



S. A. RELF & SONS PTY LTD

FLOORING PRODUCT USE GUIDE

S. A. RELF & SONS Pty. Ltd. is proud of its quality certified hardwood flooring products. Australian Timber Industry Certification (ATIC) provides independent assurance that our hardwood flooring products comply with the grade and product specifications set by Australian Standard AS 2796 – 2006.

Experience has shown that where dissatisfaction with a tongue and groove floor occurs, simple precautions and sensible care have usually been ignored at some stage during the preparation, delivery, on-site storage, installation or in the general care of a floor. Customers need to be aware of the consequences of their choices and decisions.

Tongue and groove timber floors are a completely natural material which is sawn, seasoned and machined to a suitable profile. Timber continually takes up and gives off moisture to keep in balance with its surrounding. This results in a process of natural shrinkage and expansion.

To reduce the degree of shrinkage and expansion, we kiln dry the flooring to an average moisture content of between 9% to 14%. This is the range specified by AS 2796 and is a good starting point for most installations, but as you will read later, many other local factors influence the atmospheric moisture content around and in your home and therefore may affect your floor.

To achieve premium performance and to gain total satisfaction, please take note of the following information on the installation and care of your hardwood flooring.

DELIVERY OF YOUR FLOORING

- Make sure that each pack is unloaded carefully and is stored where it will be kept dry and not damaged. The optimum storage location would be where the floor is to be laid, alternatively within the home under cover, protected from the elements and where the atmospheric moisture content is similar to the level expected in your house.
- Check the pack label to ensure that the material delivered complies with your order. Look for the Moisture Content Test Record supplied with each pack. Have your flooring installer record the moisture content measurements in the column provided from the 4 samples pieces supplied within the pack.

If you have any concerns or problems with the quality of the flooring, contact us immediately. S.A. Relf & Sons is committed to dealing promptly with any quality issues you may have, using the customer feedback procedure set by Australian Timber Industry Certification (ATIC). Any timber quality issue needs to be resolved before the flooring is installed.

TIMBER COLOURING AND FEATURES

The general colour will be determined by the timber species. Remember timber is a natural product and every floor will be different and completely unique. The true colour of a floor will only become evident after it has been sanded and coated with a chosen finish. Variations in character markings, colour and grain should be expected and appreciated for their natural beauty and value. The grade of flooring chosen will determine the level of features on each board. The type of features you may discover are the colour variation, knots, gum veins, and insect markings.



BUILDING ENVIRONMENT

The performance of timber floors can be adversely affected by building practice and the building environment. To avoid shrinkage and gapping, swelling, cupping or cracking, the following factors are important:-

- The moisture content of the timber should be within 2% of the expected Equilibrium Moisture Content (EMC) of the room environment. This may be different to the EMC in an uncompleted building. If there is any need to acclimatise the timber, it should be done in conditions similar to the expected conditions of use. Factors such as air conditioning, heating, unprotected windows and sunlight can have a significant effect on EMC in different areas of a building.
- The moisture content of concrete slabs, plywood or particleboard substrates should be checked. Moisture barriers are recommended if the substrate is not thoroughly dry, or may be exposed to moisture.
- Prevention of rising damp in the sub-floor is critical for suspended strip flooring. Adequate sub-floor ventilation and drainage is essential. Protection from flooding, seepage or plumbing leaks is necessary to prevent swelling and cupping.
- The sub-floor or substrate must be sound, stable and level to allow proper fixing of the flooring. Strip flooring should not be attached directly to unseasoned timber joists.
- It is preferable to lay flooring only after all 'wet trades' such as brick cleaning, rendering, plastering and tiling have finished. Plastic laid over the floor to protect it from wet trades often raises the moisture content of the flooring timber and can be counterproductive. Close monitoring is required in this situation.

INSTALLATION, SANDING AND COATING

All hardwood timber flooring should be installed and finished by professional, experienced floor layers and finishers. To ensure that S. A. Relf & Sons flooring is fitted, fixed and finished correctly, we recommend that members of professional associations, such as the Australian Timber Flooring Association (ATFA), are used.

Timber is a natural product that responds to environmental changes by expanding and contracting slightly. Changes are most evident during long periods of either dry or wet conditions. Therefore an allowance of 10-12mm for movement should be left between the edge of the adjacent board and any vertical barrier, such as walls, steps tiled thresholds, posts and doorsills. This gap is normally covered over by skirting boards or quad around steps etc. For continuous floor widths over 6m, measured at right angles to flooring, intermediate expansion joints of a 10mm gap should be provided in addition to the perimeter gaps. These gaps are usually filled with compressible material, such as mastic, cork or similar material.

The coating material should be carefully selected to achieve the preferred look and quality of finish. Consideration needs to be given to high traffic wear conditions and the effects of heat, sunlight, or moisture in damp areas. In areas exposed to fluctuating environmental conditions, the use of coatings that may glue the flooring together, preventing the normal expansion and contraction movements of each floor board is not recommended.

At least three sequences of sanding and coating are recommended to achieve a smooth, uniform and durable surface that will sustain the beauty and serviceability of the timber.

FURTHER INFORMATION

The floor finisher should supply you with a Care and Maintenance Guide to keep your hardwood timber floor in good condition. The amount of care will depend on your location and lifestyle but generally any liquid spill should be wiped up promptly and sand, dirt or grit should be removed to prevent surface scratching.

Advice and information on laying and maintaining timber floors is available from the Timber Development Association (NSW) on www.timber.net.au.

For more detailed advice or information on the fixing and finishing of specific S. A. Relf & Sons flooring products, contact us by phone, fax, or email.



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