

Installation Guide Tools

Broom, Electric Saw (carbide blade), Eye and Ear Protection, Cool Glide, Rubber Hammer, SureGuard®, Mask, Felt Pads, Pencil, Pull Bar, Straight-edge (6 ft), Tape Measure, Utility Knife, Wall Spacers (3/8"), Block Plane.

Product Inspections

At Gaia Flooring our highest priority is to ensure that your engineered hybrid wood flooring and accompanying products exceed expectations. The installer and owner are responsible for inspecting all planks before and throughout installation discarding any defective materials or pieces with questionable appearance of color, finish, or sheen. The owner and installer should discuss installation and layout to maximize satisfaction. The owner/installer assumes all responsibility for the product quality of the completed installation. NOTE: When it comes to the appearance of your engineered hybrid wood floors, woodworking techniques are used during production to create a visually appealing look. These techniques include hand distressing, scraping, wire brushing, chiseling, carbonizing, and color staining. As a result, there will be variations between plank sizing, bevel gap, color change, thickness, and color, adding to the unique character of your flooring. These are characteristics that are not to be mistaken for a manufacturing defect. Please remember that any samples, photos, or models provided are solely for demonstrative purposes. They do not guarantee that your purchased goods will mirror these examples. Variations between these visuals and installed flooring are not considered manufacturing defects. We recommend purchasing an additional 5% for back stock and replacement planks. It is important to carefully inspect the planks for their dimensions in appropriate light settings. If any plank appears doubtful, it should not be used for the project. Any complaints related to such issues will only be accepted if they are reported prior to installation. In this case, we stand committed towards providing a replacement within reasonable time frames after the investigation, (if) determined to be a manufacturing defect, of the complaint, once concluded successfully. Gaia Flooring does not accept responsibility for any shipping costs, installation repair, or replacement expenses resulting from the installation of a plank with visual defects.

Acclimation

Engineered hybrid wood requires a 48 hour acclimation period before

Warranty Owner

This Limited Warranty applies exclusively to the original end-user and is not transferable. The warranty safeguards the product's initial installation site location, and it covers only one site installation. A second location installation will not be covered by this warranty. It is important to note that this product warranty is specific to one site installation.

Obligations Of Owner

Note that the warranties outlined below are applicable to Gaia Flooring products only in the event that they are installed and maintained in accordance with our most current installation and maintenance guidelines. For the most up-to-date procedures, please refer to the Gaia Flooring website. The original purchaser must present proof of purchase and adherence to recommended installation and maintenance procedures when filing a claim. In the event that a defect or another matter covered by the limited warranties described below is discovered, please notify customercare@gaiafloor.com. They will carry out a thorough review and, if necessary, initiate the claim process. It is the responsibility of the owner to engage a C-15 qualified flooring installer or certified to install flooring in your state to ensure proper installation in your state if applicable.

WARNING: Do not sand, dry scrape, bead blast, or mechanically chip or pulverize existing resilient flooring, backing, lining felt, asphaltic "cutback" adhesive, or other adhesive. These products may contain asbestos fibers and/or crystalline silica. Avoid creating dust. Inhalation of such dust is cancer and respiratory tract hazard. Local building requirements may require that the existing floor material be tested to determine if there are asbestos materials. RFCI's (Resilient Floor Coverings Institute) Recommended Work Practices for Removal of Resilient Floor Coverings are a defined set of instructions addressed to removing all resilient floor covering structures. These instructions should be consulted for each installation.

installation. To ensure optimal performance and longevity of your floor, temperature should be kept between 60-85°F while relative humidity remains between 35% to 55% before, during, and after installation. If there is no time for acclimation, there should be no more than a difference of 25° F and 20% relative humidity between the stocking/transportation environment of the flooring and the final installation environment of the flooring.

