



Lasting beauty of your floor can be achieved through proper care and regular maintenance. Failure to follow these guidelines can void your warranty. Visit www.opusfloors.ca to get more maintenance information.







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Important Laminate Care Information & Maintenance
 Please Read Before Purchasing Laminate

Most laminate floors look very similar to authentic hardwood flooring. Laminates are made up of a moisture resistant wear layer, photographed images of actual hardwood boards for the desired look and then bonded to a high-density fibreboard core under pressure. It is designed to float vs securing it to the to the substrate. The main benefit of laminate is that it provides a floor which is much more resistant to scratching and denting for those looking for an alternative to actual hardwood. Listed below is relevant information to be considered before buying laminate flooring. Laminate can be installed over wood or concrete, above or below grade.

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- Viewing a portion of your laminate floor before it is installed is highly recommended. Warranty claims regarding appearance (colour, texture, gloss, etc.) will not be considered after the job has been installed.
 - Denting: Laminates can and will chip and dent. It is important to remember that laminates cannot be refinished, however finishing putty can be used to repair minor scratches and dents. In severe cases, boards can be replaced in most available styles. Some styles cannot be partially replaced to look as good as the initial installation. Some laminate boards cannot be reused after being taken apart, so having extra material on hand would be required for this procedure. Order enough extra material to have on hand for this scenario.
 - Seams: The nature of a laminate product lends itself to creating an appearance of very obvious seams, especially in naturally lit areas and/or areas with overhead pot lighting. Dark laminates have seams that appear white while lighter floors have noticeable dark lines at seams.







- Humidity and Gapping: Laminate floors are a wood by-product and carry many of the same characteristics of wood, including its weaknesses. In particular, similar contraction and expansion properties can occur relating to humidity, including heat and cold variations in the installed area.
- Microchipping: These are very small chips that can occur in the joints of laminate flooring and are caused by some of these examples: Excessive friction or sharp blows created by a dropped or fallen object, a stone lodged in the tread of footwear or a pet with long nails, etc. This is characteristic can occur in virtually all laminate floors.
- Underlayment: Always use an underlayment under your laminate flooring. The least expensive types provide a minimum separation between the sub floor and laminate to reduce problems relating to friction and minor sound proofing. A higher quality underlayment is a better choice to help reduce sound transfer and other issues relating to friction and minor subfloor irregularities. It can also act as a moisture barrier. Moisture in the soil beneath concrete in an on or below grade installation canmigrate to the surface of the concrete. This can affect the properties and performance of laminate flooring. For a successful installation in this situation, a moisture barrier is required.
- Radiant Heat: Take extra care when installing laminate flooring over radiant heating.
- Level Floor: The laminate floor you install can only be as level/stable and reliable as the floor you have beneath it. Preparing your existing floor is critical. Some existing floors, barring a complete reconstruction, will never be perfect. The maximum deflection tolerance is 3/16 of an inch over a span of 10 feet and 1/8 of an inch over a span of 6 feet. Fill in low areas with a recommended sub floor patch or levelling compound to a maximum thickness of 1/8 of an inch. Ask your sales person if you are unsure about the levelness or







deflection of the floor you are installing your laminate over.

- Checking for Unevenness: Hammer a nail into the centre of the floor. Tie a string to the nail and push the knot against the floor. Pull the string tight to the farthest corner of the room and examine the floor at eye level for any gaps between the string and floor. Move the string around the perimeter of the room noting any gaps larger than 1/8 of an inch. Sand down or fill with appropriate filler as required.
- Acclimatization: Your laminate flooring MUST be allowed to acclimate to the environment of the installation area. Leave the closed packages in a horizontal position in the room for 48 hours prior to installation. The preferable temperature should be approximately 17-23 degrees Celsius with a relative humidity of 35-50 percent. Humidity in the installed area should never be allowed to drop below 30 percent, as this may cause gapping.
- **Pets:** Damage resulting from pets with their claws is not covered under warranty. Discuss your lifestyle and the use of the areas being considered for flooring with your sales person.
- Laminate locking systems: These are usually referred to as "Click" locking systems that do not require adhesive at the joints to install. These locking systems however can, in certain tight-fitting conditions, require an adhesive to complete the installation. Over time, some locking systems may begin to gap and separate. Laminates with locking systems will separate on seams at pivot points or when significant force is applied.
- Moisture: Floors or concrete being covered must be carefully checked for moisture problems. Any moisture issues need to be solved before installation. New concrete is required to cure for at least sixty days before installation. Laminate flooring is not suitable for damp rooms such as bathrooms, saunas, rooms with damp concrete, rooms with floor drains or rooms that could potentially flood.





• For installation on concrete floors or any floors over a crawl space a vapour barrier MUST be laid down in the space first.

Use 4 mil poly. Run the poly two inches up walls and overlap seams 18 inches. Tape seams.



Preventive Maintenance

Laminate floors, like other fine furnishings in your home, require proper care to keep them looking their best. Please follow these easy cleaning and maintenance instructions. The surface layer of laminate flooring is hard and compact, so dirt and dust do not adhere to it easily. The following simple steps are usually all it takes to keep your floor clean.

- For general cleaning, use a dust mop, vacuum with the hard-floor attachment of your vacuum cleaner or wipe occasionally with a damp cotton or cloth mop. Ensure that all spills are mopped up and dried promptly.
- For heavier cleaning, use a spray cleaner made specifically for laminate or use household ("non-sudsing") ammonia and water (1/2 cup ammonia to 1 gallon distilled water) in a spray bottle. If an accident occurs and a stain remains, you can remove the worst stains with acetone or denatured alcohol on a soft cloth without bleaching or damaging the floor. In a pinch, nail polish remover containing acetone is a handy substitute. Do not use soap or detergent-based cleaners, wax-based products or any type of polish on laminate floors, as they leave a dull, filmy residue. Before starting this procedure, always test in a discreet area first.
- There is never a need to wax or refinish your laminate floor. Never lacquer, sand or refinish your laminate floor.
- Distilled water will minimize 'hazing' that can occur due to the minerals found in tap water.
- Avoid walking on your floor with sports shoes with cleats and high heels. A 125-pound woman walking in high heels has an impact of 2,000 pounds per square inch. An exposed







heel nail can exert up to 8,000 pounds per square inch. This impact can dent any floor surface.



Protect the Floor

- To protect your laminate floor from surface scratches, place walk-off mats inside any exterior doorway to collect small bits of gravel or dirt particles that may track in on shoes.
- Use felt floor protectors (ask your salesperson) on the legs of chairs, sofas, TV stands, tables and other easily movable furniture. Do not use Teflon protectors on laminates; they can mar the surface through friction.
- Replace plastic casters on chairs with rubber wheels.
- Lift rather than slide heavy objects across the floor.
- Regularly trim your pets' nails to minimize scratching.

For specific cleaning instructions and the removal of spots and spills please consult the recommended cleaning guide specified by the manufacturer of your laminate.

Common Stains and Removal

- Chocolate, grease, juice, cordials, wine: Lukewarm water and a non-abrasive cleaner (i.e. ammonia and water) or a laminate spray cleaner.
- Tar, markers, crayon, lipstick, oil, shoe polish, ink, nail polish or cigarette burns: Acetone/nail polish remover or denatured alcohol. Note: Do not use acetone on floor mouldings.
- Candle wax, chewing gum: Let harden and scrape carefully with a blunt plastic scraper.

