



# Zenati & Edri French Oak Wood Collection Installation and Maintenance Guidelines

Please make sure you read carefully and adhere to the following installation guidelines. If your flooring is not installed correctly and in accordance with these guidelines and those of the national wood flooring Association (NWFA) then Tabarka Studio cannot be held responsible for any defects or problems that may arise in the future as a result of improper installation.

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## 1) Customer/ Installer responsibility

Please remember that wood is a natural product deriving from the purist wonders of nature. Therefore there is always a possibility that a good percentage of your product will have natural variation and or characteristics including knots, cracks, mineral streaks and dents etc.

The customer/ installer is responsible for the final inspection of the product quality and the conditions in which the product shall be installed. Inspection of the wood flooring should be carried out prior to installation. In the event that the customer is not entirely happy with their product please contact and inform Tabarka Studio immediately. Do not under any circumstances lay a piece of wood if there is any doubt as to grade, dimension, or factory finish. Warning: Installation constitutes acceptance .

When ordering, please bare in mind that 7% –10% should be added to the overall square footage to compensate for any unseen wastage or adjustments that may be applicable. Additionally, ordering additional quantities of wood is recommended for future accidents or necessary repairs.

Prior to installation, the customer/installer is responsible for carrying out a job-site inspection to make sure that the sub-surfaces and job-site environment meet or exceed all recommended

industry standards that should be in place when installing your wood floor.

When installing your wood floor it is imperative that the sub-floor should be as clean, and dry as possible to ensure moisture is kept to a minimum. It should also be as flat and firm as possible. Under no circumstances will Tabarka Studio be held responsible for job failure or site failure as a consequence of poor job-site environment or sub-floor deficiencies.

## **2) Job Site Inspection/pre installation procedures**

A proper job site inspection is paramount to the longevity and quality of the wood flooring. If the job site is not suitable and adequately prepared for installation of your floor, then you should amend these factors prior to laying the flooring. Please read the following procedures and adhere to them. Failure to do so may result in problems further down the line, and would also render your warranty (which would have arrived with your order) as invalid.

### **Exterior checks**

Make sure the foundations of the house adequate for installation of the wood floor.

Make sure rain water carried away from the foundation. Also that there is an appropriate drainage system in place to deal with rainfall, snow, or such like residue.

Is there any outdoor swimming pool or natural body of water that is on the level or higher than the foundation? If so, a proper drainage system must be in place.

If the home has a raised foundation, check for any exterior vents open and unrestricted which could lead to damaging substances, such as water, entering the property and moisture damaging the floor. Sub Grade Installation is not recommended.

### **Interior checks**

It is important that the building is fully enclosed with all inside and outside doors already in place prior to installation. Similarly any wall coverings and painting (bar final coat on the base moldings) should also be completed before installation procedures begin.

Make sure a thorough check is made of the plumbing. All toilets, sinks, baths, showers, refrigerators, freezers, washing machines, dishwashers etc should be checked for leaks.

Make sure all external and internal doors and windows appropriately sealed. Check for holes and gaps that should not be present.

Do the interior walls have any evidence of dampness? This can be checked by either certain smells, or visually, by observing and examining the walls themselves. If unsure, then a professional surveyor, or someone with expertise in this area should be consulted.

It is vital that all basements and crawl spaces should be well ventilated and as dry as possible.

Sub-floors should be dry and clean, free of paint, wax, oil, adhesives, curing agents and other such as chemical agents or debris. Sub-floors should also be flat and firm and level to within 3/16" in 10 feet. (Please see section 4 below for comprehensive guide to sub-floor requirements). It is an important factor which requires careful consideration prior to installation of the wood floor.

Humidity and temperature is an important factor when considering the longevity and maintenance of the wood. It is also a highly variable factor and dependent on what climate the wood floor is being installed. For a detailed guide for ideal humidity levels required for you wood floor installation and thereafter, please see the temperature and humidity chart (laid out below). Humidity levels can be controlled through the use of air conditioners, heaters, humidifiers, and de- humidifiers, and should be used when appropriate.

Before consulting the chart below, one should be aware of what exactly it means when referring to RH (relative humidity). A simple definition is as follows.