Site Requirements

Nearwood Black Collection is intended to be a glueless flooring installation and can be installed directly over most existing floor coverings except for carpet. Before installation, it is necessary to remove wood flooring that is glued down to concrete. It should be installed indoors in a climate-controlled environment, on a clean, dry subfloor that meets building codes and is securely anchored. The installation location-specific structural components may need slight modifications for a successful installation. All responsibility here lies solely with the owner/contractor to satisfy local regulations before moving forward. Nearwood Black Collection is best suited for in climate-controlled (35-55% RH and 60-85° F) indoor installations. Additionally, Nearwood Black Collection cannot be laid over sump pumps or drains as these can cause damage over time when exposed to moisture from below or above grade levels. The flooring installer must assess the moisture level to discover if there is a significant amount of moisture underneath the floorboards. A calcium chloride test should be employed when examining concrete subfloors. (ASTM F1869-22), values must be ≤ 3 lbs/1000ft²/24-hr or $<80\%$ RH with an in-situ probe (ASTM F2170-02). Moisture readings of plywood subfloors must be $\leq 12\%$. It is necessary to ensure that the moisture levels, temperature, relative humidity, and subfloor situation remain at optimum levels before installing the flooring and continue to be maintained during and after installation. While the flooring is being installed, it should be monitored afterward to ensure the floor is kept in good condition. When installing your floating floor, it is recommended to install T-moldings in doorways that are 4 ft (1.22m) or less in width, as well as in rooms that are 40 ft (12.2 m) or larger in length or width. The methods help allow for proper floor movement and prevent potential issues. Floor movement must not be constrained by glue, nails, screws, hardware, or other fixed obstructions, including the time/base moldings. This product must be installed per these instructions and with a licensed flooring installer (installation receipt required).

Suitable Substrates for Nearwood Product Installation

For warranty coverage to remain valid, make sure to check for loose areas, hollow spots, cracks, and excessive moisture content. Fix any issues and ensure the substrates are securely prepared before installation. Nearwood product must be installed over one of the following suitable substrates, provided all preparation guidelines are strictly followed:

- I. One Layer of Sheet Vinyl
- II. One Layer of Glue-Down Flooring
- III. Concrete
- IV. Ceramic/Porcelain Tiles Over Concrete

Unsuitable Substrates for Nearwood Product Installation

Failure to adhere to these substrate requirements may result in voiding the product warranty. Please ensure that all installation guidelines and substrate preparations are carefully followed to maintain warranty coverage.

- I. Carpet (Including Commercial Carpet)
- II. Sheet Vinyl Floors with More Than One Layer
- III. Wood Floors Glued Down to Concrete Substrates
- IV. Additional Underlayment
- V. Strip Wood Plank or Tongue and Groove Plank Substrates
- VI. Substrates with Deflection
- VII. Substrates with loose areas, hollow spots, cracks, or excessive moisture content.

Installation Tips

- I. Flooring is the finishing touch on any construction or remodeling project, so be sure to get it installed after all other elements are in place, including Paint & Millwork.
- II. Nearwood Black Collection should not be installed underneath cabinetry or fixed items.
- III. Ensure you keep spare boards in climate-controlled locations in case replacement planks are needed for any unforeseen damage. With a flooring professional, it's easy to quickly and efficiently fix an issue.
- IV. **Additional underlayment should not be used.**
- V. Do not install Nearwood Black Collection in high-humidity areas such as steam rooms or saunas.
- VI. To ensure maximum stability for your floor, never attach it to any other surface.
- VII. Maintaining a moderate temperature between 60-80°F and ensuring the subfloor is sufficiently flat, level, and solid are critical elements for installation in residential homes.
- VIII. Nearwood Black Collection provides a clean, seamless fit for your floor. If the installation is not done with precision and care, damage may occur to click profiles - enlisting professional services and using suitable tools to complete the job is required.

Basement and Crawl Spaces

Concrete slab or ground must be dry. Ensure that crawl spaces have open vents year-round for proper air circulation and prevent moisture build-up. The ground in the crawl spaces must be covered entirely using 6 mil polyethylene vapor barrier. Crawl space clearance between the earth and underside of joists should be no less than 18", and the perimeter of the vent area should equal 1.5% of the total square footage of the crawl space or as mandated by code. See Figure 1.

