



FLORSOLUTIA & DECOR

MAINTENANCE GUIDE

EXPECTATIONS

AVOIDING PROBLEMS

Please keep this folder for future reference

FLOOR MAINTENANCE GUIDE



· Before putting furniture on hardwood floors, attach adequate floor protection (felt pads) to the feet of all furniture to reduce scratches and dents.

· When moving heavy furniture, place a clean blanket face down, under each leg; slide furniture carefully. **Ideally it is best to lift – carry and place.**



· For solid wooden flooring it is very important to maintain relative air humidity level in the house of 30%-55% throughout the year. Humidification may be needed to prevent excessive shrinkage in floors in winter time when homes are heated and air is dry. Air conditioners act as a de-humidifier and take moisture out of the air and can also be the cause of dry air which can cause shrinkage of wooden flooring it however can be a useful appliance to prevent over expanding in abnormally high humid time. Timber engineered wooden flooring would be a more stable option in regions that have huge humidity swings.



Keep shoes in good repair. If they lose their protective cap, they will damage the surface. Avoid high-heel shoes. Be careful the pressure at the point of a stiletto high heel shoe is tremendous and can indent some hardwood flooring.

· Keep pet nails trimmed, paws clean and free of dirt and grease.

· Exposure to sunlight can slightly change shade of your floors. Rearrange your rugs and furniture periodically to avoid shades on your floors.



Do not leave the sun shining all day on your floors as this will dry out the wood and cause shrinkage gaps, make sure that your windows are up filtered or fit UV filtered curtains or if you are not in the room close the curtains. This direct sunlight can also cause the floor to fade where the sun hits it.

Do not leave your windows and doors closed and have the sun blazing onto your floor as this will create a sauna effect in the room and could cause massive shrinkage gaps and even worse perhaps a floor failure.

· Use area rugs in heavily travelled areas, especially if you have a large family. Place rugs at all entrances, inside and outside, as well as by kitchen sink, stove and dishwasher.

· Remove spills promptly using soft cloth with appropriate cleaning product like Loba Parquet cleaner.



· **Never use wet mop and do not clean hardwood floors with water.** This can dull the finish and permanently damage your floor. Use only proper wood floor cleaner's and use as directed on the bottle. This cleaning should be once a week.



· **Never use wax or oil-based detergents.** They will dull or damage finish, leaving greasy spots and making the floor difficult to clean.



· **Frequently** sweep, dust mop or vacuum floors to prevent dirt and dust from scratching the finish. Use only brush or felt type vacuum head. Be certain the wheels of the vacuum do not damage the finish and that the vacuum brush is in good repair.

· **Frequently** vacuum or beat rugs and mats to remove dirt and grit.

HUMIDITY CONTROL SOLID WOODEN FLOORING

Wood flooring is a natural product that responds to humidity variation by expanding and contracting. These changes may be noticeable. During warm and humid summer wood expands. During dry weather wood contracts. This seasonal movement is a normal characteristic of wood flooring. The best way to reduce this movement and even make it invisible is to install humidity controls and make sure they function before the flooring is installed.



In winter, when homes are heated and the air is dry, wood flooring gives up some moisture and therefore shrinks. When it happens thin gaps can appear between planks. This is normal, and a homeowner should be prepared for this. Once indoor heat goes off in the spring and indoor environment regains moisture, most of these gaps will probably close.

To avoid these separations try to add moisture to the air during dry period. The best way is to install humidifier in the air-conditioning or heating system or moveable humidifier in the room with good air circulation. If humidity does not go lower than 45%, no separations should appear at all. To keep permanent control over humidity in the house, install simple humidity meter (hygrometer), so you can constantly monitor humidity level in your house, you can get these Hygrometers from BAMR in Cape – Town on (021) 683 2100 they will send it overnight and they are not expensive

SOLID WOODEN FLOORING



In warm and humid summers and rainy seasons when indoor humidity can rise up to 90% the opposite occurs. Wood absorbs moisture from the air and therefore expands. If wood flooring is exposed to extensive humidity even for a couple of days it can cup. Cupping means that edges of a board are higher than its centre. It can also occur after water is spilled onto the floor and it is absorbed by the wood. It takes a while for humidity to return back to normal. Remember a normal air conditioner can act as a dehumidifier, so if you get excessive humidity, switch on the aircon..

In extreme cases, if wood expands significantly, boards get under enormous pressure from adjoining boards and close all expansions and cup. To prevent cupping do not allow humidity rise over 60-65%. Keep air conditioner or dehumidifier running during humid summer.

If you see cupping in your flooring, first, identify and eliminate the moisture source. It can be plumbing leak in the basement, the terrain of the lot with rain and runoff not moving away from the house or indoor humidity may need to be controlled.

After the source of moisture is controlled cupping can usually be cured. If cupping is moderate, the floor may improve on its own as it dries out over time. If cupping is excessive, floor may need to be sanded and refinished. Before sanding can take place all expansion joints should be re-cut open and the floor needs to go through a full dry season. If sanded too soon the sander will take more wood off the edges of the boards and less from the centre and then through the natural flattening of the boards one may get the opposite look of cupping when the centre of the board is higher than the edges.

Some slight cupping could be considered as acceptable or normal



BEWARE

GREENHOUSE EFFECT

In newly built or renovated houses before the owners move in it is important to keep good living conditions and the 30 – 60% humidity levels and it is during this time when the house is empty and all windows are closed with the sun blazing with no curtains installed yet that a sauna/greenhouse effect is caused and can cause a major negative reaction to the floors, and will not be the fault of the wooden flooring installer as now you have been informed of this possibility of a floor failure occurring

Things you should not expect from a wood floor

A floor that will not indent. In spite of the term "hardwood", all hardwood flooring will indent under high heel traffic (especially heels in disrepair). The finish that is applied will not prevent the dents. Some timbers are prone to denting more than others depending on the hardness of the species chosen.

Understand that furniture, cabinetry, doors, etc., are fabricated in a factory under ideal conditions and that they contain 1-10 different pieces of wood. A wooden floor is fabricated in the home and is made up of 300 to thousands of individual different pieces. And that each floor is never to be duplicated – each a truly custom floor of its own.

A monochromatic floor. Wood, as a natural product, varies from piece to piece. Remember it is not fabricated – it is milled from a tree and will have grain and colour variations (weather natural wood or stained) consistent with the grade and species of flooring selected.

A floor that will remain tightly together at all time. Natural shrinkage could occur (gaps between the floor boards). This could happen in the dry seasons when the air is dry and the wood shrinks as it loses moisture. Super Engineered floors will generally remain tight with no gaps.

Cupping of solid wide boards, 100mm – 200mm widths is characteristic to a degree. Boards are rectangle in shape and the tree is round, giving the board a natural tendency to be round, depending on the cut of the board. Wide width cupping is not normally seen in normal lighting but noticed in reflective light when looking against the grain. Slight cupping of wide width planks is characteristic and may not be associated with a moisture problem.