

## FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

### SHOULD I ACCLIMATE MY FLOORS BEFORE INSTALLATION?

Acclimation, sometimes called conditioning, is the process of allowing wood to reach its equilibrium moisture content (EMC) “conditions” of the location installed. Per the National “When wood is neither equilibrium moisture reached.” Acclimating the the MOST important steps installation. Skipping or properly may cause shrinkage, dimensional damage. If the flooring material being installed does not have specific acclimation and conditioning instructions, utilize the following steps to properly acclimate your wood floors:



within “normal living where the wood floor is to be Hardwood Floor Association, gaining nor losing moisture, content (EMC) has been hardwood planks is one of of hardwood floor not performing this step excessive expansion, distortion, or even structural

Step 1: Make sure that the heating and air conditioning units are in operation at least five days before delivery of the flooring, during installation, and after the flooring is installed. If it is not possible for permanent HVAC to be operating before, during, and after installation; a temporary system that mimics normal living conditions may enable installation to proceed.

Step 2: Once the facility has been confirmed to be at the expected living condition, proceed with delivery of flooring material. Check the moisture content of the wood flooring as soon as it is received at the jobsite.



Step 3: Check the moisture content of the subfloor. The moisture content of the sub-floor should coincide with the temperature and relative humidity of the jobsite, based on the temperature, relative humidity and average the moisture content idea of the where the being maintained and expected “in-use” recommended range EMC, which occurs Fahrenheit or 15° - 26° Celsius, and 30% - 50% relative humidity.

Moisture content (%) at various relative humidity values

(°C)	(°F)	20%	25%	30%	35%	40%	45%	50%	55%	60%
4.4	(40)	4.6	5.5	6.3	7.1	7.9	8.7	9.5	10.4	11.3
10.0	(50)	4.6	5.5	6.3	7.1	7.9	8.7	9.5	10.3	11.2
15.6	(60)	4.6	5.4	6.2	7.0	7.8	8.6	9.4	10.2	11.1
21.1	(70)	4.5	5.4	6.2	6.9	7.7	8.5	9.2	10.1	11.0
26.7	(80)	4.4	5.3	6.1	6.8	7.6	8.3	9.1	9.9	10.8
32.2	(90)	4.3	5.1	5.9	6.7	7.4	8.1	8.9	9.7	10.5
37.8	(100)	4.2	5.0	5.8	6.5	7.2	7.9	8.7	9.5	10.3

moisture content chart shown; reading will give you a good conditions in the space are allow you to compare to the conditions. The generally for wood flooring – 6% - 9% when temperature is 60° - 80°

Step 4: Ensure the flooring material is exposed to the “normal” conditions of the environment in which it is being installed. units into small lots and/or the material with spacers circulation on all sides of the subfloor. Acclimate to as it takes. Some species equilibrium moisture content than others. It is never a good idea to base acclimation on time along, but rather on actual moisture content. Check with the manufacturer before beginning this stage, in case they have different acclimation instructions.



To accomplish this, break the flooring open the flooring packages. Cross-stack between each layer to allow air the boards. Start stacking elevated from equilibrium moisture content for as long will take much longer to reach

Step 5: If the flooring material cannot be delivered to an adequate jobsite, pre-acclimate the material in an off-site location set to mimic the expected conditions of the jobsite. Then deliver pre-acclimated material to the jobsite once “normal conditions” can be established. Again, refer to the temperature, relative humidity, and moisture content chart to determine ideal conditions.

Step 6: Finally, make sure the flooring and wood subfloor moisture content is within the acceptable range for the jobsite. The subfloor should be within 4 percent for strip and 2 percent for plank wood flooring. Wood is only acclimated or conditioned once it reaches equilibrium moisture content for the space in which it is expected to perform. Equilibrium moisture content is based on an “unchanging” environment. After a wood floor has been installed, changing conditions within the environment will change the equilibrium moisture content of the wood floor, ultimately resulting in dimensional change.

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