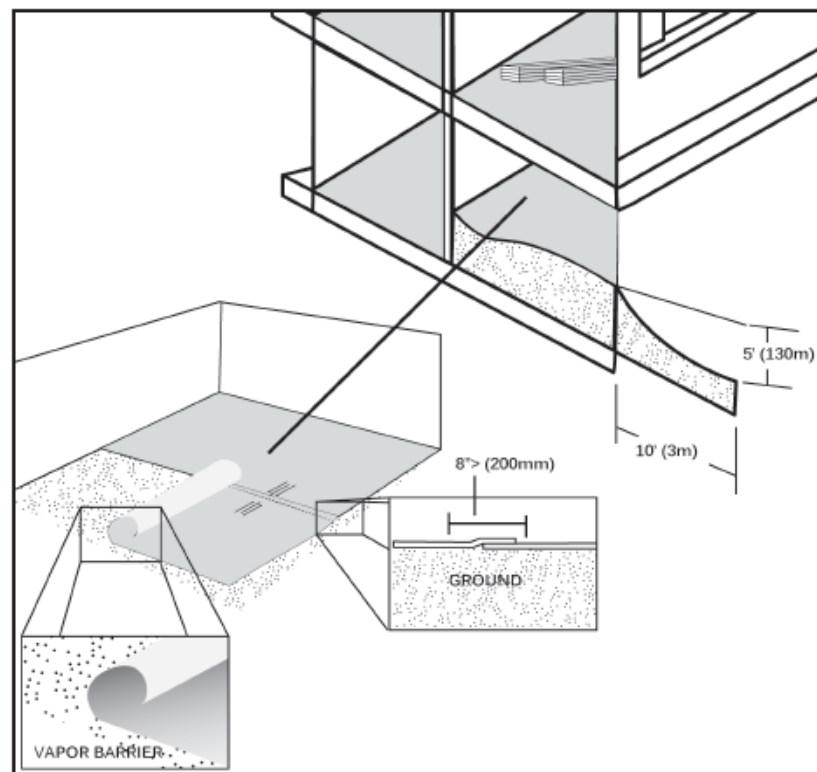


Figure 1: Basement and Crawl Spaces

⚠ WARNING

Drilling, sawing, sanding or machining wood products can expose you to wood dust, a substance known to the State of California to cause cancer. Avoid inhaling wood dust or use a dust mask or other safeguards for personal protection. For more information go to www.P65Warnings.ca.gov/wood.