Relative humidity is a percentage of water vapor per area at a specific temperature. Relative humidity can be calculated using various methods and instruments. It is a calculation to find out how many grams of water vapor can be held at a given temperature. Usually, the warmer the air the higher it's capacity for holding water vapor.

**Dependence of equilibrium moisture content (EMC) of wood on relative humidity (RH and temperature)**

Moisture levels are an important factor in prolonging the longevity and finish of the wooden floor. The chart above is designed to assist you in assessing whether or not you have the correct installation environment for your wooden floor.

Dependence of equilibrium moisture content (EMC) of wood on relative humidity (RH and temperature)																			
Table 1-Dependence of equilibrium moisture content(EMC)of wood on relative humidity (RH)and temperature																			
EMC%																			
Temperature	5%	10%	15%	20%	25%	30%	35%	40%	45%	50%	55%	60%	65%	70%	75%	80%	85%	90%	95%
(°F(°C))	RH	RH	RH	RH	RH	RH	RH	RH	RH	RH	RH	RH	RH	RH	RH	RH	RH	RH	RH
30(-1.1)	1.4	2.6	3.7	4.6	5.5	6.3	7.1	7.9	8.7	9.5	10.4	11.3	12.4	13.5	14.9	16.5	18.5	21.0	24.3
50(10.0)	1.4	2.6	3.6	4.6	5.5	6.3	7.1	7.9	8.7	9.5	10.3	11.2	12.3	13.4	14.8	16.4	18.4	20.9	24.3
70(21.1)	1.3	2.5	3.5	4.5	5.4	6.2	6.9	7.7	8.5	9.2	10.1	11.0	12.0	13.1	14.4	16.0	17.9	20.5	23.9
90(32.2)	1.2	2.3	3.4	4.3	5.1	5.9	6.7	7.4	8.1	8.9	9.7	10.5	11.5	12.6	13.9	15.4	17.3	19.8	23.3
110(43.3)	1.1	2.2	3.2	4.0	4.9	5.6	6.3	7.0	7.7	8.4	9.2	10.0	11.0	12.0	13.2	14.7	16.6	19.1	22.4
130(54.4)	1.0	2.0	2.9	3.7	4.5	5.2	5.9	6.6	7.2	7.9	8.7	9.4	10.3	11.3	12.5	14.0	15.8	18.2	21.5
150(65.6)	0.9	1.8	2.6	3.4	4.1	4.8	5.5	6.1	6.7	7.4	8.1	8.8	9.7	10.6	11.8	13.1	14.9	17.2	20.4

Source: United States department of Agriculture

The chart is very easy to read. Should you be unsure as to the correct humidity levels for your wood, please consult the chart. On the left-hand side of the chart is the temperature column, which correlates to the equilibrium moisture content (EMC) and relative humidity (RH) on the right hand side of the chart.

As an example of how to use it, please look at the highlighted sections of the chart (in blue). If you know that the average temperature of your location is 70 °F/ 21.1°C and the relative humidity is 55% then, as you can see, it follows that your wood floor should have a moisture content of approximately 10.1%.

At the time of installation, and thereafter, conditions should be within the range expected when the building is in use. The Relative Humidity (R.H) of the air should be between 45 and 55 R.H. The temperature should be between 18°C and 21°C. These figures also apply once the floor is installed. This climate is coincidentally and also the most comfortable for people to live or work in.

### **3) Handling, storage and acclimatization**

Wood is a natural product that should be treated with care. It is a product made from timber that has been put through an advanced drying and balancing system which secures the appropriate moisture level to the market we sell to. It is important to maintain the correct moisture level, so do not unload it in the rain, snow or particularly abnormal, humid, or wet conditions. If this is unavoidable then try and take precautions such as using a cover/tarpaulin of some description, or alternatively waiting until conditions are appropriate.

Flooring should not be delivered until structural work, in particular any cement work, paint work or other "wet" work on the premises has been completed, and is dry. Doors and windows should have been installed prior to delivery and installation of the wooden floor.

