dry causing the splitting. In the same way, an increase in humidity will make the timber expand. As the humidity decreases it will shrink. Abnormal levels of this type of exposure will result in splitting.

Solution: Ambient humidity must be maintained throughout the year. To achieve this, humidity should be monitored. Domestic humidifiers can be used to correct humidity levels. Any remaining splits can be filled with flexible filler. Please refer to the filler instructions before use to ensure suitability.



Common Installation Issues



Bridging/Lifting (All flooring)

Either the whole floor or portions of the floor have become separated from the sub-floor to form a bridge. This is often accompanied by various degrees of cupping.

Cause: Bridging or lifting is most common when inadequate expansion gaps are left.

Expansion in timber products is caused by a rise in moisture, expansion in vinyl products is caused by a rise in temperature.

If horizontal movement of the flooring is obstructed, this results in the floor lifting, creating the bridging effect.

Solution: On solid, real wood or laminate floors, firstly find the source of the moisture problem if one exists. Once rectified, the flooring can be re-installed.

On vinyl floors, find all sources of heat including south facing windows, glazed doors, or skylights. Ensure that the temperature of the floor is managed by controlling the floor's exposure of heat and sunlight and is within its stated operating range. Sun Heat underlay can be used to help dissipate heat from sources of sunlight.

In the case of floating floors where there has been an inadequate expansion provision (rather than a moisture or temperature issue), the problem can be solved by trimming the boards at each end to increase the expansion gap.





Creaking/Squeaking (Real Wood)

This issue is common in timber flooring and is often only in some areas of the laid flooring and not others.

Cause: Creaking or squeaking is caused when excessive vertical movement in the floor has occurred, leading to joints moving on each other. Some common reasons for this

are that joist battens are too far apart or the timber base (to which the floor has been laid) is too thin and flexible, the sub-floor is uneven or the floor has been laid on top of existing flooring.

Solution: Ensure the floor has not been laid on top of existing flooring. Widespread creaking may require the flooring to be replaced, with a new suitable sub-floor installed. Localised creaking can be solved by injecting adhesive between the floor and sub-floor. Additional secret nailing can also be used to remedy this issue.

Gapping of Joints (All flooring)

Gapping can occur for multiple reasons, dependent on the type of flooring used, some common causes can be identified by checking the following:

Cause: Has the sub-floor been suitably prepared and in line with the specification? Has the correct underlay been used?

Was the correct installation method used? Are the joints free of debris?

Is there anything causing excessive and rapid expansion and contraction of the floor (Temp/Moisture)? Are there any heavy items of furniture restricting the expansion or contraction of the floor?

Solution: Best practice would be to assess the floor and address any issues found with the installation. Uninstall the floor and check the affected planks for damage. Replace damaged planks and re-lay the floor following the instructions closely.

Sometimes it is not practical to uplift the floor, in these circumstances there is a quick fix but the trade off is that it will need monitoring for some time afterwards to see if the issue persists. Using a wooden block with double sided tape on one side, stick the block to the affected plank and use a mallet to move the plank and close the gap. A bead of glue may be used before closing the gap if necessary.