SITE AND MATERIAL PREPARATION

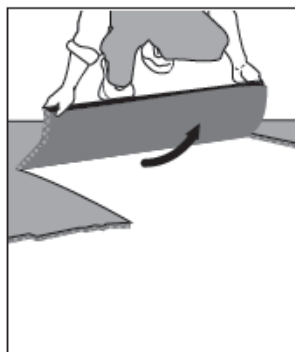


Figure 1: Site and Material Preparation



Figure 2-a: Site and Material Preparation

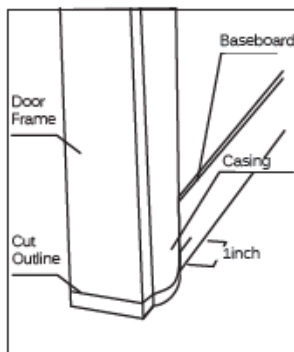


Figure 2-b: Site and Material Preparation

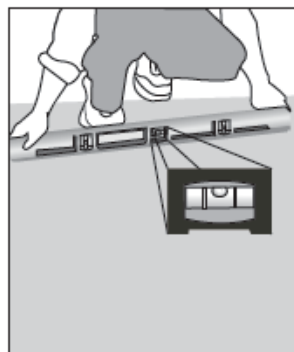


Figure 3: Site and Material Preparation

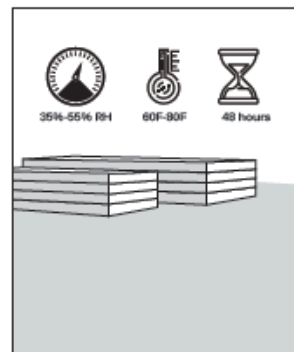


Figure 4: Site and Material Preparation



Figure 5: Site and Material Preparation

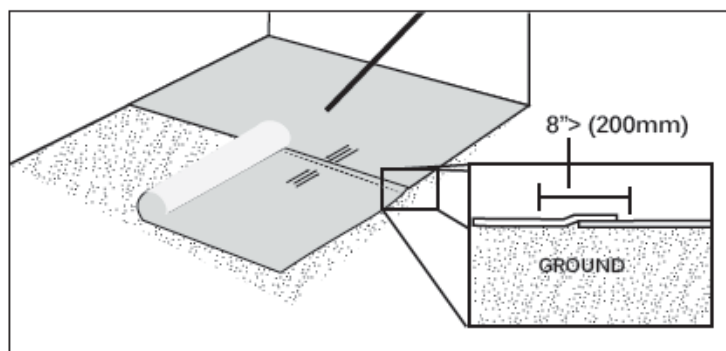


Figure 6: Site and Material Preparation

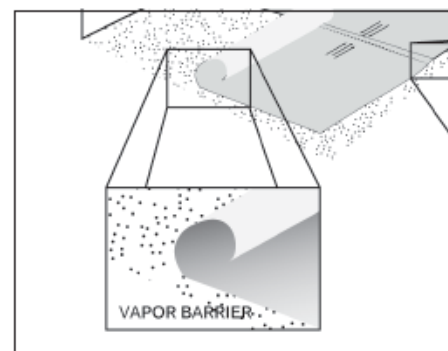


Figure 7: Site and Material Preparation

Site and Material Preparation

Figure 1: Take up the carpet and padding, and carefully remove any wooden flooring installed on the concrete.

Figure 2-a,b: Undercut the door frame and wall base to achieve a seamless look. Slide the flooring at least 3/8"; underneath the door frame and wall base while leaving at least 3/8" concealed expansion space.

Figure 3: Prepare the subflooring for a smooth, even finish - eliminating bumps and filling low spots to create no more than 3/16" in 10' radius (5 mm in 3 m) or 1/8" in 6' radius (3 mm in 2 m)—sand high areas or joints. Fill low areas with a high compressive strength (min. 3,000 psi) Portland-based compound. Vertical deflection must not exceed 3/16".

Figure 4: Properly preparing your flooring before installation is key. To avoid issues, ensure that the temperature and humidity of avoid issues,

ensure that the temperature and humidity of the storage/transport environment is controlled between 60 – 80 degrees Fahrenheit RH between 35%-55% while still adhering to 48 hours of acclimation. Lay flat and away from areas with excessive sunlight. Do not store standing. **Note: It is essential to maintain consistent temperature and humidity levels. The stocking/transportation environment should not deviate more than 25°F and 20% relative humidity from the final installation environment.**

Figure 5: Clean and clear debris from the subfloor before installation.

Figure 6: For maximum floor protection, installing a vapor barrier plastic polyethylene sheeting on concrete subfloors with at least 8 inches of overlapping seams is recommended. All installations over concrete sub-floors require a moisture barrier. Do not install additional underlayment.

Trim Accessories

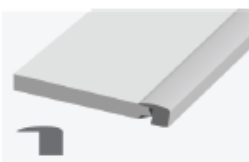
GAIA Flooring offers a 1 year Residential Limited Warranty and 90 day Commercial Warranty for its hard surface accessories when used in proper indoor residential applications. This warranty guarantees that the product will be free from manufacturing defects and is provided to the original end-use purchaser. The warranty takes effect from the date of purchase and lasts for the designated warranty period above. Coverage is valid only while the product remains owned and maintained by the original end-use purchaser. For any warranty-related claims, the original invoice from GAIA Flooring or an authorized dealer is required as proof of purchase.

For Uniclic Locking System Only (Nearwood Black Collection)

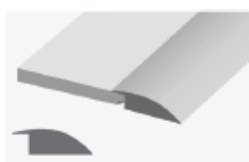
The Uniclic Angle - Snap Locking system encloses a female and male in the long side and short side of each plank:



