

LAMINATE

GENERAL INSTALLATION INSTRUCTIONS FOR DROP LOCK FLOORING

ACCLIMATION

Acclimation is a required procedure prior to the installation of laminate flooring. Store the UNOPENED BOXES in the room where the floor is to be installed for at least 48 hours prior to installation. Always store the boxes on a flat and level surface; never store the boxes on their sides. Heating and air conditioning should be operational and set between 65 °F – 85 °F (18.3 °C – 29.4 °C) and relative humidity in the room should be 35% – 65%.

TOOLS AND MATERIALS REQUIRED

- Safety glasses and dust mask
- Measuring tape and square
- Table type power saw with dust collector, circular saw with (minimum 60 tooth) carbide-tipped blade (thin kerf) or a power jigsaw or handsaw
- Handsaw or door jamb saw for door jambs
- Spacer blocks of plastic or wood 3/8" (9.5 mm) thick
- Pull bar, hammer and tapping block
- If not already attached to the plank, you will need an underlay material with a thickness of max. 1/8" (3.2 mm)
- For installations over concrete or cement-type substrates, a vapor barrier is required (see "Concrete subfloor" below)
- Embossing leveler/floor patch (if necessary)
- **NOTE TO INSTALLERS: When using knee pads, insure that the cap is a soft material. Never use hard cap knee pads as these may scratch the flooring.**

SUITABLE SUBSTRATES

Beaulieu® laminate flooring can be installed on most existing floors, wooden, PVC and concrete floors. All existing flooring should be well adhered to the substrate. Beaulieu laminate flooring cannot be installed over any existing flooring that has an attached cushion or is a floating floor. All carpeting and padding as well as adhesives from prior installation must be removed from the surface of the subfloor. Make sure that the surface is clean, dry, and flat within 3/16" per 10 foot radius (4.7 mm per 3 m). Supporting floors must be rigid as too much deflection can result in a failed installation.

WOODEN SUBSTRATES

Wooden and wood-based materials (plywood, OSB, particle board) must be dry, with a moisture reading no greater than 14% (this should be checked with a moisture meter). All wooden subfloors must be 3/4" (19 mm) thick. Ensure that the boards of the subfloor are properly fastened to the supporting beams and that you do not have any squeaking or depressed areas. Patch if needed and fill depressed areas with floor leveling compound. Raised areas must be sanded down. The subfloor must be smooth, flat, structurally sound and free of deflection.

CONCRETE SUBSTRATES

All types of concrete floors, light weight concrete floors or ceramics, require a moisture inhibiting membrane (vapor barrier). Attached underlayment does not qualify as a vapor barrier. Use a polyethylene film of 6-8 mils (0.15 – 0.2 mm). This vapor barrier must be applied with a minimum of 8" (20 cm) overlap and taped with a waterproof tape and turned about 2" (5 cm) up the wall. If not already attached to the plank, you will also need a separate underlay material with a maximum thickness of 1/8" (3.2 mm). A vapor barrier can be incorporated into the separate underlayment; however, this underlayment must be approved as a moisture barrier underlayment. Check with the underlayment manufacturer's specifications. Concrete subfloors must be cured for 60 days prior to installation, and should be tested for excessive moisture.

Maximum levels are:

1. Calcium chloride test of 5 lb/1000 sq. ft. (2.27 kg/92.9 sq. m)/24 hours (ASTM F1869)
2. Maximum 75% relative humidity (ASTM F2170)

SUBFLOORS MUST BE CHECKED PRIOR TO INSTALLATION

GENERAL INFORMATION

When installing Beaulieu's laminate flooring, you must leave an expansion gap around the perimeter of the room of 3/8" (9.5 mm) to prevent binding of the flooring. The planks must not be glued or tacked to the subfloor in any way. Do not install cabinets or kitchen islands on top of floating laminate floors. An expansion gap should be maintained when meeting other types of flooring. This also applies to any obstructions (columns, pipes, etc.) in the installation. Door jambs must be undercut to allow for expansion; do not force the laminate product under tight door jams. Installations greater than 40' (12 m) lengthwise or greater than 26' (8 m) widthwise or those with separate rooms will require the use of transition moldings to provide proper expansion space. Remove base moldings. If necessary, the planks in the first row can be cut to a narrower width to ensure the planks of the final row are at least 2" (5 cm) wide.

