

BEFORE YOU BUY – FLOORING

WELCOME TO SOUTHERN LUMBER'S FLOORING SALES DEPARTMENT

"Here are a few questions to consider, that will hopefully help make your flooring buying experience" easier and more enjoyable. Please read through these questions and where possible try to answer to the best of your ability. This questioner and information guide is intended to help you consider and gather as much pertinent information as possible prior to making your purchase. By doing so it will help to make your ordering process quick and easy!

1. **First you need to determine what type of subfloor you have?**

- A. If you have no crawl space beneath the sub-floor, and no exterior vents, you probably have a Concrete subfloor.
- B. If you have a crawl space beneath the floor and exterior vents, you probably have a raised Wood subfloor.

2. **Types of wood and laminate flooring**

- A. Solid hardwood or softwood - Nail Down application only.
- B. Floating Floor - Engineered laminated hard wood floor / Very versatile can be installed over different types of existing floors, offers quick installation, and is installed over foam underlayment.
- C. Glue Down - Engineered laminated hardwood floor, can be installed over any type of subfloor.
- D. Low pressure plastic laminate - Lower cost, very durable in high traffic areas, and easy care maintenance.

3. **Hardwood flooring is available in a variety of species, listed below are some examples.**

- A. Ash, Oak, Maple, American Cherry, Brazilian Cherry, Birch, Kempas, and Bamboo.
- B. Many other species are available as well.

4. **Hardness of surface wear layer.**

- A. Hardwoods vary greatly in hardness, this important factor should be considered, based on area to be installed, and the type of traffic that it will have.

5. **What color scheme are you looking for?**

- A. Light - usually blond colored hardwoods that have little if any color added to natural beauty.
- B. Medium - usually hardwoods have had a little color added to enhance the natural beauty.
- C. Dark - either naturally dark colored species, but sometimes is merely stained for affect.

6. **Who will be installing the flooring?**

- A. Do-it-yourself - Best type to consider is floating floor, due to ease of installation.
- B. Professional - Opens up full spectrum of types.

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7. Where are you installing the floor?

- A. Kitchen - One of the toughest environments, best suited for plastic laminates, but hardwood floors with the proper weekly maintenance can work also.
- B. Bathroom - Another tough environment, best suited for plastic laminate with moisture warranty.
- C. Bedroom - Low traffic area suitable for all types of flooring.
- D. Family Rooms - Usually high traffic, Hardwoods will require somewhat more than routine maintenance to keep looking good. Plastic Laminate excellent choice.

8. Installing a floor will usually require some form of transition strip between your existing flooring and your newly installed floor.

- A. Wood to Wood - Wood to Carpet - Wood to Linoleum or Tile - Wood to Laminate.
- B. These various combinations of floor types will usually require some form of auxiliary moulding or trim to reduce from one height to the next.

9. How to determine if your subfloor has excess moisture.

- A. If concrete subfloor, place a 24 square piece of plastic film directly onto the surface of the subfloor and seal edges with duct tape. If, after 24 hours, condensation or darkening does not occur, the subfloor is considered dry. If condensation or darkening does occur, corrective action or surface preparation must be done in accordance to specific manufacture of flooring.
- B. If wood subfloor, first perform visual inspection of entire subfloor area looking for possible signs of existing moisture, along with inspection of appliances in affected area I.e. refrigerator, washing machine, dishwasher, etc. Secondly use a probe type moisture meter in several different areas. A subfloor is considered dry and ready for flooring if moisture content is 12% or less, If higher source of moisture needs to be determined, eliminated, and subfloor brought back into approved specifications.

10. How large is the area you wish to install flooring?

- A. First draw simple diagram of affected areas.
- B. Now that you have broke down each area or room into simple rectangle or square, measure each width and length in inches. Multiple each room (or area) by the width x the length, divide this number by 144, this will give the approximate square footage of each area to have new flooring installed.