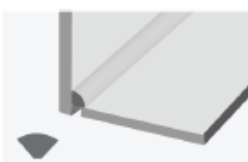
T-Molding



End Cap



Reducer



Quarter Round

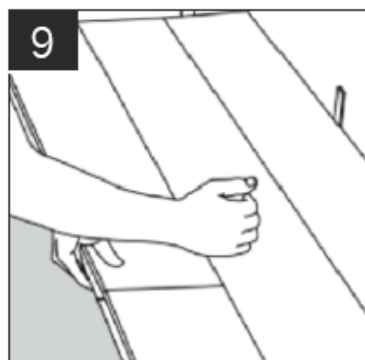
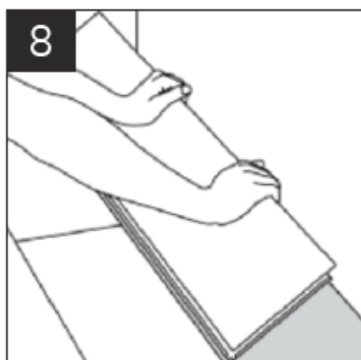
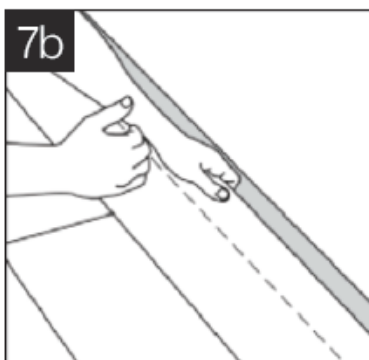
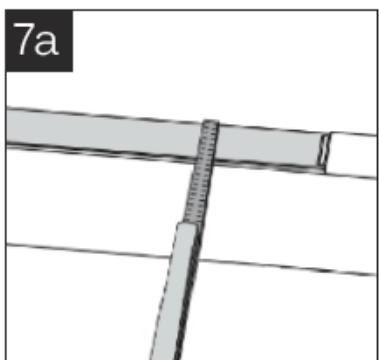
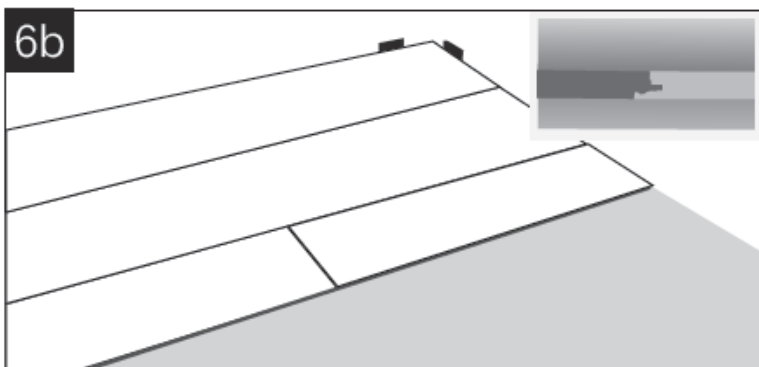
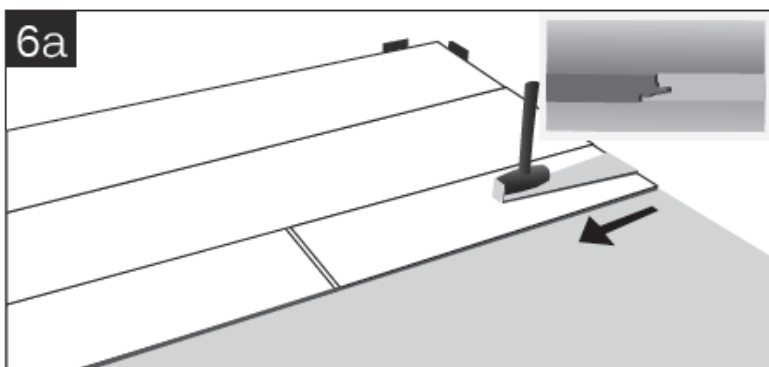
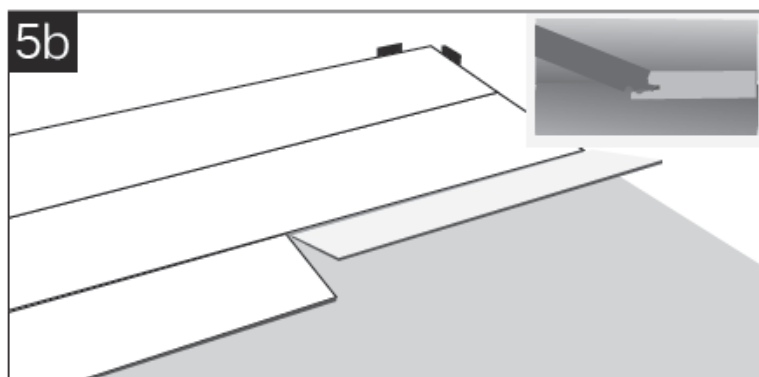
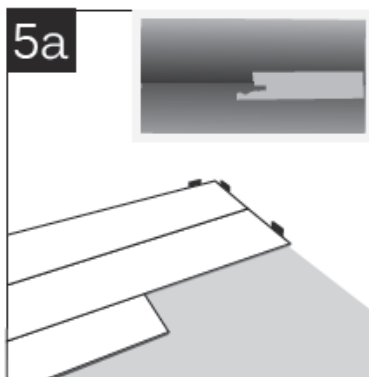
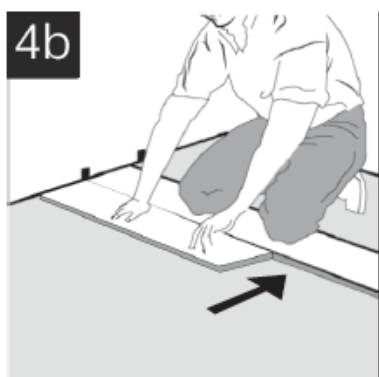
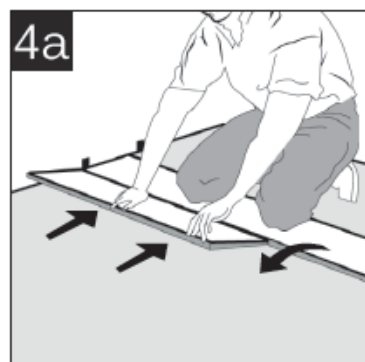
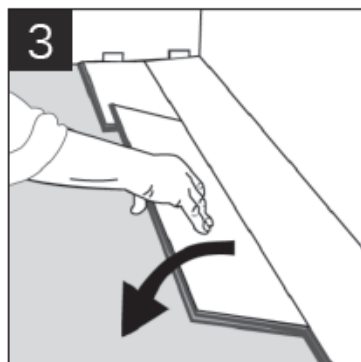
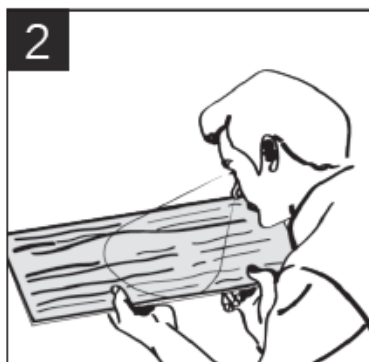
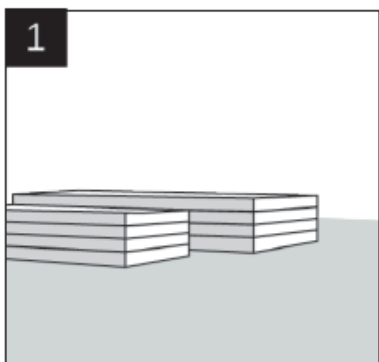