It should be noted that engineered floors do not require as much acclimatization as solid wood. However it still may need some and it is vitally important that the wood acclimatizes to its surroundings prior to installation. If you do not let it acclimatize adequately, then it could cause serious problems in the future. It is vital that the wood has the correct moisture content. This should be checked with a good quality wood moisture meter. If, upon arrival, your wood does not have the correct moisture content, then an acclimatization process may be required. In order to acclimatize your wood, you should remove all packaging and place the wood in a dry storage facility. Wood should then be block stacked and left to acclimatize until it has obtained its required moisture content. We recommend a minimum of 72 hours acclimatization but acclimatization may take anything from 2 days, to 2 weeks depending on its moisture content on arrival, and the relative humidity of where it is being installed. When you have tested the moisture content of the wood and its moisture content is adequate, then it is ready to be installed.

Please note that intense heat and extreme temperatures where the wood is stored for prolonged period of time may affect the overall integrity of the wood floor, the finish not withstanding; therefore would render any wood product warranty expressed or implied null and or void. Damage caused during storage, installation, handling or disassembly is not covered by the warranty. Tabarka Studio warrants to the original purchaser its pre-finished engineered and or solid hardwood floors against any manufacturing defects caused by improper milling, grading staining, polyurethane or oil finish.

Structural warranty means the hardwood flooring product will remain free from defects in lamination, assembly, milling and dimension. Tabarka Studio warrants to the original purchaser its pre-finished engineered hardwood floors against delamination [separation between plies] buckling, warping, twisting and cupping only in normal environmental conditions.

Normal environmental conditions mean that heating and ventilation systems should be designed to maintain interior relative humidity level ( in the air) between 40 to 60% RH, or refer to our RH table best for your area and climate, to ensure the best performance of the engineered flooring.

Wherever this warranty is applicable, Tabarka Studio's liability is limited to replacing, or repairing, at the option of Tabarka Studio, the defective boards due to manufacturing defects in excess of five percent (5%), industry standard, material only. Damage due to improper transportation, storage, installation, extreme indoor conditions, (extreme heat, dryness or moisture, extreme sunlight or any other cause are not covered. Exposure to excessive heat, dryness or moisture may cause damage to the flooring. It is natural, due to the inherent properties of wood that some minor contraction and expansion might occur. These occurrences and/or visual changes on the hardwood floor will self correct with seasonal climate changes on the hardwood floor will self-correct with seasonal climate changes and/or when maintaining normal environ- mental conditions.

#### **4) Sub-floor requirements**

Checking the condition and quality of the sub-floor is an important part of the installation process. It is the foundation for the floor, and a good sub-floor is the beginning step of ensuring the wood floor remains as beautiful as the expectations dictate for as long as possible. Please do not underestimate the importance of a good quality sub-floor, as it is arguably the most important part in ensuring the quality and durability of the finished floor. Therefore please read carefully the following recommendations in relation to proper sub-floor requirements and repairs that may be applicable. Note: Sub-floors should be level to within 3/16" in 10 feet.

It is the responsibility of the flooring contractor or installer to check that the site and sub-floor conditions are in a satisfactory state for the installation to take place including all moisture related readings.

#### **Recommended sub-floor surfaces**

Please note that flooring should be installed over a solid foundation be it concrete, plywood, marine plywood or a sufficiently strong existing solid wood floor. Under no circumstances lay flooring if there are cavity spaces as this will inevitably lead to problems with your floor at a later point.

### **Concrete subfloors**

When using glue down installation method there are two methods you can employ. One method is to glue your floor onto plywood; the other method is to glue your floor directly on to the concrete slab. Important: It is vital that concrete slabs are checked for their moisture content. The difference in moisture level between the sub-floor and the wood flooring itself, should not exceed 4%.

### **General sub-floor guidelines**

Regardless of what surface your sub-floor is, it is vital that your sub-floor is a) clean, b) dry, c) flat and d) firm. These four conditions are paramount to a good, suitable sub-floor.

A clean sub-floor – prior to installation make sure the sub-floor has been cleaned adequately. Use a broom, mop, vacuum cleaner or such like devices to remove any dirt, residue, or dust from the sub-floor itself. It should be free of oil, paint, wax, sealer, adhesives, curing agents and other such like debris. A check should also be made for any insect/animal infestations. In the event of such infestations contact someone with expertise in this area, who will be able to advise how best to remedy the situation. Under no circumstances continue with installation if the sub-floor is not free from all that is mentioned above.

