



Laminate Installation Guide.

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Laminate Flooring Installation

STRATAInspire

INTRODUCTION

Strata Inspire is a high-performance laminate flooring designed to deliver stunning timber realism with everyday durability. This guide will walk you through the key steps to ensure a smooth, successful installation. Whether you're a seasoned installer or tackling a DIY project, following these instructions will help you achieve a flawless finish that's built to last.

INSTALLATION LIMITATIONS

Strata Inspire is only waterproof after installation. Carefully following these installation instructions ensures the floor performs as intended in areas such as bathrooms, kitchens, laundries, and entranceways. For the best results, always follow the steps outlined in this guide.

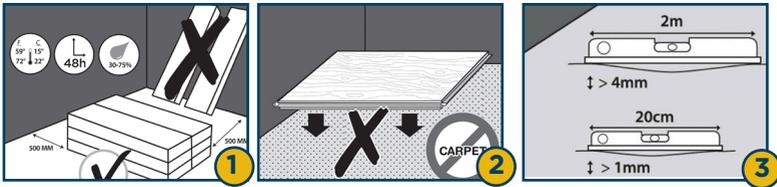
Strata Inspire is not suitable for continuously wet areas such as pool rooms, saunas, or spaces with built-in drains (e.g., open showers). These water-resistance instructions do not replace regulations for waterproofing in wet rooms.

Strata Inspire uses a unilin locking system, allowing you to choose your preferred starting point. Most installers find it easiest to work left to right, but you can install in either direction.

TOOLS NEEDED

- Laminate tapping block
- Straight edge
- Pulling iron
- Rubber mallet
- Saw (jigsaw, circular saw, hand saw, or cross-cut saw)
- Spacers
- Tape measure

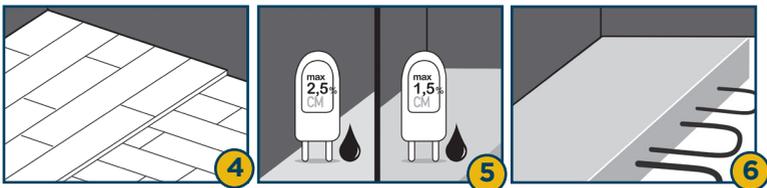
PREPARATION



1. Let the planks acclimatize for 48 hours in their unopened packaging at normal room temperature, placed in the centre of the room where they will be installed. Ideal conditions are 15–22°C with 30–75% relative humidity. If conditions fall outside this range, acclimatize for 1 week with the packages opened. Before beginning your install check you have received the right product and all boards are free from any defects. Installed boards will be considered as accepted.

2. To prepare the subfloor, remove any damp-porous floor coverings such as carpet or needle-felt. Damp-sealed coverings (PVC, linoleum, VCT) can remain. For wooden floors, lift a board to check for any signs of mould or insect infestation before beginning installation. Nail or screw any loose areas of the subfloor.

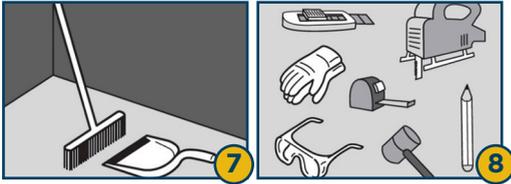
3. Using a straight edge, ensure the subfloor is level. Any unevenness greater than 4mm over the length of 2 meter must be smoothed out. The same applies to any unevenness of more than 1 mm over a length of 20cm. Grind any high spots and fill low spots with levelling compound to meet the evenness tolerance.



4. Install the new floor at ninety degrees to the existing subfloor. The crawl space under the floor must be sufficiently ventilated (minimum 4 cm² (1/2") total ventilation openings per m² (40") of floor). The moisture content of the wood must not exceed 10%.

5. The moisture content of the subfloor must be less than 2.5%CM / 75%RH (cement screed) or less than 0.5%CM / 50%RH (anhydrite screed - subfloor). In the case of floor heating, results must be respectively 1.5%CM / 60%RH and 0.3%CM / 40%RH. Always measure, record and keep your moisture content results. A new cement screed floor must dry at least 1 week per 1cm thickness up to 4cm. Thickness over 4cm require twice as much drying time. For example, a 6cm concrete subfloor must dry at least 8 weeks. Moisture measurements should always be taken (and a protocol must be kept for the future.)