Before installing the flooring you must clean, sweep or vacuum the subfloor so that it is free of dirt and debris. Verify the moisture content of the subfloor using a moisture meter or another approved method. The subfloor must be level and flat within 3/16" per 10 foot radius (4.7 mm per 3 m). Deviations must be corrected by either filling or sanding the subfloor.

RADIANT-HEATED FLOORS

Radiant heat systems are required to be embedded in the subfloor. The system must be operating for a minimum of three (3) weeks prior to the installation of Beaulieu laminate flooring. The system should be turned off at the time of the installation, or, if in winter, should be set at exactly 65 °F (18.3 °C) for a minimum of 48 hours prior to installation. After the installation is complete, or when turning on the radiant heat system from a cold start, the operating temperature may be increased by a maximum of 5 °F (2.8 °C) in a 24-hour period. The maximum allowable surface temperature for laminate floors is 85 °F (29.4 °C). Do not use Beaulieu laminate flooring with systems that expose the floor to wide variations in temperature, such as a wire induction mat system. The installation area of the laminate flooring shall not contain heated and non-heated areas, unless expansion joints separate them. A vapor barrier is required for all radiant heat installations. Keep in mind that loose rugs or carpets may accidentally function as heat insulators and raise the temperature to more than the tolerated maximum surface temperature of 85 °F (29.4 °C).

Layout and measuring

First, determine which way to run the planks. Rules of thumb are:

Over wooden floor joist systems, run the length of the product perpendicular to the joist system.

Over concrete, the following can be used:

- Lengthwise in the longest direction of the room.
- Lengthwise perpendicular to the main source of incoming light.

To avoid straddling a door jamb with a plank, use a T-molding or measure back to the starting wall to ensure a plank connection within the door jamb area. It is recommended that you do not end up with a narrow strip at the end that is less than 2" (5 cm) wide on any wall in the room. It is recommended to cut the first and last rows so they are equal in width. Undercut all door jambs so that the flooring will easily slide underneath them. Using a scrap piece of flooring and underlayment as a guide, undercut the jambs with a jamb saw or regular handsaw. Always leave an expansion space between the flooring and all walls or other fixed objects.

VISUAL INSPECTION AND MIXING PLANKS

Notice to installer

Planks showing visible defects should never be installed. These planks should be put aside and used for cuts or submitted for a product claim. Claims resulting from the installation of such planks will not be honored. For best results it is recommended that material be mixed from four (4) to six (6) boxes when installing Beaulieu laminate flooring. Do not put like planks next to each other and randomly stagger end joints for best visual appeal.

Cutting the planks

When cutting laminate flooring with a circular saw, it is recommended to cut with the decorative side down. When using a table saw, jigsaw or handsaw, cut with the decorative side up.

- Remember that airborne wood dust can be an explosive hazard and an irritant to eyes, skin and the respiratory system. Use dust collectors on power tools, wear appropriate clothing, eye protection and an approved dust mask.
- Always start a row with a plank at least 12" (30 cm) long and insure the minimum end joint offset is 12" (30 cm) apart.

INSTALLATION

1. Getting started

Check the planks before you start to make sure that they are not in any way damaged or have quality defects. After cleaning the subfloor, you may roll out the vapor barrier or underlay material (if required). The vapor barrier must overlap by at least 8" (20 cm).

2. First row

Start installation of the planks in the left hand corner, tongue-side against the wall. Make sure you place the short side of the plank 1/4 - 3/8" (6.35 – 9.5 mm) from the wall. The long side can be pushed into place when three (3) rows have been assembled; mind distance of 1/4 - 3/8" (6.35 – 9.5 mm). If the wall is uneven, the planks must be adapted to its contours. To do this, remove the first row. Cut the planks as required and then re-lay them.

3. Completing the first row

Place the final plank face down. The distance to the wall must be 1/4 - 3/8" (6.35 – 9.5 mm). Mark where the plank is to be cut.