A dry sub-floor –It is vital that the sub-floor be checked for any sign of water, or liquid residue of any form. If there appears to be water present then this should be completely removed before continuing. The source of this residue should also be checked to ensure that once removed it will not come back at a later date.

A flat sub-floor – Make an effort to make sure the sub-floor is as flat/level as possible. A sealer can also be used to help level the sub-floor. Note: Sub-floor must be level within 3/16” in 10 feet.

A firm sub-floor – If the sub-floor is not firm then this could result in serious problems occurring with your wood floor in the future. Simple tests such as banging a nail into your sub-floor can be done to check the firmness of it. If you find that your sub-floor is not firm, which could be to do with moisture levels, or presence of water, then further investigations and necessary adjustments may be required.

### **Moisture barriers/ Intermediate layers**

For glue down installations we recommend you use a high quality moisture cure polyurethane barrier product which is applied to the prepared substrate using a notched trowel or spatula; prior to administering your adhesive. For detailed laying instructions please follow the manufacturer's guidelines.

It should be noted that moisture barriers are strongly recommended particularly when installing

over concrete, and when installing on grade.

2mm thick high quality PE sheets can be use when floating the wood floor.

### **5) Consideration and planning regarding Expansion and contraction**

Before installing the wood floor please pay attention to how the wood floor may expand and contract over time. Different times of year will result in oscillating temperatures and consequently lead the floor to naturally expand and contract. Therefore when installing the floor it is imperative that you allow enough room for your floor to breathe in this respect. Please remember that any movement/expansion that may occur will be across the width of the boards and not in the length and so when planning the run of the boards bear this in mind.

To ensure that the wood can breathe certain measures can be taken prior to installation. The recommended expansion gap is 12-15mm. Any vertical obstructions, thresholds, or pipes will also need to be accommodated leaving a minimum of 12-15mm expansion gap around them.

### **6) Installing using a glue down system**

Tabarka do not insist you use one particular brand of adhesive, provided the flooring contractor/installer is knowledgeable and confident in the brand they are using. Always remember to follow the adhesive manufacturer's guidelines when applying their adhesive.

#### **Establish a starting point**

A good starting point would be to provide a proper layout of flooring by distributing short and long lengths of flooring over the area where you are going to install.

To ensure proper grade and color mixture, lay the wood floor from different boxes. Do not work out of the same box and then move onto the next one. Try and work from multiple boxes at once.

Always try and begin layout or installation from an outside wall. This is because these are normally the straightest. A chalk-line may assist you in this process, in particular if your starting wall is not completely straight or there are any visible obstructions.

Once you have established which wall is the best guideline for your starting point be sure to take expansion gaps into consideration; use wedges to create 12-15mm expansion gaps at walls, door thresholds, pipes, stairs, etc. Larger spaces require larger expansion gaps ( 2mm increments for every 1-meter of flooring width) When installing through several adjoining rooms provide expansion joints at every door's threshold.

## **Installation**

Chose an appropriate wall to begin with, usually this will be the longest wall in the room. Use a guide running along the wall to ensure that the first row of planks are laid straight. If possible, run the lengths of your wood floor in the same direction as incoming sunlight for best visual effect.

Remember to install spacers at walls all the way around the room to ensure room for natural expansion between the wall and the room.

Lay the adhesive onto the sub-floor in accordance with the manufacturers instructions. Please follow the manufacturer's instructions in relation to correct adhesive set times, correct tools to use when laying adhesive, minimum temperature requirements and any other applicable installation procedures that may apply when using your adhesive. Never lay more adhesive than you can cover in one session when installing your floor; otherwise there is a risk the adhesive will dry before you have laid the floor.

Lay the first plank with its groves towards the wall ( corner) and works towards your right. Apply a continues layer of adhesive on the grove tops and also at the head joints. Gently hammered onto the tapping block so it pushes the planks into the adjacent ones. Remove any excess adhesive with a damp cloth.

Continue laying the first row until complete. This may require you to cut one of the boards to fit the size of the room.

Use a tapping block against the tongue side of the board to make sure the boards are secured together. Never, under any circumstances use a hammer or rubber mallet directly onto the wood, as this may lead to damaging the top of your wood floor.

To lay the rest of the floor continue laying the adhesive paying strict attention to manufacturers instructions ensuring that there is maximum contact between the adhesive and the flooring.