6. Strata Inspire Laminate is suitable for use over both warm-water and electric underfloor heating systems. Warm-water heating elements must be fully embedded in the subfloor, with pipes positioned at least 3 cm below the surface. The heating system must be tested and confirmed as functioning correctly before laying the laminate. Switch off the underfloor heating during installation, and keep it off for at least 24 hours before switching it back on. The subfloor temperature must not exceed 18°C before, during, and for 24 hours after installation. Once the floor is laid, increase the temperature gradually, no more than 5°C per day and avoid sudden temperature changes at all times. The floor's surface (contact) temperature must not exceed 28°C. For warm-water systems, the maximum water temperature is 50°C.



7. After checking the subfloor for unevenness, carefully vacuum the entire surface. Make sure that the floor base is flat, clean, firm, and dry. To avoid risk of squeaking, secure any loose areas of the subfloor.

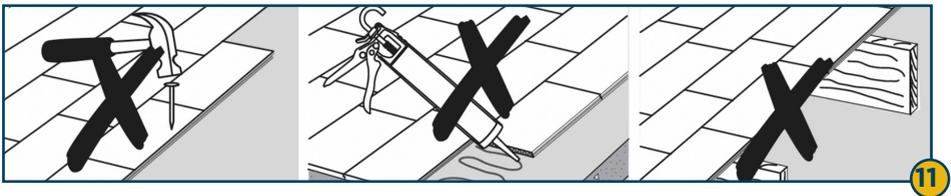
8. To install your laminate floor, you will need the tools outlined on page 2.

Using accessories that are not recommended by Strata Flooring may cause damage to your floor and will void the warranty. For the best results and full warranty protection, always use Strata Flooring approved accessories, which are specifically designed and tested for use with Strata Flooring.



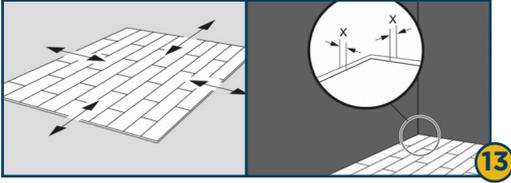
9. Check all flooring planks before and during installation. Defective planks must never be used. An installed plank is considered accepted and cannot be claimed on.

10. Install kitchen islands and other heavy objects before laying your flooring. The floor must be able to expand and contract to prevent gaps or separating planks. If your kitchen island is already in place, you will need to undercut the base or remove kickboards to allow for expansion. If this is not possible, expansion gaps can be concealed with an end cap trim.



11. Strata Inspire laminate must be installed as a floating floor to allow natural expansion and contraction with changes in temperature and humidity. To maintain the benefits of a floating floor and prevent issues such as gaps or squeaking, never fasten the floor with nails, screws, silicone, or any other adhesive. If silicone is required, ensure you use a flexible variety so the flooring can expand and contract freely. **An expansion gap must be present on 100% of the floor perimeter. A single area with no expansion can compromise the integrity of the floor.**

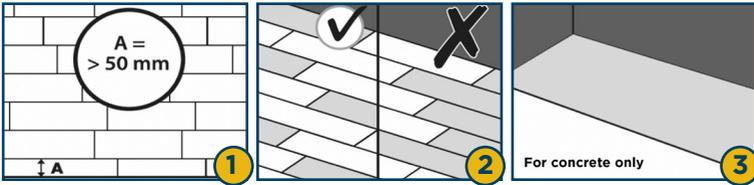
12. Check to ensure that doors can still open and close after the flooring has been installed.



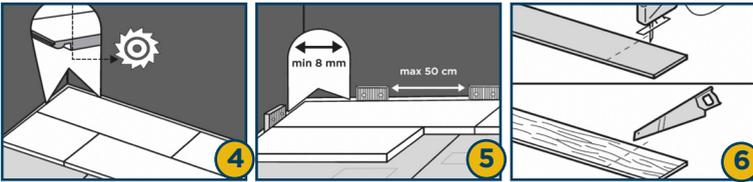
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14. Strata Inspire laminate is primarily made from natural wood, so it will expand and contract as relative humidity changes. At 20°C and 40-60% RH, movement is minimal. Strata Inspire laminate is manufactured with a moisture content suited to environments between 30-60% RH.