4. Cutting the planks

Place the plank face down on the work surface and cut to size using a circular saw. If you are using a

hand saw, ensure that it is fine toothed and cut the plank face up.

5. Starting the second row

Use a cut piece of plank at least 12" (30 cm) long from the previous row to start the next row. If this piece is too short, start with a new plank cut in half. Always ensure that the end joints are randomly staggered at least 12" (30 cm).

6. Continuing installation

Place the plank at an angle against the plank in the previous row, press forward and fold down at the same time.

Take a new plank (see Figure 7) and push the corresponding side into the groove of the planks already in place on the floor. Push the plank down properly so that it joins with the side of the plank already in place. Continue the row by locking in the length of the planks and pushing down until the ends are joined together.

7. Laying the last row

Measure and cut the plank. Leave 1/4 - 3/8" (6.35 – 9.5 mm) distance to the wall.

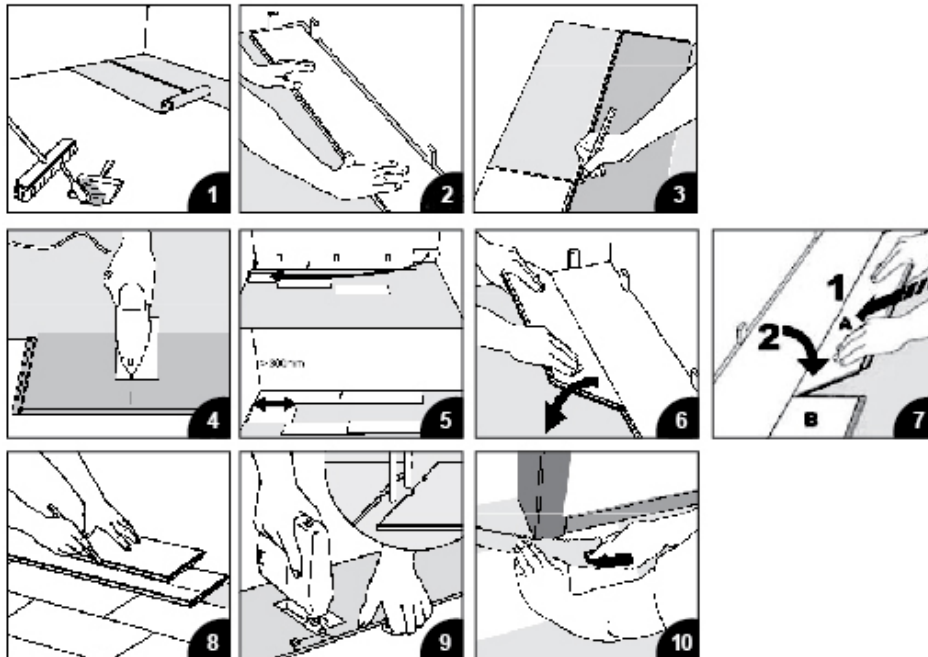
8. Holes for pipes

Measure the diameter of the pipe and drill a hole that is 3/8" (9.5 mm) larger. Saw off a piece and lay the plank in place on the floor.

9. Door moldings and skirting

Lay a plank, with the decorative side down, next to the door molding to measure where it is to be cut. Cut the plank and slide it under the molding.

INSTALLATION ILLUSTRATIONS



Homeowner Obligations

To maintain the coverage under the terms of these warranties and ensure fast and easy warranty service, the homeowner is responsible for the following:

- Keep five (5) planks of the laminate flooring product after installation for testing purposes.
- Keep and be able to provide the original sales receipt or documentation illustrating proof of purchase and installation date of the product.
- Make sure the flooring is installed according to Beaulieu Installation Instructions.
- Keep a list of products used to clean the flooring.

Please visit our website at beaulieuflooring.com for the most up-to-date version of this document as it may have been revised and updated since this printed version.

Warranty Guide as well as Care and Maintenance instructions can also be found on our website at beaulieuflooring.com, or you may contact:
Technical Services at 800-944-2840 or tek.services@beaulieugroup.com.

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