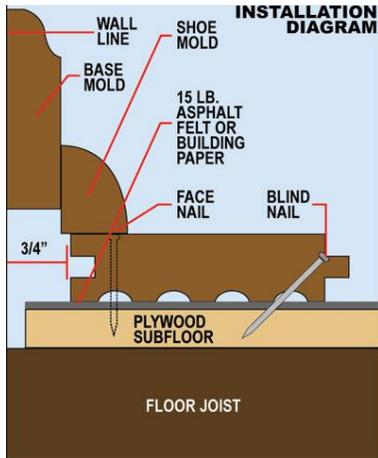


NAIL DOWN INSTRUCTIONS



This type of method is used primarily when installing a solid wood floor. Since solid wood floors are usually thicker, they need to be nailed in order to stay in place properly. Solid wood flooring has a tendency to expand and contract more than engineered flooring. With that in mind, using a glue down method would prove to be a huge mistake with a solid floor. While most solid wood floors are 3/4" thick, this product comes 5/16" thick. Since the product is much thinner than a conventional solid wood floor, you experience less expansion and contraction. This product can be stapled or glued down.

Nowadays, most consumers are getting away from the solid wood flooring in favor of the engineered products because of their superior stability. There are some situations however, where the solid wood flooring might be beneficial. One such application might be if you have existing solid wood floors in certain areas of your home, and you want to extend that flooring into other areas. As we mentioned previously, if you would like to learn more about solid wood floors versus engineered, read our article titled Solid or Engineered Flooring, which is right for me.

PLEASE NOTE: Nail down installations are not generally recommended as a Do-It-Yourself project. This type of installation requires certain professional tools and experience

STAPLE DOWN INSTALLATIONS

This installation method has become more popular since engineered wood flooring has grown in popularity. This installation method is mainly used with engineered plank or strip wood floors over a plywood or wood sub-floor. Certain wood floors require specific types of staple sizes. It is recommended that you find out what type of staples are required for the series of flooring you have selected. The staple down method has been proven to be a good choice for certain product lines.



PLEASE NOTE: Staple down installations would be recommended as a Do-It-Yourself project for someone with a moderate amount of skill using power tools. In most cases, a special stapler is required which can sometimes be rented.



GLUE DOWN INSTALLATIONS

This installation method is most common when installing an engineered strip or plank wood floor over a concrete sub-floor. If done properly, a glue down installation is a very stable one. A lot of people with plywood sub-floors have also learned that a glue down installation can also be beneficial. The reason being is that it can be quieter than a staple down

install with less creaking when the floors expands and contracts.

One major drawback to the glue down installation can be the evenness of the sub-floor, or correct sub-floor preparation. If you install an engineered wood floor using the glue down installation method, and your sub-floor is not flat, you are asking for some serious future problems. One of those problems will be something known as "popping". This is where the bond of the glue breaks loose in a low spot of the floor, and that section is no longer attached to the sub-floor. Another problem can be improper bonding. This is usually caused when the sub-floor was not cleaned properly and the glue you are spreading on the floor is actually being spread over the dust and/or dirt. This can also cause the bond to be broken. Yet another problem with this installation method is the use of a non-approved floating or flashing compound. I know I probably just lost you so let me explain. If your sub-floor is not even, you will need to use a cement type compound to flash or float that area in order to make it flat in preparation for the wood floor installation. After you install a wood floor using the manufacturers' recommended adhesive, that adhesive has a tendency to shrink and pull the wood floor tighter down to the sub-floor. If the correct flashing or floating compound is not used, when the adhesive shrinks, it can literally rip the compound right off the floor, leaving you with a section or sections that is not bounded.

PLEASE NOTE: Glue down installations are recommended for someone that has some experience working with the preparation methods described above. If you have a sub-floor that is flat, or only requires minor preparation, the glue down installation is not that difficult.

FREE-FLOAT INSTALLATIONS

This installation method has grown tremendously in popularity over the last few years. It has become known as one of the most stable and forgiving installation methods available. The reason this installation method is so stable, is because it is not attached to the sub-floor whatsoever.

The free-float installation method is most common with products known as engineered longstrip wood floors. This product type is somewhat of a panel system. Most products in this category come in boards approximately 8" by 96", and may vary in size depending on the manufacturer. Here's what makes this product, and the way it's installed so unique. These products are installed by first laying down an underlayment, usually foam or a plastic and foam combination, and then the wood flooring is laid on top of that underlayment, a bead of water based glue is applied to the tongue and groove per the manufacturers' instructions, the boards are tapped together using a tapping block, and the excess glue is wiped off with a damp cloth. That's it!

Why is this type of installation more stable? Simple. With the other installation methods we've discussed, each plank or strip is installed individually. When the floor expands and contracts, which it most definitely will, the size of the gaps between those planks or strips tends to get larger and then tighter. This can be a major issue in areas where the climate changes dramatically from season to

season. With the free-float installation, the boards are glued together, not down, so when the floor expands and contracts, it does so as one big floor as opposed to individual units. Additionally, since these boards are glued together, there are no gaps whatsoever between the boards. Yet another stability advantage is the fact that these boards are not attached to the sub-floor. You will not experience any of the popping or creaking you might with one of the other methods. The foam underlayment also helps absorb some of the minor imperfections in the sub-floor, so the exact evenness of the sub-floor is not as crucial with this type of installation. We would like to point out that while the free-float method does require slightly less effort in the way of sub-floor preparation, each manufacturer has their own guidelines as to the sub-floor requirement that you must follow in order for the warranty to be valid.

PLEASE NOTE: The free-float installation method gets high marks as a very do-it-yourself friendly install type. Someone with little or no experience can easily tackle an installation using this method. If you are looking to save on the installation cost and install a wood floor yourself, we would suggest this as a first choice over other install methods.