



# Storage Guide

## STORAGE

### How to transport and store your flooring before installation

## COMMERCIAL QUANTITIES

### HANDLING AND TRANSPORTING

Vinyl tile and plank flooring require care during storage and handling as do all floor covering products, their adhesives, and all the ancillary items for floor preparation and finishing.

Flooring is packaged in cartons which must be kept squarely positioned on the pallet to prevent distortion of the contents and to be fully supported during storage.

Check specific product instructions to determine maximum carton stacking, but NEVER double-stack pallets of vinyl tile and plank flooring, even for the short term

Leave the new flooring in its original packaging for transport.

Handling cartons of vinyl tile and plank flooring can be heavy and bulky. Always use proper material handling equipment when moving these products. When handling cartons, always use proper lifting techniques and never lift more than you can safely handle. Ensure that products and pallets are fully supported during transportation. Even distribution of the secured material is compulsory in your truck or van to avoid load shifting or movement. Rough handling can damage flooring before installation.

Avoid delays during the installation by simply exercising care when handling and transporting these products.

## DOMESTIC QUANTITIES

If you are planning to take it home yourself in your own car, here's how: Lay the boxes down flat inside the vehicle, preferably in the boot or if necessary, on the back seat. Do not place them upright or lean them. Make sure that they are also supported in the middle and not just on the edges.

To prevent the boxes from sliding when driving through curves and making turns, we recommend that you fasten them with belts etc. But not too tightly, to avoid damaging the tongue-and-groove joints!

Don't run the risk of the packaged flooring getting rained on – that means not transporting the boxes on a vehicle's roof or in the back of a pickup truck, for example.

After arriving at your destination, leave the flooring in the original packaging until you get around to installing it.

## STORAGE

In case you decide to postpone installing your new floor (for whatever reason) or are unable to move into your final installation location when planned (perhaps because it's still under construction), it's important to properly store the new laminate flooring. The same goes if some is left over after installing your floor and you want to keep the rest in reserve (you never know!).

It is critical to store the plank and/or tile in a dry, temperature-controlled interior environment.

The temperature range should be no lower than 65° F and no greater than 80° F and the relative humidity should be controlled and maintained between 30-70% relative humidity

All cartons containing vinyl tile or plank flooring should be stored on a dry, flat, level surface. Do not store cartons on their edge

## KEY POINTS

### Upright or flat?

Make sure to store the laminate panels in a flat, i.e. horizontal, position. Otherwise they can suffer damage or warp.

### Stacked or spread out?

The best approach is to stack them crosswise, with each successive layer rotated 90° with respect to the last. This saves space, allows air to circulate better and prevents the boxes from tipping over.

### Inside the original packaging or not?

It's better to leave the flooring in the original packaging, which will protect it from damage.

# Storage Guide

## Laminate Flooring

Before installing flooring, allow it to acclimatize for about 48 hours at a temperature of at least 18°C. Lay the panels down (without removing them from the original packaging) in the same room in which they will be laid. It's best to lay four packages alongside one another, then the next four on top of them at right angles so it looks like a grid. This has the added advantage of preventing the panels from sagging in the middle.

## Wood & Engineered flooring

Firstly, your wooden flooring needs to be stored in a warm and dry environment. Never leave the boxes of flooring in a garage, shed or anywhere outdoors.

Secondly, the conditions in the room need to be correct. Make sure that all wet trades, such as plastering, screed and painting, are finished. The room needs to be weather tight and completely dry. You will also need to check that the relative humidity in the room is between 45 – 65%. The temperature of the room should be between 17 - 22°C.

It's best to lay four packages alongside one another, then the next four on top of them at right angles so it looks like a grid. This has the added advantage of preventing the panels from sagging in the middle.

This lets the engineered wood that the laminate mainly consists of adjust to conditions in the room. It's then ready for installation, and you'll continue to enjoy your new floor for a long time to come.

Finally, leave the planks of wood flooring in their original boxes. Store the flat, never leaning against a wall.

## Acclimatizing wood flooring – short term

Wooden flooring needs to acclimatize to its new surroundings before it can be installed. This is an extremely important process. It allows the wood to adapt to the atmosphere. The boxes of wooden flooring should be left, in the room where it is going to be fitted, for a sufficient amount of time:

- Solid hardwood flooring should ideally acclimatize for at least 5 days
- Engineered hardwood flooring ideally acclimatize for at least 3 days

If you have an underfloor heating system in the room, ensure that the boxes of flooring are raised slightly off the subfloor. This can be done by using wooden blocks or batons.

## Long-Term Storage - More than 48 hours

If you need to store flooring for longer than the 48 hours required for acclimatization, make sure to monitor the temperature and relative humidity. The ideal conditions for longer-term storage are a temperature of 20-22°C and 50 to 60% relative

humidity. Avoid large temperature fluctuations and constant draughts – they can damage flooring by causing it to repeatedly expand and contract. It's best to leave in the sealed boxes and store them in a heated room.

If a box has already been opened, it's advisable to use packaging tape to reseal the plastic sheet surrounding the panels. So just in case, it's best not to dispose of the packaging right away when installing the flooring. If you do, however, a tip is to wrap individual panels in the plastic membrane you're using for the vapour barrier – it very effectively protects your flooring.

## FINAL NOTE

These are intended as general guidance notes only, you are advised to read and follow the exact instructions for the flooring type and brand you have purchased.