

Bowens Installation Guidelines

STRIP FLOORING ADVICE

GENERAL RECOMMENDATIONS (FOR ALL JOBS)

NO-MATTER WHAT THE SUB-STRATE THESE

RECOMMENDATIONS APPLY:

- Do not install the flooring until all external doors and windows are installed.
- Wherever possible acclimatize the flooring for at least 2/3 weeks depending on the thickness. This cannot be satisfactorily done unless all surfaces of the boards are subject to air within the building. Also, at the time of acclimatization, the environment within dwelling should be indicative to what the boards will experience during the floors service life. The best way to achieve this is to Stack and stick, to create the necessary air flow between rows of boards. Acclimatisation may be a waste of time if the air-conditioners are not installed at the time of intended acclimatisation.
- The sub-strate, whether it be concrete or sheet flooring must be within the regulations for levelness; the floor should be within + or – 10mm over the entire room or + or – 5mm over any 3 metre length.
- Based on sub-strate of either sheet flooring or concrete the flooring should not be laid till after the plaster is installed, but before the fixings are fixed in place.
- Do not secret nail flooring over 85millimetres in width (refer AS1684.4---1999 5.4.1.2), unless strictly to the manufacturers instructions.
- A flooring adhesive should be used and screeded on with a vee trowel. This will ensure 100% of the boards are adhered to the sub-strate. We recommend Bostik Ultraset.
- After installation windows, particularly facing north or west should have protection against direct sunlight, otherwise excessive shrinkage can take place. Skylights and heating ducts can also cause shrinkage.
- Wet trades such as plumbing, plastering, window and brick cleaners can cause an increase in moisture content (of the boards) if care is not taken with their use of water.
- Protection against damage (by other trades) is prudent by using drop sheets.
- Do not leave the house locked up for long periods of time during hot weather, another cause of excessive shrinkage.
- Do not commence the sanding and polishing unless all other trades are finished.
- Leave the final painting of the skirtings until the sanding and polishing is completed.
- Flooring Finishes; there are many types available, like most products, each has pros and cons. The most popular is probably the budget priced solvent based Polyurethane Polyurethane, although the water based Polyurethane is becoming more popular. It is not as glossy as the solvent based, but it does hold the natural colour of the boards longer than the cheaper solvent based alternative. It is about 15% dearer.
- The house should be quarantined (airtight) for 2 weeks from the commencement of the sanding and polishing. This usually will give the floor a week to settle before experiencing any foot traffic.

FLOORING LAID ON A CONVENTIONAL TIMBER SUB-FLOOR

- External drainage and stormwater (unconnected) points can cause wet spots in the sub-floor cavity, that can cause problems with the flooring above.
- Ventilation; the building regulations are quite clear, there should be a ventilator with air capacity of 6000 square mm per lineal metre of wall perimeter, unless there is the ground within the cavity is sealed with an impervious membrane, then the air capacity of the vent can be reduced to 3000 square mm per lineal metre of wall perimeter.
- Also the vents must be positioned below the level of the bearers.
- Sub-floor air-conditioning duct work must be positioned above the ground, not left on the ground.
- The sheet flooring must be dry and the face fully (rough) sanded to achieve a good bond with the adhesive. We recommend Bostik Ultraset.
- If the floor is to be fixed directly to floor joists use a flooring adhesive sausage. If the joist is a softwood a 65mm long nail should be used.

FLOORING BEING LAID OVER A CONCRETE SUB-STRATE

Below are the usual methods of installation:

- 1 On a plywood substrate with 200 UM plastic acting as a waterproof membrane. The plywood should be fixed to concrete with redi-drive pins with at least 28 per 2400x1200 sheet. The thicker the floor board the thicker the plywood sub-strate. We prefer 15mm minimum thickness although 12mm is often used.
- 2 Direct stick to the slab using Bostik Moisture Seal as the waterproof membrane. With this method the slab would need to be level and the boards reasonably straight. Also the boards would not thicker than 14mm.
- 3 Battens fixed to the slab. Once again the cheapest way to go with the waterproof membrane is to use 200 UM plastic. The battens should be dry and a hardwood (not softwood) for nail holding qualities.

POST INSTALLATION CARE

- All furnishings that have direct contact with the floor should have padded protection, eg; chair and table legs.
Sunlight effected windows should have drapes/curtains to avoid the floor boards gapping in that area.
- Cleaning techniques should not involve water based cleaners. Use a relatively dry mop.
- Any spills on the floor should be addressed quickly. If not the floor could grow in moisture content with a corresponding increase in board size, as well as cupping.
- Spills or poor ventilation have been known to cause structural damage to the dwelling.
- Do not leave air-conditioning on for prolonged lengths of time, whether in summer or winter. The boards could readjust to a different environment they originally acclimatized to. Again there could be could be asthetic or damaging consequences.
- Do not house locked up over the summer months.
- Move mats or rugs regularly, to avoid a different colour to boards that are regularly exposed to outside light.
- Do not build up garden beds around windows in slab situations, or block off ventilation in sub-floor situations.