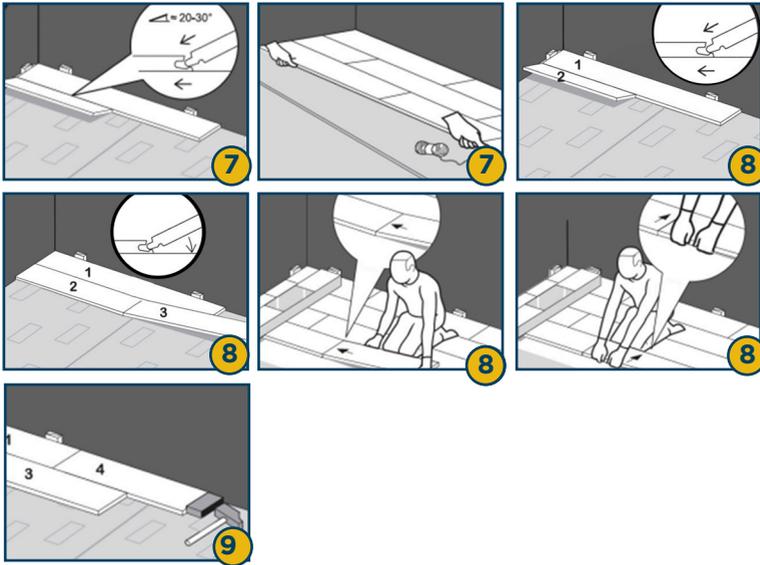
INSTALLATION



- 1.** Before starting, carefully measure the length and the width of the room to plan a precise layout to achieve a balanced appearance of the floor. This will ensure that you won't end up with the last row being too narrow. To avoid the last row being less than 50mm, cut down the planks of the first row. A starting or ending row should never be less than 50mm.
- 2.** Make sure the panels are mixed sufficiently when you install them, so that you do not end up with identical, light or dark planks next to each other. To obtain the best visual effect, it is best to fit the floorboards in the direction of the longest wall and parallel to the incidence of light.
- 3.** If you are installing over a concrete subfloor a clear builder's plastic (minimum of 150 micron) must be installed below the flooring. Ensure all joints overlap and are fully sealed using a vapour-tight, waterproof tape. The plastic should be covered up the walls by 50mm and trimmed back after the flooring has been installed.



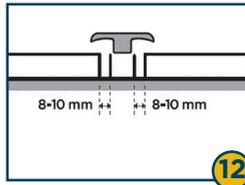
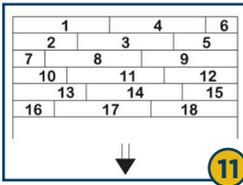
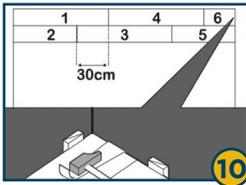
- 4.** Begin the first row with a whole plank. Saw off the tongue/click profile on both the long and short sides. For the remaining planks in the first row, remove the click profile only on the long edge that will sit directly against the wall. Any plank edge positioned next to a wall must have its click profile removed to ensure the required expansion gap.
- 5.** Put the plank with sawn off sides against the walls. Put your 8-10mm spacers between the planks and the wall. This will ensure that your expansion joint meets the requirements.
- 6.** Planks will be required to be cut down to size. To obtain a clean cut, the pattern side should face down when you use a jigsaw, sabre saw or circular handsaw and pattern side up when you use a handsaw or a crosscut saw. Ensure that the end joints of the planks in two successive rows are never in line. Always ensure that the joints are staggered by at least 30cm.



7. In order to make the start of the installation easier, assemble the first 2-3 rows away from the wall, so you can sit on the planks during the assembly. Then slide the first 2-3 rows at the wanted position close to the wall with distance spacers in place. Take a thin rope and hold it alongside the installed planks to check and adjust the straightness of your installed first 3 rows. It is recommended to make additional checks of the straightness, in order to confirm the straightness during the installation. Remember to use the distance spacers for the expansion gap of 8mm along the perimeter.

8. Insert the short side of the new plank into the short side of the installed plank using the angle method. Lift the plank to about $20-30^\circ$ —this will raise the row as the short sides are already connected. With both hands near the joint, pull the long side toward you until it clicks into place. You can insert tongue-into-groove or groove-onto-tongue, though tongue-into-groove is easiest.

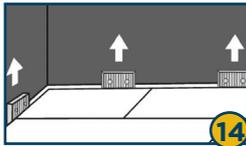
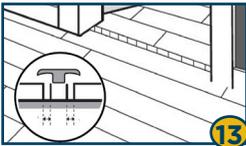
9. You can also join planks without lifting by tapping them together using the Uniclic tapping block. Do not use a single hard tap use light, controlled taps to avoid damage.



10. In places where it is too difficult to install the planks with the tapping block (e.g. against the wall) you can tap them together using the pulling iron and a hammer. Where horizontal tapping is not possible, you should cut the bubble of the groove lip with a wood chisel or sanding machine, and add wood glue to hold panels together.

