

## Engineered Bamboo Flooring Installation Instruction

### Installation tools

- Tape measure
- Pencil
- Chalk line
- Handsaw or power saw
- Tapping block (trimmed piece of flooring)
- Crow bar or pull bar
- Wood or plastic spacers (1/4")
- Hammer

### For nail-down installation, you'll also need:

- Power nailer®Model 50c 1/2" nailer
- Power cleats®1-1/4" cleats

### For floating installation, you'll also need:

- 6-mil polyfilm
- PVAC glue (white glue)
- 1/8" Foam, Cork or Rubber underlayment
- Poly tape or duct tape

### For glue-down installation, you'll also need:

- Flooring adhesive: Bostik®Best, Franklin®811 or 911, Dri-Tac 7500 or 7600
- Adhesive trowel as recommended by adhesive manufacturer

### Acceptable Sub floor types:

- Plywood (at least 5/8" thick)
- OSB (at least 3/4" thick)
- Existing wood floor
- Resilient tile & sheet vinyl (floating/glue-down only)
- Underlayment-grade particleboard (floating/glue-down only)
- Concrete slab (floating/glue-down only)
- Ceramic tile (floating/glue-down only)

### Sub floor must be:

- Structurally sound
- Clean: Thoroughly swept and free of all debris (including wax, grease, paint, sealers, and old adhesives)
- Level: Flat to 3/16" per 10-foot radius
- Dry and will remain dry: Sub floor must remain dry year-round. Moisture content of sub floor must not exceed 13% for wood product surfaces, or must not exceed 3 lbs. (per Calcium Chloride test) for concrete. Sub floors can be tested with commercial moisture meter.

**Wood Sub floors** 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 an underlayment patch.

**Concrete** must be fully cured, at least 60 days old, and should have minimum 6-mil polyfilm between concrete and ground. Do not install on concrete unless you are sure it stays dry year-round. All concrete should be tested for moisture.

**Ceramic tile, resilient tile and sheet vinyl** must be well-bonded to sub floor, in good condition, clean and level. Do not sand existing vinyl floors, as they may contain asbestos.

### Radiant heat

Use only floats installation over radiant heat. Sub floor should never exceed 85°F. Check with

manufacturers suggested guidelines for correct water temperature inside heating pipes. Switch off heating unit one or two days before flooring installation. Room temperature should not vary more than 15°F year-round. Follow floating installation instructions for below grade.

## Preparing for Installation

- Since wood expands with any increase in moisture content, always leave at least a 1/4" expansion space between flooring and all walls and vertical objects (such as pipes and cabinets). This will be covered up once you reapply base moldings around the room. Use wood or plastic spacers during installation to maintain this expansion space.

- **Work out of multiple (2-3) boxes.** Bamboo is a natural product and has natural color variations. Bamboo flooring is separated by shade at the factory. The shade differences between cartons may be noticeable. Mixing cartons creates a natural, random shade effect.

- When laying flooring, stagger end joints from row to row by at least 18". When cutting the last plank in a row to fit, you can use the cut-off end to begin the next row. If cut-off end is 8" or less, cut a new plank at a random length and use it to start the next row. You will always begin each row from the same side of the room.

- To pull planks together always use a tapping block and hammer. Tapping block should be used against the tongue only (never against the groove). When near a wall, you can use a crow or pull bar to close end joints. Take care not to damage edge of flooring.

## Getting Started

Begin installation next to an outside wall. This is usually the straightest and best reference for establishing a straight working line. Establish this 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 1/4" for expansion space. You may want to dry-lay a few rows (no glue or nails) before starting installation to confirm your layout decision and working line. If outside wall is out of square, adjust working line to make it straight for the rest of your installation. You'll need to scribe cut the first row of planks to match the wall to make a straight working line.

### Nail-Down Installation

- **First and second rows:** Lay flooring perpendicular to floor joists, unless sub floor is existing hardwood and/or has been strengthened to prevent sagging. Lay first plank inside chalk line with grooved edge toward wall. Pre-drill 1/2" 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 the same manner. Always leave at least a 1/4" expansion space between flooring and all walls and vertical objects (such as pipes and cabinets). Use wood or plastic spacers during installation to maintain this expansion space.

- **Subsequent rows:** Lay by using floor nailer to blind-nail top inside edge of tongue at a 45° angle. Nail each board every 8" and within 2" of each end. Remember to stagger end joints from row to

row and use a tapping block to fit boards together. It may be necessary to face-nail in doorways or tight areas where the nailer can't fit. The last two rows will need to be face nailed in the same manner as the first two rows.

### **Glue-Down Installation**

- Use only the above-mentioned approved adhesives. Read adhesive instructions carefully for proper trowel size and adhesive set time. Never use the "wet lay" or "loose lay" method of installing. This is when you install the flooring immediately after spreading adhesive. This method will trap moisture under the floor and cause the flooring to warp. Read adhesive instructions for proper set time before beginning installation of flooring (usually at least 30 minutes).
- Starting at outside wall, spread as much adhesive as can be covered by flooring in one hour (or as recommended by your adhesive instructions). Spread with trowel at a 45° angle.
- Once adhesive has set, 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 fit planks together, but 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 at least a 1/4" expansion space between flooring and all walls and vertical objects (such as pipes and cabinets). Use wood or plastic spacers during installation to maintain this expansion space.
- Walk each section of flooring foot-by-foot within the adhesive working time to ensure a solid bond with the adhesive. Flooring plank on perimeter of room may require weight on them until adhesive cures enough to hold them down

### **Floating Installation**

#### **Laying underlayment**

- Polyfilm: If below grade, first lay a 6-mil polyfilm with seams overlapped 8". Fasten seams every 18-24" with duct tape or poly tape. Run the outside edges of film up perimeter of wall 4" (trim after flooring installation is complete.) If installation is on or above grade, polyfilm is recommended but not necessary.
- Foam/Cork/Rubber: Lay underlayment by butting edges, not overlapping. Tape full length of seam.

#### **Installing the floor**

- Start first row with groove toward wall. Glue end-joints of first row by applying adhesive to bottom of groove. Always leave at least a 1/4" expansion space between flooring and all walls and vertical objects (such as pipes and cabinets). Use wood or plastic spacers during installation to maintain this expansion space.
- Lay subsequent rows of flooring by applying glue to side and end joints and fitting planks together with a tapping block. Remember to stagger end joints from row to row.

#### **Finishing the Job**

- Remove expansion spacers and reinstall base and/or quarter round moldings to cover the expansion space. Install any transition pieces that may be needed (reducer, T-moldings).
- Do not allow foot traffic or heavy furniture on floor for 24 hours (if glue-down or floating).
- Dust mop or vacuum your floor to remove any dirt or debris. Do not use a vacuum with a beater bar brush.

## **Cleaning and Maintenance**

Maintain your bamboo floor as you would any hardwood floor. The key to your floors long life and good looks is periodic cleaning and refinishing when necessary. We recommend the Bona Kemi floor cleaning kit for cleaning your floors. Protectors should be placed under the legs of furniture and floor mats placed at entrances to the outdoors to collect dirt that can damage your floor finish. Always follow the finish manufacturer's recommendations for periodic re-coating.