

INSTALLATION AND MAINTENANCE GUIDELINES

Please make sure you read carefully and adhere to the following installation guidelines. If your flooring is not installed correctly and in accordance with these guidelines and those of the National Wood Flooring Association (NWFA), then Tabarka Studio cannot be held responsible for any defects or problems that may arise in the future as a result of improper installation.

1) CUSTOMER / INSTALLER RESPONSIBILITY

Please remember that wood is a natural product deriving from the purist wonders of nature. Therefore there is always a possibility that a good percentage of your product will have a natural variation and/or characteristics including knots, cracks, mineral streaks, and dents etc. The customer/installer is responsible for the final inspection of the product quality and the conditions in which the product shall be installed. Inspection of the wood flooring should be carried out prior to installation. In the event that the customer is not entirely happy with their product, please contact and inform Tabarka Studio immediately. Do not under any circumstances lay a piece of wood if there is any doubt as to grade, dimension, or factory finish.

Warning: Installation constitutes acceptance. When ordering, please bare in mind that 7% –10% should be added to the overall square footage to compensate for any unseen waste or adjustments that may be applicable. Additionally, ordering additional quantities of wood is recommended for future accidents or necessary repairs. Prior to installation, the customer/installer is responsible for carrying out a jobsite inspection to make sure that the subsurface and jobsite environment meet or exceed all recommended industry standards that should be in place when installing your wood floor. When installing your wood floor it is imperative that the subfloor be as clean and dry as possible to ensure moisture is kept to a minimum. It should also be as flat and firm as possible. Under no circumstances will Tabarka Studio be held responsible for job failure or site failure as a consequence of poor jobsite environment or subfloor deficiencies.

2) JOBSITE INSPECTION ON PRE-INSTALLATION PROCEDURES

A proper jobsite inspection is paramount to the longevity and quality of the wood flooring. If the jobsite is not suitable and adequately prepared for installation of your floor, then you should amend these factors prior to laying the flooring. Please read the following procedures and adhere to them. Failure to do so may result in problems further down the line, and would also render your warranty (which would have arrived with your order) as invalid.

EXTERIOR CHECKS: Make sure the foundations of the house are adequate for installation of the wood floor. Make sure rain water carries away from the foundation, and also that there is an appropriate drainage system in place to deal with rainfall, snow, or such like residue. Is there an outdoor swimming pool or natural body of water that is on the level or higher than the foundation? If so, a proper drainage system must be in place. If the home has a raised foundation, check for any exterior vents open and unrestricted which could lead to damaging substances, such as water, entering the property and moisture damaging the floor. Sub Grade Installation is not recommended.

INTERIOR CHECKS: It is important that the building is fully enclosed with all inside and outside doors already in place prior to installation. Similarly any wall coverings and painting (bar final coat on the base moldings) should also be completed before installation procedures begin. Make sure a thorough check is made of the plumbing. All toilets, sinks, baths, showers, refrigerators, freezers, washing machines, dishwashers etc. should be checked for leaks. Make sure all external and internal doors and windows are appropriately sealed. Check for holes and gaps that should not be present. Do the interior walls have any evidence of dampness? This can be checked by either certain smells, or visually, by observing and examining the walls themselves. If unsure, then a professional surveyor or someone with expertise in this area should be consulted. It is vital that all basements and crawl spaces should be well ventilated and as dry as possible. Subfloors should be dry and clean, free of paint, wax, oil, adhesives, curing agents, and other such chemical agents or debris. Subfloors should also be flat and firm and

level to within 3/16" in 10 feet. (Please see section 4 below for a comprehensive guide to subfloor requirements). It is an important factor which requires careful consideration prior to installation of the wood floor. Humidity and temperature are important factors when considering the longevity and maintenance of the wood. It is a highly variable factor and is dependent on what climate the wood floor is being installed. For a detailed guide for ideal humidity levels required for your wood floor installation and thereafter, please see the temperature and humidity chart. Humidity levels can be controlled through the use of air conditioners, heaters, humidifiers, and dehumidifiers, and should be used when appropriate. Before consulting the chart, one should be aware of what exactly it means when referring to RH (relative humidity). A simple definition is as follows: Relative humidity is a percentage of water vapor per area at a specific temperature. Relative humidity can be calculated using various methods and instruments. It is a calculation to find out how many grams of water vapor can be held at a given temperature. Usually, the warmer the air, the higher its capacity for holding water vapor.

