Installation Guidelines

Royal Bamboo 14mm is a solid strand woven bamboo floor and installation of this product roughly follows the installation practice for floating floors. However, due to its solid bamboo construction, it is not as dimensionally stable as engineered or multi-layer flooring products (such as Royal Hydro Bamboo). Solid bamboo flooring is a wonderful product, but it is more reactive to changes in humidity, generally in the width, less so in the length. Therefore, it is important to keep water away from the floor and reduce humidity during times of significant rain. In dry environments, such as during Winter with heating systems, it is best to introduce some humidity into the environment to prevent shrinkage, such as with indoor plants, water-features, fishbowls or humidifiers.

Despite bamboo being more reactive to moisture changes, Royal Bamboo 14mm has been installed in Australian homes for over a decade and has undergone extensive product refinements and improvements, making it one of the most stable solid 14mm strand woven bamboo floors available. However, it is best to pay close attention to this guide during installation to ensure the longevity and warranty of the floor.

If you require a bamboo floor for an environment that has high temperature or humidity fluctuations, or is regularly exposed to moisture, we recommend you choose our Royal Hydro Bamboo, which is the most water-resistant and stable bamboo flooring available

Expansion Gaps

Adequate perimeter gaps and proper compartmentalisation of the floor plan is necessary. This involves the provision of control joints at doorways to break up the floor plan into separate floors, and by doing so reduce the overall expansion or contraction of the floor.

Expansion gap of minimum 12mm is required in lower relative humidity areas e.g. Melbourne or Hobart. A minimum 14mm gap is required in areas of higher relative humidity like Northern New South Wales or Queensland. Royal Bamboo 14mm may grow or contract approximately 2mm per Lineal Metre in the width, so make sure you leave enough gap to allow for expansion or contraction. The wider the floor, the bigger the gap that may be required. As such, 10 - 12mm skirting boards are not suitable, as they do not provide adequate cover for the perimeter gap. 18mm thick skirting boards are recommended, as they allow for up to a 14mm expansion gap and 4mm additional coverage incase of shrinkage.

Large multi room installations must be compartmentalised i.e. separated at doorways. This gap is then covered with a cover trim. Consult your retailer or contractor if you are unsure about the required locations. Additionally, ensure that the compartments are no larger than 40sqm in size i.e. no unseparated areas exceeding 40 square metres.These expansion gaps must also be left around any other fixtures e.g. pipes, under doors and at doorsteps.

Laying Direction

Always lay the product down the length of the room to minimise the span in width. Always ensure that the floor does not exceed 8LM in width before an expansion joint is provided

Installer Expectations

The installer assumes all responsibility for final inspection of product quality. The inspection of the entire floor should be done prior to installation and it is expected the colour, finish and quality is inspected before installation. Use reasonable selectivity and hold out or cut off pieces with glaring defects. If the flooring is not acceptable, contact your dealer immediately.

Before commencing any installation, ensure the environment of the job site and the condition and type of the subfloor are acceptable. Royal Floors does not assume any responsibility for job failures resulting from or associated with incorrect installation or maintenance.

Colour Variation

Bamboo flooring is a natural product that displays variations in grain and colour, and the colour of the floor does change over time with exposure to light. These variations are to be expected and we do not recommend colour matching of different batches or products of bamboo flooring. Should an individual piece be doubtful as to grade, manufacture or factory finish, the installer should not use the piece.

Regulated Moisture Environment

Please note the flooring must be installed in a regulated and liveable environment to prevent possible damage not covered by warranty i.e. it should not be installed more than two weeks prior to occupation of the home. The floor is designed to perform in an environmentally controlled environment.

Movement

As a floating floor that will move naturally with expansion and contraction, some sound may be present i.e. joint crackling or creaking. This is expected of a floating floor made from bamboo flooring and is not a Major Fault. If excessive noise is present, this is often a sign of an uneven substrate i.e. more than 2mm over 1m.

Repairs and Touch Ups

As a natural product, the use of stain, filler or putty stick for the correction of defects should be accepted as normal procedure.

Installation Site and Storage Instructions

Keep in mind the following when assessing an installation site for bamboo flooring:

Suitable Area

This flooring can be installed at ground level, above it, or below it, in non-wet areas but should not be installed in bathrooms or other wet areas. Special care must be taken with removing any moisture immediately when installing it in the kitchen. Moisture damage is not covered by warranty.

