



Building Australia for over 100 years

# PRE-FINISHED FLOORING

## INSTALLATION INSTRUCTIONS

### SITE CONDITIONS

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It is the responsibility of the installer and the owner to ensure that the job site conditions, and the sub-floor are environmentally and structurally acceptable before installation commences.

Big River does not accept responsibility for any issues arising from failures caused by the sub-floor or site conditions being outside the relevant Australian Standards.

Optimum installation conditions, having the room temperature range between 15 – 30 degrees, relative humidity between 30 – 70%. The flooring should be installed under the “in-situ” conditions in which it is to be used. This should include heating and/or air-conditioning. Do not install and finish the floor if the ambient conditions are extreme; always wait for suitable conditions.

It is the responsibility of the installer to ensure that the work site is safe. If there are any safety concerns, the installer should cease work immediately and not continue the installation until the work site is completely safe.

The timber flooring installation should always be the last service on to the site. If this is not possible, foot traffic on the finished product should be limited to a minimum.

Drainage should always be directed away from the building.

Timber flooring should only be delivered if the work site is enclosed, dry and in a lockable condition.

**NOTE:** Commencement of installation is considered to be acceptance by the installer of the job site conditions. If the site is not acceptable, installation should not commence.

### SUB-FLOOR PREPERATION

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Check that the sub-floor is level and smooth. Place a 3 metre straight along the surface of the sub-floor; check that no depressions deeper than 3mm are evident below the straight edge.

If the sub-floor levels exceed 3mm the sub-floor must be levelled either by grinding and/or filling on concrete floors.

Grind the concrete sub-floor using a machine suitable for the size of the project. Fill indentations with a suitable levelling agent from a reputable manufacturer in accordance with the manufacturer’s recommendations

In the case of a timber sub-floor, sand and/or lay an appropriate hard underlay product over the existing floor.

**NOTE:** Big River will not accept claims resulting from inadequate sub-floor preparation.

### SUB-FLOOR MOISTURE CONTENT

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The moisture content of the concrete sub-floor should not exceed the maximum of 70% relative humidity using a hygrometer or 5.5% with an electrical resistance metre.

The moisture content of a timber floor sub-floor should not exceed 70% relative humidity using a hygrometer or 5.5% with an electrical resistance meter.

If the moisture content exceeds these figures a suitable physical or chemical moisture / vapour barrier system from a reputable manufacturer must be used. Follow the manufacturer’s instructions at all times.

## SUB-FLOOR VENTILATION

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Where the sub-floor is fully enclosed by brickwork or concrete it must be constructed so that it provides adequate cross-flow ventilation. If the sub-floor spaces are exposed to the ground (e.g., soil) ventilation shall be in accordance with the building authority's requirements. Generally, a minimum ground clearance of 400mm at the base of the bearers should be provided, with sufficient drainage to prevent water build-up.

An impervious membrane may be required if the ground below the flooring is regularly subject to damp conditions.

## PRE-INSTALLATION

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Ideally, before installation begins, the building where the floor is being laid should be in the final stages of completion, with all trades having left the site.

If required, remove skirting boards, quarter round or doorway thresholds. These items can be re-fitted after installation is complete. Doorway architrave should be undercut to allow the Oak flooring to fit neatly. This is best done using an electric under-cut saw. If using a hand saw, a piece of underlay and flooring placed against the architrave can be used a height guide.

### FLOATING FLOORS

When installing Big River Pre-Finished flooring as a floating floor, use an underlay recommended by Big River. Ensure all underlay meets the requirements set out in the Building Code of Australia with regard to sound transmission. Suitable products are available from Big River or your nearest Big River distributor.

Un-roll the underlay so that the ends butt neatly against the walls. Seams between lengths should also butt together with no overlaps. To prevent overlaps, tape the ends and seams of the underlay.

### DIRECT GLUE APPLICATIONS

Where boards are glued directly to the sub-floor, the adhesive should be a durable moisture-cured polyurethane or MS, selected for the product and site conditions. It should be sufficient to hold the boards in place ensure rigidity and be able to transmit the required load.

The adhesive should be compatible with the substrate and flooring, be non-staining and resistant to aging, oxidation and Ultraviolet light.

Use adhesive in accordance with the manufacturer's instructions, allowing for the appropriate field and perimeter expansion.

Follow sub-floor preparation instructions above. Apply adhesive to sub-floor using a 4mm V-notch with a minimum 80% adhesive coverage to the board. polyurethane adhesive using

a trowel as specified by the adhesive manufacturer. Adhesive should be applied without bubbles or lumps under finished surfaces or edges. Clean excess adhesive progressively. Remove all excess adhesive on completion. Apply adhesive as per the adhesive manufacturer's guidelines.

Follow fixing and installation procedure as set out below.

## GENERAL INSTALLATION

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The following general information is important part of the Big River Pre-Finished Flooring installation process.

NOTE: installation must be carried out according to the Big River Pre-Finished Flooring installation instructions; failure to do so can void the warranty.

The final grading process is to be carried out in conjunction with the owner of the floor.

## GRADING AND COLOUR VARIATION

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It is important that the customer is fully aware of the natural colour variations between floorboards of the same species. Packs of flooring should be opened prior to installation and the customer should be shown the colour variation that can be expected in the floor. Where practical any boards that the customer is concerned about should be used in areas that are not main thoroughfares (in cupboards etc.).

If the installer or customer is not happy with any boards that have been included in the packs, contact Big River to arrange for an inspection or for replacement of the material if you consider it out of specification.