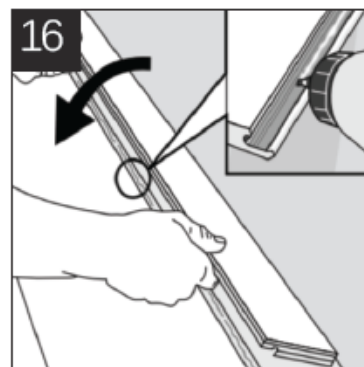
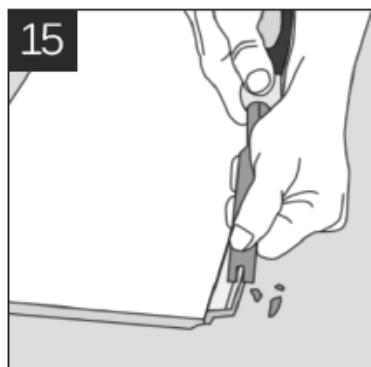
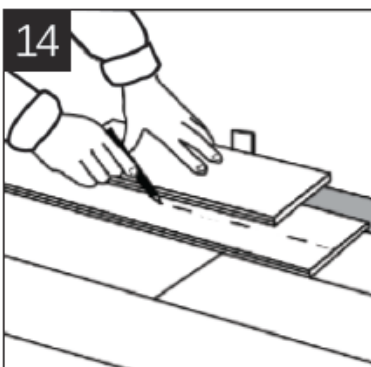
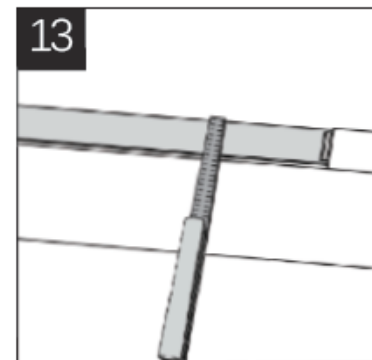
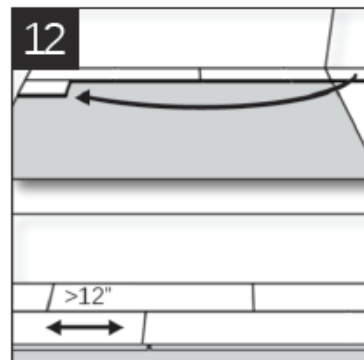
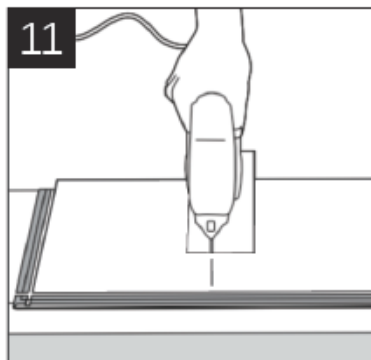
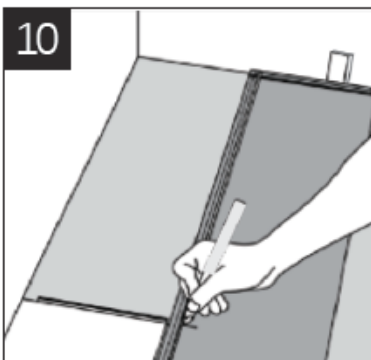
Overlap Nosing