DEPENDENCE OF EQUILIBRIUM MOISTURE CONTENT (EMC) OF WOOD ON RELATIVE HUMIDITY (RH AND TEMPERATURE): Moisture levels are an important factor in prolonging the longevity and finish of the wooden floor. The chart is designed to assist you in assessing whether or not you have the correct installation environment for your wooden floor. The chart is very easy to read. Should you be unsure as to the correct humidity levels for your wood, please consult the chart. On the left hand side of the chart is the temperature column, which correlates to the equilibrium moisture content (EMC), and relative humidity (RH) is on the right hand side of the chart. As an example of how to use it, please look at the highlighted sections of the chart (in blue). If you know that the average temperature of your location is 70°F/ 21.1°C and the relative humidity is 55% then, it follows that your wood floor should have a moisture content of approximately 10.1%. At the time of installation, and thereafter, conditions should be within the range expected when the building is in use. The Relativity Humidity (R.H) of the air should be between 45 and 55 R.H. The temperature should be between 18°C and 21°C. These figures also apply once the floor is installed. This climate is coincidentally the most comfortable for people to live or work in.

3) HANDLING, STORAGE, AND ACCLIMATIZATION

Wood is a natural product that should be treated with care. It is a product made from timber that has been put through an advanced drying and balancing system which secures the appropriate moisture level for the market we sell to. It is important to maintain the correct moisture level, so do not unload it in the rain, in the snow, or in particularly abnormal, humid, or wet conditions. If this is unavoidable then try and take precautions such as using a cover/tarpaulin of some description, or alternatively waiting until conditions are appropriate. Flooring should not be delivered until structural work, in particular any cement work, paint work or other "wet" work on the premises has been completed and is dry. Doors and windows should have been installed prior to delivery and installation of the wooden floor. It should be noted that engineered floors do not require as much acclimatization as solid wood. However it still may need some, and it is vitally important that the wood acclimatizes to its surroundings prior to installation. If you do not let it acclimatize adequately, then it could cause serious problems in the future. It is vital that the wood has the correct moisture content. This should be checked with a good quality wood moisture meter. If, upon arrival, your wood does not have the correct moisture content, then an acclimatization process may be required. In order to acclimatize your wood, you should remove all packaging and place the wood in a dry storage facility. Wood should then be block stacked and left to acclimatize until it has obtained its required moisture content. We recommend a minimum of 72 hours acclimatization but acclimatization may take anything from 2 days, to 2 weeks depending on its moisture content on arrival and the relative humidity of where it is being installed. When you have tested the moisture content of the wood and its moisture content is adequate, then it is ready to be installed. Please note that intense heat and extreme temperatures where the wood is stored for a prolonged period of time may affect the overall integrity of the wood floor, the finish notwithstanding, therefore, rendering any wood product warranty expressed or implied null and/or void. Damage caused during storage, installation, handling, or disassembly is not covered by the warranty. Tabarka Studio warrants to the original purchaser its prefinished engineered and/or solid hardwood floors against any manufacturing defects caused by improper milling, grading staining, polyurethane, or oil finish. Structural warranty means the hardwood flooring product will remain free from defects in lamination, assembly, milling, and dimension. Tabarka Studio warrants to the original purchaser its prefinished engineered hardwood floors against delamination [separation between plies] buckling, warping, twisting, and cupping only in normal environmental conditions. Normal environmental conditions mean that heating and ventilation systems should be designed

to maintain interior relative humidity level (in the air) between 40% to 60% RH. Wherever this warranty is applicable, Tabarka Studio's liability is limited to replacing, or repairing, at the option of Tabarka Studio, the defective boards due to manufacturing defects in excess of five percent (5%), industry standard, and material only. Damage due to improper transportation, storage, installation, extreme indoor conditions (extreme heat, dryness or moisture, extreme sunlight) or any other cause are not covered. Exposure to excessive heat, dryness, or moisture may cause damage to the flooring. It is natural, due to the inherent properties of wood, that some minor contraction and expansion might occur. These occurrences and/or visual changes on the hardwood floor will self correct with seasonal climate changes, and the hardwood floor will self correct with seasonal climate changes and/or when maintaining normal environmental conditions.

