

HANDLING & INSTALLATION

BLC takes numerous steps to ensure that the flooring we produce meets our high standards. In order to preserve that quality, several procedures need to be followed between the time your flooring leaves our facility and the time it is installed in your home.

Prior to flooring delivery, the jobsite should be checked to make sure it is ready to receive the flooring. BLC Hardwood Flooring is for interior use only and should never be exposed to excessive moisture conditions. Abuses during shipment or storage such as exposure to excessive moisture conditions or rough handling should be noted and reported immediately. Once delivered, BLC Hardwood Flooring should be allowed to acclimate to the area where it is to be installed. This helps prevent moisture related problems such as gaps between strips, cupping and/or buckling.

According to NOFMA: The Wood Flooring Manufacturers Association (www.nofma.org) and the National Wood Flooring Association (www.nwfa.org), the following items should be done and maintained prior to, during and after delivery to the jobsite and installation of the flooring:

- (1) Surface drainage of the land around the building should be directed away from the structure;
- (2) The building must be “dried-in” with the roof on, all exterior walls completed and all outside windows and doors in place;
- (3) All concrete, masonry, sheetrock, and framing members should be thoroughly dry;
- (4) The basement and/or crawl space must be dry (meaning no presence of high humidity conditions as well as no standing or liquid water) and a ground cover of 6 mil polyethylene film should be in place over 100% of the crawlspace earth;
- (5) The interior environment must be near occupancy levels with the heating or air conditioning system operating at time of flooring delivery and until after installation and occupancy; and
- (6) The subfloor moisture content must be checked to make sure it is within normal ranges for the region.

Once these steps have been completed, your flooring is ready to be installed. BLC hardwood flooring should always be installed either perpendicular or at a 45 degree angle to the floor joists. Failure to do so will result in high ridges in the floor at every joist. Do not use a wall as your starting line because walls are rarely perfectly straight and the flooring therefore will not be straight. Place a straight line on the floor using a carpenter’s chalk line. You may need to face nail and/or glue the boards along the starting line to achieve a straight starting row. In very wide rooms, consider placing the starting row in the center of the room. Use a spline to reverse direction so that you can proceed to walls at either end of the room. This will minimize movement and noise issues that may occur should the flooring absorb moisture and swell after occupancy. It is absolutely necessary to leave a $\frac{3}{4}$ ” expansion space between the hardwood flooring and the perimeter walls of every room. Failure to leave an expansion space can damage walls and other surrounding fixtures such as fireplace hearths and adjacent flooring materials should the wood flooring absorb moisture and swell.

BLC hardwood flooring is made to be mechanically fastened to a wood subfloor using flooring cleats or staples. The subfloor should be at least $\frac{5}{8}$ ” thick ($\frac{3}{4}$ ” is preferred) exterior-use rated plywood or its equivalent. On flooring that is wider than $3\frac{1}{4}$ ”, we recommend that wood flooring glue be used in conjunction with mechanical fasteners to make sure that the flooring is properly attached to the subfloor. The fasteners used should be either a 2” barbed flooring cleat or 2” 15 gauge flooring staples with $\frac{1}{2}$ ” crowns. On $2\frac{1}{4}$ ” and $3\frac{1}{4}$ ” wide flooring, fasteners should be placed along strips at no more than 10” to 12” apart (8” to 10” spacing is preferred). On 4” or wider flooring, fasteners should be spaced along planks approximately 8” apart. There should be a minimum of two flooring fasteners per board on the shortest boards, and fasteners should be spaced 1” to 3” from the ends of every flooring strip or plank. Flooring nails or staples are made to be driven at an angle through the top of the tongue for blind-nailing. However, face-nailing is often required for starting strips as discussed above or along walls where there is not enough room for a flooring nail-gun.

Once your floor is installed, consult our Floor Care page to keep it looking great for life.