Flush Stairnose

FLOORING INSTALLATION STEPS





Start of Installation

1: To keep your Nearwood Black Collection floors in top condition, always lay the boxes flat and avoid extreme temperatures (below 50°F or above 100°F) within 12 hours before installation. If exposed, acclimate for 48 hours. Store in a climate-controlled, low-moisture environment, and never store boxes upright. Stack pallets no more than three high and four inches off the ground for airflow. Protect from forklift damage and keep away from heating ducts, cooling ducts, and direct sunlight. Maintain temperatures between 60°F and 80°F with relative humidity between 35% and 55%.

2: Quality checks are the responsibility of the homeowner and the required licensed flooring installer. When installing components in an installation project, it is critical to inspect each piece before installation and confirm that the locking system has no cracks, defects, or other impediments. Warranties don't apply on materials with visible issues after being installed- this use constitutes acceptance of any flaws present at installment.

3: Start on the left corner and carefully place the plank 3/8" away from any walls. Use installation spacers for uniform expansion and to guarantee a secure fit throughout your perimeter.

4a-b: To ensure that the Uniclic locking system is secure, follow these steps during installation. Lift and angle the additional plank by 30 degrees. Align the plank locking mechanism to the adjoining plank - this must be aligned properly before engaging the plank. Upon engaging the planks, push the new plank towards and down the plank for a secure plank install. Use the flat of your hand to press down the length of the joint.

5a-b: With the Uniclic Locking system, you can easily connect the long-end planks until they lock in place. Angle the planks together until they align, raise the outer edge slightly, pull it back towards you until the board engages, and lower it down. This method of installation ensures a secure fit.

6a-b: To connect the next plank, you can use a tapping block and a rubber mallet to tap the short end towards the coinciding plank until both plank's short ends have been fully engaged.

7a-b: Installing planks on an uneven wall, the first row must conform to its contours. Use a 2" square block and pencil for scribbling along the surface of the wall before disassembling your initial plank layout. Once the cut on-marking you have made, reassemble this line with a 3/8" expansion pace maintained from all edges - including those adjacent to walls where possible.

8: Enhance your project's visual aesthetics by removing the first row and lifting the planks a few inches. Then, tap along their joint to identify where it needs trimming before you finally cut out only what is necessary for each plank.

9: To easily remove your flooring, pry up the planks a few inches and lightly tap along their edges - unlocking them from each other in no time.

10: Gently lay the final plank face-down, ensuring that its shorter side (without any locking strip) is facing away from the wall. Afterward, leave approximately 3/8" of space between it and the surface to allow for expansion - Draw a pencil line along this area as your guide before cutting.

11: To limit tearout (splintering) of the wood veneer, test a small portion of flooring with the saw you intend to use throughout installation. The material may be sawn face-down or face-up depending on the results of this test.

12: To ensure your structural integrity, secure each row with the help of a leftover piece. Aim for sections that are at least 12" long to start. Otherwise, provide extra support by beginning anew and cutting into one-third, half, or two-thirds lengths based on necessary staggering needs. Always maintain randomness in rows as you go forward - keep any end joints spaced conveniently apart (12-16") across different levels.