4) SUBFLOOR REQUIREMENTS

Checking the condition and quality of the subfloor is an important part of the installation process. It is the foundation for the floor, and a good subfloor is the beginning step of ensuring the wood floor remains as beautiful as the expectations dictate for as long as possible. Please do not underestimate the importance of a good quality subfloor, as it is arguably the most important part in ensuring the quality and durability of the finished floor. Therefore, please read carefully the following recommendations in relation to proper subfloor requirements and repairs that may be applicable.

Note: Subfloors should be level to within 3/16" in 10 feet. It is the responsibility of the flooring contractor or installer to check that the site and subfloor conditions are in a satisfactory state for the installation to take place, including all moisture related readings.

RECOMMENDED SUBFLOOR SURFACES: Please note that flooring should be installed over a solid foundation, be it concrete, plywood, marine plywood, or a sufficiently strong existing solid wood floor. Under no circumstances should you lay flooring if there are cavity spaces as this will inevitably lead to problems with your floor at a later point.

CONCRETE SUBFLOORS: When using the glue down installation method, there are two methods you can employ. One method is to glue your floor onto plywood; the other method is to glue your floor directly on to the concrete slab. Important: It is vital that concrete slabs are checked for their moisture content. The difference in moisture level between the subfloor and the wood flooring itself should not exceed 4%.

GENERAL SUBFLOOR GUIDELINES: Regardless of what surface your subfloor is, it is vital that your subfloor is a) clean, b) dry, c) flat, and d) firm. These four conditions are paramount to a good, suitable subfloor. **A CLEAN SUBFLOOR:** Prior to installation make sure the subfloor has been cleaned adequately. Use a broom, mop, vacuum cleaner, or such like devices to remove any dirt, residue, or dust from the subfloor itself. It should be free of oil, paint, wax, sealer, adhesives, curing agents, and other such like debris. A check should also be made for any insect/animal infestations. In the event of such infestations, contact someone with expertise in this area, who will be able to advise how best to remedy the situation. Under no circumstances continue with installation if the subfloor is not free from all that is mentioned above. **A DRY SUBFLOOR:** It is vital that the subfloor be checked for any sign of water or liquid residue of any form. If there appears to be water present, then this should be completely removed before continuing. The source of this residue should also be checked to ensure that once removed it will not come back at a later date. **A FLAT SUBFLOOR:** Make an effort to make sure the subfloor is as flat/level as possible. A sealer can also be used to help level the subfloor. **Note:** Subfloor must be level within 3/16" in 10 feet. **A FIRM SUBFLOOR:** If the subfloor is not firm, then this could result in serious problems occurring with your wood floor in the future. Simple tests such as banging a nail into your subfloor can be done to check the firmness of it. If you find that your subfloor is not firm, which could have to do with moisture levels or presence of water, then further investigations and necessary adjustments may be required.

MOISTURE BARRIERS / INTERMEDIATE LAYERS: For glue down installations, we recommend you use a high quality moisture cure polyurethane barrier product which is applied to the prepared substrate using a notched trowel or spatula prior to administering your adhesive. For detailed laying instructions, please follow the manufacturer's guidelines. It should be noted that moisture barriers are strongly recommended, particularly when installing over concrete and when installing on grade. 2mm thick high quality PE sheets can be use when floating the wood floor.

5) CONSIDERATION AND PLANNING REGARDING EXPANSION AND CONTRACTION

Before installing the wood floor please pay attention to how the wood floor may expand and contract over time. Different times of year will result in oscillating temperatures and consequently lead the floor to naturally expand and contract. Therefore, when installing the floor, it is imperative that you allow enough room for your floor to breathe in this respect. Please remember that any movement/expansion that may occur will be across the width of the boards and not in the length, so when planning the run of the boards bear this in mind. To ensure that the wood can breathe, certain measures can be taken prior to installation. The recommended expansion gap is 12-15mm. Any vertical obstructions, thresholds, or pipes will also need to be accommodated, leaving a minimum of 12Q15mm expansion gap around them.

6) INSTALLING USING A GLUE DOWN SYSTEM

Tabarka does not insist you use one particular brand of adhesive, provided the flooring contractor/installer is knowledgeable and confident in the brand they are using. Always remember to follow the adhesive manufacturer's guidelines when applying their adhesive.