NOTE: Material will not be replaced because of natural colour variations. Big River will not accept any responsibility for colour variations in material that has been installed.

## SETTING OUT THE FLOOR

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Accurately setting out the floor prior to laying the material can prevent problems during installation. It is critical to establish a primary working line for the project; this is usually through the longest continuous area of the floor. This then becomes the reference point for the project.

NOTE: Initial alignment of the floor is critical. A misaligned starting row can cause side and end gaps to appear in the proceeding rows of flooring.

To achieve the best "look" for the floor it is important to "rack out" the flooring to achieve a random appearance. Start the floor by using either the random planks supplied or by cutting the boards to a pre-determined length. Joints between boards should be located randomly. Allow at least 400mm between adjacent end joints. This will avoid "clustered" joints. To avoid repeated patterns, randomly cut starting boards to different lengths.



## PRE-INSTALLATION INSPECTION

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Inspect all material before installation. Any material considered not to be of the correct quality must not be laid. If there is any doubt that the quality is to the required standard, contact the supplier of the material for further information. No claims will be allowed for visible defects in material that has been laid.

**NOTE:** Care should be taken at this stage to ensure that the colour and grain variations between Big River Oak boards are randomly mixed throughout the finished floor. This can be achieved by working from several different packs of flooring. Using boards of differing lengths helps the boards blend in.

## ALLOWING FOR FLOOR EXPANSION

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To start the first row, place 15mm thick spacers between the boards and the wall, approximately 600mm apart. A gap between the floorboards and the walls allows for slight movement of the building or by seasonal changes in relative humidity. The gap between the floorboards and the wall should be covered by either the skirting boards or a suitable cover strip.

Floating Floor - intermediate expansion should be allowed be allowed in floors that are over 8 metres in length and 6 metres in width (SITE SPECIFIC). Rooms should be compartmentalised.

Direct Stuck – intermediate expansion should be allowed in floors that are over 10 metres in length and 8 metres in width (SITE SPECIFIC) and where the hallway meets other room in length intermediate expansion joint.

## GLUING THE TONGUE AND GROOVE JOINT

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Always apply glue to the top of the groove on both the long edge and the end groove. Wipe off all excess glue immediately using a damp cloth; it can be very difficult to remove glued glue from the finished floor. Always use a tapping block on the tongue of the board to lightly tap the boards together. Tapping too hard or using a hammer can damage the tongue and increase the chance of damage to the floorboard.

**NOTE:** it is not necessary to glue the T&G in Direct Stuck Applications

## INSTALLING FIRST ROW OF BOARDS

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Lay the first row of boards with the groove facing the wall with the glue already applied to the groove of the boards of both the edges and ends (for floating floors). Using a tapping block and hammer, tap the boards together firmly. At the end of the first row use an installation bar to tap the last board into place. Cut the last board in the row so there is a 15mm expansion gap on the end of the row.

To ensure a random pattern of boards, start the second row with a board at least 400mm shorter / longer than the first board in the row. Again, using the tapping block and hammer, firmly tap the adjacent boards together until no gap is visible.

Continue installing the floor repeating the process until the last row is ready for installation.

## INSTALLING THE FINAL ROW

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The final row of boards, in most installation, will need to be ripped lengthwise to fit. The cut must allow for the expansion clearance or gap between the wall and the flooring; you may also need to compensate for uneven walls.

Allow a minimum of 12 hours for the adhesive to cure before allowing foot traffic on the floor.

To ensure a random pattern of boards, start the second row with a board at least 400mm shorter / longer than the first board in the row. Again, using the tapping block and hammer, firmly tap the adjacent boards together until no gap is visible.

Continue installing the floor repeating the process until the last row is ready for installation.

## FLOOR PROTECTION

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When applying floor protection tape it should not come in contact with the coating on the floor. Do not use a floor protection product that has adhesive, if it makes contact with the flooring coating, it will become null and void of all warranties. Use traditional timber flooring protection like Dunlop Floorshield, Ram Board etc. to ensure the product will not scratch or have an adverse effect on the floor coating.



## CARE AND MAINTENANCE

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Big River uses and recommends Loba coating systems for the care of Big River flooring products. The Big River flooring product range is coated in the factory using UV coating systems; to ensure that your floor is kept in good condition regular maintenance programs should be followed. Below basic maintenance plan considered the minimum requirements for timber floor care; detailed information is available in the Big River product manual that is available for down-load on our website under the down-load section of the Decorative Products section. The Big River website is [www.bigrivergroup.com.au](http://www.bigrivergroup.com.au)

### SWEEPING

In retail and domestic environments, it is recommended that sweeping be carried out daily, ideally in the morning, as required to reduce the presence of potentially damaging grit before the day's trading. The combination of grit and foot traffic is similar to sanding the surface.

### MOPPING

Should be carried out as required (normally weekly) thoroughly wringing out the mop beforehand and using as little water on the floor as possible, with the recommended dilution of LobaCare Cleaner.

Small spills should be wiped up immediately, and LobaCare CleanFix can be used for waterless localised cleaning when required.

### REJUVENATING

Heavy foot traffic always creates a challenge for polished timber floors. Therefore, it is important to plan for it in advance. LobaCare ParkettCare gloss/matt provides a "sacrificial" wear layer that will take the wear and tear of daily traffic, while the primary coating remains intact. This allows the floor to retain its decorative value for much longer, while reducing maintenance requirements. It also refreshes the floor's polished appearance. LobaCare ParkettCare is odourless, easy to apply with a Loba Wischwiesel applicator, and the floor is ready to walk on in less than 2 hours.

**Big River**

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