Installed Last

Make sure that all work involving water or moisture is completed before installing the flooring. The heating and air systems must also be fully operational, maintaining a comfortable room temperature. The flooring should be the last thing to be installed, and should not be delivered until the building has been closed in and all other materials, such as cement work, plastering, and painting are completely dry. The concrete and plaster should also be cured and at least 60 days old. Check the basement and underfloor crawl space to ensure that they are dry and well-ventilated to prevent moisture damage.

Handle and Store with Care

Handle the flooring with care, and do not stand on the ends of boxes to avoid damage to the locking systems. Store the flooring in a dry place, but not directly on concrete or near outside walls. Place the cartons in the installation area.

Do not store directly on concrete or near outside walls. Cartons should be placed in the area of installation.

Maintaining Humidity Levels

Extremes in humidity levels in the home must be prevented all year long. Bamboo is a living product which changes with humidity variations. During summer, where the humidity level is at the highest point, the bamboo floor absorbs the humidity and naturally expands, and these variations may need to be dealt with adequate dehumidification.

In winter, when the heating system is on, the humidity level can become too low, which is more common in inland and southern Australia. To prevent irreversible cupping of the boards, moisture should be introduced into the indoor environment through plants, water features, humidifiers, etc. Failure to adopt such measures is not covered by the warranty.

Subfloor Requirements

Subfloor requirements as per standard floating flooring installations, that broadly meet 3 criteria:

- Flat
  Subfloor deviation no more than 4mm over 2 lineal metres and 1mm over 1 lineal metre, as measured by a straight edge. Uneven floors may lead to movement and noise, and potential damage to the joints in the floor.
- Dry
  The subfloor of concrete should not exceed 75% RH when tested in accordance with AS1884-2012, the subfloor of wood must not exceed 12%. Additionally, the subfloor should be free of mould.
- Stable
  The floor needs to be firm and not not display any movement (which may be the case with movement in older timber floors, and squeaking or creaking may indicate this).

Underfloor Heating

Do not install bamboo flooring over subfloor heating or underfloor heating. Exposure to heat may reduce plank moisture and result in gapping.

Installation Instructions

Pre-Installation & Planning

- Inspect all planks in sufficient light before and during installation. Planks with visible defects must never be used. Once installed, the planks are considered accepted by the installer and the end customer
- Always lay the product down the length of the room to minimise the total width. Keep the run in the width side of the board as short as possible.
- **Make sure the panels are mixed when installing, so you have sufficient pattern variations.**
- Check that the doors can still open and close after the floor and underlay have been installed, with a minimum gap of 1 cm, to allow for natural expansion and contraction.

Installation

- First lay the underlay across the breadth of the room and then gradually as you lay the planks, or as per the instructions by the manufacturer. Make sure to tape the joins and / or put down a moisture barrier to prevent subfloor moisture from reaching your floor.
- Begin the first row with a whole plank. Saw off both the long and short tongue from the first plank.
- Put the plank with sawn sides against the walls. Put spaces of at least 12mm against the wall but no thicker than the size of your skirting / scotia profile (this could be offcuts of flooring). Generally, between 12 – 14mm expansion gap is recommended).
- Slide the next plank into the first plank and push downwards and forwards. It should automatically fall into place. Use a tapping block and push the board in tightly.
- You will need a saw to cut the planks, such as a jigsaw, crosscut saw or circular hand saw. Ensure that the end joints of the planks in two successive rows are never in line, and they are staggered by at least 15cm.
- Click lock the first plank of the second row into the previous row. Click the short side of the panel into the previous plank and tap them together with a tapping block.
- There must be an expansion gap between the last row and the wall. Where it's challenging to install, you can use a pull bar and tap it with a mallet.
- If you encounter any obstacles e.g. pipes, make sure to cut around them and leave expansion gaps.
- Remove all spacers.
- Install the skirting board or the scotia. Never attach this to the floor, it should be attached to the wall (generally with a nail gun and / or adhesive). Ensure the skirting / scotia covers the flooring expansion gap by at least 4mm to facilitate contraction of the floor in lower humidity environments.