ESTABLISH A STARTING POINT A good starting point would be to provide a proper layout of flooring by distributing short and long lengths of flooring over the area where you are going to install. To ensure proper grade and color mixture, lay the wood floor from different boxes. Do not work out of the same box and then move onto the next one. Try and work from multiple boxes at once. Always try and begin the layout or installation from an outside wall. This is because it is normally the straightest. A chalk line may assist you in this process, in particular if your starting wall is not completely straight or there are any visible obstructions. Once you have established which wall is the best guideline for your starting point, be sure to take expansion gaps into consideration. Use wedges to create 12-15mm expansion gaps at walls, door thresholds, pipes, stairs, etc. Larger spaces require larger expansion gaps (2mm increments for every 1Qmeter of flooring width). When installing throughout several adjoining rooms, provide expansion joints at every door's threshold.

When beginning installation, choose an appropriate wall. Usually this will be the longest wall in the room. Use a guide running along the wall to ensure that the first row of planks are laid straight. If possible, run the lengths of your wood floor in the same direction as incoming sunlight for best visual effect. Remember to install spacers at walls all the way around the room to ensure room for natural expansion between the wall and the room. Lay the adhesive onto the subfloor in accordance with the manufacturer's instructions. Please follow the manufacturer's instructions in relation to correct adhesive set times, correct tools to use when laying adhesive, minimum temperature requirements, and any other applicable installation procedures that may apply when using your adhesive. Never lay more adhesive than you can cover in one session when installing your floor; otherwise, there is a risk the adhesive will dry before you have laid the floor. Lay the first plank with its groves towards the wall (corner) and work towards your right. Apply a continuous layer of adhesive on the grove tops and also at the head joints. Gently hammer onto the tapping block, so it pushes the planks into the adjacent ones. Remove any excess adhesive with a damp cloth. Continue laying the first row until it's complete. This may require you to cut one of the boards to fit the size of the room. Use a tapping block against the tongue side of the board to make sure the boards are secured together. Never, under any circumstances, use a hammer or rubber mallet directly on the wood, as this may lead to damaging the top of your wood floor. To lay the rest of the floor, continue laying the adhesive paying strict attention to the manufacturer's instructions, ensuring that there is maximum contact between the adhesive and the flooring. Once finished, the floor should be left undisturbed, ideally over night, to allow for the glue to properly dry. After this process, any remaining wedges you used can be removed. Finally, look at the floor closely to check that no adhesive has seeped out through the wood and is on the finished surface. In this event, make sure to remove it with a suitable cleaner as quickly as possible.

7) MAINTENANCE AND CLEANING FOR WATER BASE AND WAX FINISHES

To ensure that the wood floor remains as beautiful as you would like for as long as possible, it is important that it is cleaned and maintained properly. Please read the following cleaning recommendations and adhere to them as closely as possible.

MAINTENANCE

- Remember to use doormats as to prevent any unnecessary accumulation of dirt that would be detrimental to the floor.
- Protective pads should be used for any furniture, such as tables, chairs, cupboards, beds, etc. which also may damage or scratch the floor if left unprotected. Certain types of casters on furniture may damage wood flooring. Barrel type casters, wheels, or wide, flat glides are best for protecting wood floors.
- Avoid walking on the wood floor with sharp based shoes, stilettos, or spiked sport shoes, as this will inevitably create displeasing marks on the wood floor.
- Keep animal nails trimmed to minimized finish scratches.
- Do not roll or slide heavy objects directly upon the floor. When moving appliances or heavy furniture, consider laying a solid protective covering on the floor and gently “walk” the item across it. Carpet or cardboard are not adequate to prevent surface compression scratches.
- In the event of erratic weather and subsequent humidity change, humidifiers, dehumidifiers and air conditioners should be used to ensure your floor does not expand or contract any more than naturally expected. Keep the relative humidity in the home between 35% and 55%.
- Please make sure any sinks, baths, fridges, freezers, washing machines, etc. are not damaged and won't lead to leakages onto your wood floor.