Once finished the floor should be le<sup>^</sup> undisturbed, ideally over night, to allow for the glue to properly dry. After this process, any remaining wedges you used can be removed.

Finally, look at the floor closely to check that no adhesive has seeped out through the wood and is on the finished surface. In this event make sure to remove with suitable cleaner as quickly as possible.



## 7) Maintenance and Cleaning for Water base and Wax finishes

To ensure that the wood floor remains as beautiful as you would like for as long as possible it is important that it is cleaned and maintained properly. Please read the following cleaning recommendations and adhere to them as closely as possible.

### Maintenance

- Remember to use door mats as to prevent any unnecessary accumulation of dirt that would be detrimental to the floor.
- Protective pads should be used for any furniture, such as tables, chairs, cupboards, beds, etc which also may damage or scratch the floor if left unprotected. Certain types of casters on furniture may damage wood flooring. Barrel type casters, wheels or wide, flat glides are best for protecting wood floors.
- Avoid walking on the wood floor with sharp based shoes, stilettos, or spiked sport shoes, as this will inevitably create displeasing marks on the wood floor.
- Keep animal nails trimmed to minimized finish scratches
- Do not roll or slide heavy objects directly upon the floor. When moving appliances or heavy furniture consider laying a solid protective covering on the floor and gently “walk” the item across it. Carpet or cardboard are not adequate to prevent surface compression scratches.
- In the event of erratic weather and subsequent humidity change, humidifiers, dehumidifiers and air conditioners should be used to ensure your floor does not expand or contract any more than naturally expected. Keep the relative humidity in the home between 35% and 55%
- Please make sure any sinks, baths, fridges, freezers, washing machines etc, are not damaged and lead to leakages onto your wood floor.

### Cleaning

- Never clean or wet mop the wood floors with water. Clean any spillages as soon as possible. Under no circumstances leave any water to subside into your wood otherwise this may create problems such as cracking and erosion.
- Never use any of the following products (or products of similar nature) on the wood floor: ammonia based cleaners, acrylic finishes, wax-based products, detergents, bleach, polishes, oil soap, abrasive cleaning soaps, or acidic solutions such as vinegar; Many of these products can pit or etch the finish of the wood floor.
- Sweep and vacuum your wooden floor regularly to prevent an excessive build up of dirt.
- For normal cleaning use dry mop or lightly dampened mop. Never under any circumstances use an excessive amount of water,
- For more thorough cleaning use a specialized floor cleaner (neutral pH) with a maximum pH level of 8.

- In the event of heavy marks which need removing, try and use an appropriate floor cleaner (without ammonia). Stronger stain removers can be used, but should only be administered when necessary, and with caution, otherwise there is a risk that you may damage the finish of your floor.
- For everyday cleaning, a soft broom, vacuum cleaner, dry mop is suitable for your wooden floor - use as often as required. To remove stains, and for more thorough cleaning, a mop can be used with a very light solution of water and soap. For tougher stains that can not be removed with ease, we advise you to use a suitable liquid wax cleaner which should be applied to the floor with a cloth or a flat cleaning mop.
- after a while your floor is beginning to look jaded or not as fresh as you would like then your floor can be re-conditioned using Tabarka Studio's Hardwax Oil diluted with some water, which can then be administered by hand using a flat brush or pad. Simply dribble finish onto your floor and scrub in with a brush or flat cleaning pad until dry. Finish by stroking the grain of wood. Two coats are required. Wait until your floor is completely dry before applying the second coat. Ideally leave the first coat overnight to ensure it is dry and then

vacuum thoroughly. Please note that the second coat of wax can be applied without sanding, provided the first coat has been properly applied. However, if too much finish was applied then sanding may be required.

- Reconditioning your floor should only be considered after many years of use when you feel the wood floor is looking particularly worn and jaded. It can be machine sanded and treated, to give the floor a fresh new look. This should not be necessary until many years of usage have occurred. Please note it is not recommended that all wood floors should be sanded, in particular sanded to the bare wood. Please contact Tabarka Studio if unsure about reconditioning and sanding.

Tabarka Studio uses green certified products and finishes in the manufacturing of Zenati & Edri wood collection. Sustainability in the environment and protecting our Earth's natural resources are a priority for Tabarka Studio.

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