13: The distance to the walls can be adjusted when three rows are completed. Leave a 3/8" gap between your floor and any walls or other vertical obstructions such as cabinets, pipes, or columns. For the final row of planks, ensure each piece is precisely measured and cut for a perfect fit. Leave at least 3/8" extra space from the wall to account for expansion over time.

14: Accuracy is critical: Make a precise cut every time using a full-width scrap plank and 3/8" spacer to mark your final row.

15-16: For an extra secure fit in places like door jambs and cabinet kicks, use a Block Planer to remove the locking ridge from the plank's groove. To ensure that planks stay securely in place once they're tapped with a hammer and pull bar, spread 1/8" bead of tongue-and-groove adhesive along their grooves. Secure this joint until it sets by applying SureGuard® across its seam; then carefully wipe away any excess adhesive on top for clean results every time.

Maintenance and Care

Nearwood Black Collection Products

Nearwood Black Collection Glueless Floating Flooring is the perfect solution for withstanding reasonable wear and tear in any home. To ensure the life cycle, follow these simple guidelines for protection and care.

Routine Maintenance

Quickly tackle spills and splatters with a damp cloth as they occur to ensure the longevity of your hard surface flooring. When deep cleaning, use Hard Surface pH-neutral Cleaner or plain pH-balanced water on white clothes for tough spots such as oil, paint, lipstick, and ink stains; then wipe away any remaining residue. Remember routine maintenance - regularly sweep with a dust mop and use a vacuum with an appropriate attachment. Do not use a vacuum with a beater bar to prevent dirt build-up that can damage finishes over time. Opt for specialized products designed explicitly to maintain hard surfaces for lasting results between professional cleanings.

Hard Surface Cleaner

Avoid washing or mopping the floor with any liquid cleaning products (containing bleach, ammonia, chlorine, mop & shine products, or anything other than pH balanced) to keep it in optimal condition. Do not use steel wool pads to address tough-to-remove spots/spills. Excessive moisture and detergents can cause warping, decontamination, swelling, and joint-line separation, which may void your warranty. Clean up spills immediately. Do not use steam mops or excessive water/pH-balanced liquids, and allow to pool on the surface of the flooring. Not only does this create a slippery, unsafe environment, but can affect your warranty.

To ensure your engineered hybrid wood flooring lasts for years, take special care when dealing with difficult spots. Quickly eliminate candle wax or gum by hardening the area using ice and gently scraping it off using a plastic scraper - like a credit card. Keep in mind that sandier areas may require more frequent sweeping & vacuuming. Wipe up any residue with a damp cloth after each use.

Site Protection

Keep your engineered hybrid wood floors looking their best with entry mats and hard surface rug protectors designed to prevent dirt, sand, and other contaminants like oil or driveway sealer from being tracked onto surfaces. These accessories can help maintain a clean environment. Ensure the mats you choose do not have a rubber back, as this can trap moisture, heat & humidity between the floor and the rug. Over time, the rubber-backed mats can also discolor the flooring.

To preserve the integrity of area rugs over time, avoid slippage through an approved Rug Pad for added protection.

For further defense against scratches or indentations caused by heavy objects invest in floor protectors with wider leg/roller bases - you'll experience less damage as heavier items require larger diameter components to disperse weight correctly. Finally, it's important to keep relative humidity levels between 35-55% throughout the year so that natural expansion & contraction of engineered hybrid wood is minimized at all times.

Heating season (Dry)

During the heating season, dry conditions created by wood stoves and electric heat can cause materials to shrink. To prevent this issue, it is recommended that a humidifier be used to maintain comfortable humidity levels in your home.

Non-Heating Season (Wet)

During warm weather, the humidity levels in your home can become uncomfortable. To maintain a pleasant atmosphere, try using an air conditioner, dehumidifier, or periodically turning on the heating, as this will help maintain humidity levels during summer.

Extra Material

Extra material must be stored horizontally in an indoor, climate-controlled environment (35-55% RH and 60-80 degrees Fahrenheit), unopened, and in its original packaging. Avoid direct sunlight, store on a flat surface, and ensure the area is dry and well-ventilated. Products that do not meet these storage conditions cannot be used as test samples for product quality complaints and claims, nor can they be used as proof for product quality determination in complaints and lawsuits.