CLEANING

- Never clean or wet mop the wood floors with water. Clean any spillages as soon as possible. Under no circumstances leave any water to subside into your wood; otherwise, this may create problems such as cracking and erosion.
- Never use any of the following products (or products of similar nature) on the wood floor: ammonia-based cleaners, acrylic finishes, wax-based products, detergents, bleach, polishes, oil soap, abrasive cleaning soaps, or acidic solutions such as vinegar. Many of these products can pit or etch the finish of the wood floor.
- Sweep and vacuum your wooden floor regularly to prevent an excessive build up of dirt.
- For normal cleaning, use a dry mop or lightly dampened mop. Never under any circumstances use an excessive amount of water.
- For more thorough cleaning, use a specialized floor cleaner (neutral pH) with a maximum pH level of 8.
- In the event of heavy marks which need removing, try to use an appropriate floor cleaner (without ammonia). Stronger stain removers can be used but should only be administered when necessary and with caution; otherwise, there is a risk that you may damage the finish of your floor.
- For everyday cleaning, a soft broom, vacuum cleaner, dry mop is suitable for your wooden floor and use as often as required. To remove stains, and for more thorough cleaning, a mop can be used with a very light solution of water and soap. For tougher stains that cannot be removed with ease, we advise you to use a suitable liquid wax cleaner which should be applied to the floor with a cloth or a flat cleaning mop.
- After awhile, if your floor is beginning to look jaded or not as fresh as you would like, then your floor can be re-conditioned using Tabarka Studio's Hardwax Oil diluted with some water, which can then be administered by hand using a flat brush or pad. Simply dribble finish onto your floor and scrub it with a brush or flat cleaning pad until dry. Finish by stroking the grain of wood. Two coats are required. Wait until your floor is completely dry before applying the second coat. Ideally, leave the first coat overnight to ensure it is dry and then vacuum thoroughly. Please note that the second coat of wax can be applied without sanding, provided the first coat has been properly applied. However, if too much finish was applied then sanding may be required.
- Reconditioning your floor should only be considered after many years of use when you feel the wood floor is looking particularly worn and jaded. It can be machine-sanded and treated to give the floor a fresh new look. This should not be necessary until many years of usage have occurred. Please note it is not recommended that all wood floors should be sanded, in particular sanded to the bare wood. Please contact Tabarka Studio if unsure about reconditioning and sanding. Tabarka Studio uses green certified products and finishes in the manufacturing of Zenati and Edri wood collections. Sustainability in the environment and protecting our Earth's natural resources are a priority for Tabarka Studio.

ZENATI & EDRI OAK WOOD COLLECTION LIMITED WARRANTY

1. Limited Warranty valid for 5 years starting from the date of purchase. The original invoice is proof of date of purchase.
2. The flooring must be installed correctly according to the attached installation guidelines. The warranty covers normal use. The warranty does not cover use in damp and wet spaces, such as conservatories, bathrooms, and kitchens.
3. Floorboards showing visible defects should not be installed. It is the responsibility of the flooring contractor/installer to deselect these boards at the time of installation. Boards with visible defects that are installed in spite of these instructions are excluded from this warranty. Tabarka Studio will not be held liable for loss of flooring contractor/installer labor hours (claims) as if all elements of these guidelines are followed the flooring is in good condition for installation. Installation constitutes acceptance.
4. Finished flooring is subject to normal wear and is not covered by this warranty. If the wood floor is not maintained correctly, the warranty is null and void.
5. Excluded under this warranty are: scratches, heavy impacts, humidity, and damage caused by incorrect use or lack of correct maintenance.
6. If you have a defect which falls under the conditions mentioned in this warranty, you should report this to your dealer in writing within 14 days after detecting the defect. In your letter you should include a copy of the invoice.
7. The warranty provided only relates to the floor boards supplied, consequently it does not include labor costs, the cost of additional material, and any other consequential loss.
8. The 5 year warranty period will continue from original date of purchase and will not be affected by subsequent resolution of any complaint.
9. This warranty shall apply only to the original owner/purchaser of this wood floor. This warranty is not transferable.
10. Where the Zenati & Edri Oak Wood Collection warranty applies, Tabarka Studio will replace the faulty floor boards. In the event the product is no longer available, Tabarka Studio will ensure the replacement with an alternative product of the same quality and cost.

WARRANTY WILL NOT BE APPLICABLE IN CASE OF:

1. The floor has not been installed in accordance with these instructions or by a properly qualified and certified flooring contractor/installer professional.
2. The faults were noticeable prior to the floor being installed.
3. Defects and/or faults that have arisen due to dampness and/or water damage or by any other instance as a result of force majeure.
4. Defects and/or faults having been caused by improper use or negligence and failure to use the product for its intended purpose, as well as having disregarded the instructions and guidelines with respect to installation and maintenance.
5. Visual or structural faults having arisen as a result of changed climate conditions, any variation in color due to the influence of sunlight, and the effects of regular aging and/or wear and tear of the finishing coat.

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