11. Continue like this to the end of the room.

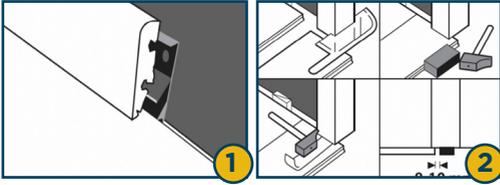
12. For room lengths of 12m and widths of 12m, there should be an intermediate expansion joint to allow for the required expansion.



13. Room humidity can vary according to the season, so it is vital that the floor is able to expand and contract. For this reason, make sure you leave an expansion joint 8-10m on all sides of the floor, around pipes, thresholds and under doors. It is mandatory to provide an expansion joint between different rooms (e.g. under the door way).

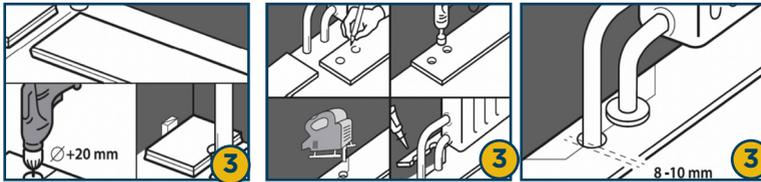
14. Remove all spacers.

FINISHING



1. Install the skirting board against the wall. Never attach the skirting board to the floor. This method allows the flooring to expand and contract under the new skirting board. Ensure skirtings are not fastened in a way that pins the floor.

2. Door frames will often need to be undercut to allow for expansion. If angling the plank when installing around a door is not possible, tap them in while flat or cut the bubble of the groove lip with a wood chisel or sanding machine and add wood glue to hold the panels together.



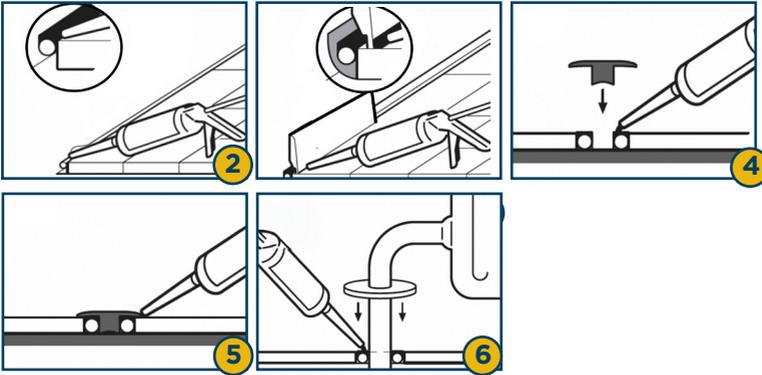
3. In rows where there is a pipe, make sure the pipe falls exactly in line with the short side of the two panels.

In rows where there is a double pipe, proceed as follows:

- Measure where the pipe will come through the plank. Don't forget to allow for expansion.
- Take a drill bit measuring the diameter of the pipe plus +20 mm for the expansion. Drill through the panel where the pipe will come through.
- Extend the hole to the edge of the panel.
- Lay the panel around the pipe.
- Take another panel and saw a piece that fits exactly in the remaining hole, and glue this piece with wood glue.

For a perfect finish around pipes, use pipe covers.

FINISHING IN MOISTURE PRONE AREAS



- 1.** For wet-area rooms such as bathrooms, kitchens, laundries, and entrances, follow the steps below. Use a waterproof, transparent, flexible silicone together with a PE foam rod. The silicone must be fully waterproof to prevent moisture ingress and flexible to allow the flooring to expand and contract.
- 2.** Push the PE foam rod of 8-10mm diameter into the expansion joints and apply the waterproof flexible silicone.
- 3.** Install the skirting board. Apply silicone between the skirtings and floor to avoid ingress of water. *Tip: put a tape on the floor before applying the silicone, this tape can be removed immediately after applying the silicone for a tidy finish.*
- 4.** For expansion joints, fit the base profile, place the PE foam rod and apply the silicone.
- 5.** Push the transition profile in the base profile and apply silicone to the edge of the profile.
- 6.** For a perfect finish around pipes, use pipe covers and the silicone on top of the PE foam rod. Then place the pipe cover and apply silicone around the edge.

AFTER INSTALLATION

You can walk on the floor during and immediately after installation. Ensure that humidity in the room is always at least 30%. Use a humidifier if you need to.

We recommend using a dry microfibre mop and a vacuum (must not have roller bars). Never use a steam mop on your laminate flooring.

Learn how to properly care and maintain your Strata Inspire flooring by reading our full Care & Maintenance Guide. Visit www.strataflooring.co.nz or simply scan the QR code.



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