

Installation instructions for Natural Impressionist Replica Timber Plank

I. GENERAL INFORMATION

These installation specifications are for *Natural Impressionist*. All recommendations are based on the most recent available information.

The information on this sheet provides general guidelines. All instructions and recommendations must be strictly followed for a satisfactory installation.

1. The floor covering should be stored and installed in climate constant or climate controlled indoor locations with an average temperature of between 18°-29°C.
2. Install *Natural Impressionist* only after the jobsite has been cleaned and cleared of anything that may hinder a fluent installation or may damage the planks.
3. To minimize shade variation, mix and install planks from several cartons.
4. Note that colour uniformity of the planks can only be guaranteed for deliveries of the same production.
5. No claims will be accepted for flooring that has been cut to size or installed.
6. All necessary subfloor patching must be done with a non-shrinking, water-resistant filler. Follow strictly the instructions from the filler manufacturer.
7. Give *Natural Impressionist* minimum 24 hours to acclimatise in the room where the installation will take place. Do not open the cartons, but spread them out and protect package corners from damage.
8. Tools: Utility knife, tapping block, pull bar, spacers, if necessary tools for surface repair.

II. SUBFLOOR INFORMATION

Although *Natural Impressionist* is designed for floating installation, the correct preparation of the subfloor is still a major part of a successful installation. Roughness or unevenness of the subfloor may telegraph through the new floor covering, resulting in an unsightly surface and excessive wear on high spots.

A. Wood Subfloors

1. All wood and wood composition panels are suitable for the use under *Natural Impressionist* providing that they are smooth, flat, structurally sound and free of deflection. The panels include plywood, particle board, oriented strand board (OSB), flake board and wafer board.
2. If the surface of the wood subfloor is not smooth, a 6mm underlayment panel must be installed over the subfloor.

B. Concrete Subfloors

1. The concrete subfloor must be dry, smooth and free from dust, solvent, paint, wax, grease, oil, and any other extraneous materials. The surface must be hard and dense, and free from powder or flaking.
2. New concrete slabs must be thoroughly dry (at least six weeks) and completely cured. The final responsibility for determining if the concrete is dry enough for installation of the flooring lies with the floor covering installer. Although *Natural Impressionist* is not susceptible to damage from moisture, excessive subfloor moisture is an ideal breeding ground for mouldiness, mildew and fungus. The limited warranty does not cover discolouration from mould or from any kind of water damage caused by flooding, leaking or similar conditions.
3. Holes, grooves, expansion joints and other depressions must be filled with a suitable self-levelling compound, troweled smooth and feathered even with the surrounding surface.
4. Concrete floors with a radiant heating system are allowed, provided that the temperature of the floor does never exceed 32°C. Before installing the flooring, the heating system must be turned on to eliminate residual moisture.

C. Existing Floor Coverings

1. *Natural Impressionist* can be installed over most existing hard-surface floor coverings, provided that the existing floor surface is smooth or can be made smooth.
2. Ceramic tiles should be made smooth by applying a cementitious overlay such as patching or levelling compound.
3. When the removal of the existing resilient floor covering is not an option then it must be covered with a leveller or equivalent in order to adjust it. Existing sheet vinyl floors should not be heavily cushioned and must consist of only one layer.

III. INSTALLATION

Natural Impressionist is designed to be installed with the floating method. Never secure the planks to the subfloor. Always undercut all doorjambes. No part of the floor must be attached to any surface. A clear unimpeded 12mm space must be left for expansion around all room fixtures - walls, windows, sliding doors, kitchens, island benches, shelving, mouldings, columns, pipes, steel door frames, heavy objects and or transition strips etc. this is critical for the performance of the product. Attach spacers to each wall to ensure enough space is left.

1. Before you start with the installation, it is important to determine the layout of the flooring. Proper planning and layout will prevent having narrow plank widths at wall junctures or very short length pieces at the end of rows. **The maximum width and length the product can be laid is 8 metres before additional expansion is required - widths and lengths beyond 8 metres require the rooms to be broken up and additional expansion allowance needs to be incorporated (1mm for every 1mtr).**
2. As with all plank products, install the planks parallel to the longest wall.
3. Determine if the starter row will need to be cut. If the first row of planks does not need to be trimmed in width, it will be necessary to cut off the unsupported tongue so that a clean, solid edge shows towards the wall.
4. Installation of the product must start from the left side to the right of the room.
5. Install the second plank in the row by angling the end tongue into the end groove of the first plank. Be careful not to bend the corner of the plank. Maintain an expansion gap of approximately 8mm from the wall. Start the second row with cutting a plank to the required length. Keep in mind that the plank must not be shorter than 150mm to receive the best looking appearance.
6. Install the first plank in the second row by inserting the long side tongue into the groove of the plank in the first row. This is best done with a low angle of the plank. Install the second plank in the second row by inserting the short end tongue into the previously installed plank groove. Align the plank so that the long side tongue tip is positioned just over the groove lip of the plank in the first row. Working from the end seam, at a low angle, insert the long tongue into the groove of the adjoining plank. Very little force is required to seat the tongue into the groove. You should feel the tongue lock into the groove.
7. Work across the length of the room installing planks along the wall in the first row and then aligning the planks in the second row. It is critical to keep these two rows straight and square, as they are the "foundation" for the rest of the installation. Check squareness and straightness often.



8. Cut the last plank in the first row and leave an expansion gap of around 8mm. Planks may be cut with a utility knife using the “score and snap” technique. The left over of this plank may be used to start the third row if it is minimum 150mm long.
9. Continue installing planks and make sure to achieve a random appearance with end pieces of minimum 150mm. Check that all planks are fully engaged; if a slight gapping is noted, the gap can be tapped together by using a tapping block and a scrap of flooring to cover the tapping block in order to avoid damages on the planks.
10. When fitting under door casings, etc, the flexibility and convenient connection of *Natural Impressionist* becomes evident. If necessary, a flat pull bar may be used to assist in locking the planks.
11. When fitting around obstacles or into irregular spaces, *Natural Impressionist* can be cut easily and cleanly using a utility knife with a sharp blade. It is often beneficial to make a cardboard template of the area and transfer this pattern to the plank.
12. Protect all exposed edges of the *Natural Impressionist* by installing wall moulding and/or transition strips. Make sure that no plank will be secured in any way to the sub floor.
13. Protect the finished *Natural Impressionist* installation from exposure to direct sunlight.

IV. REPAIRS

Natural Impressionist is tough and durable; however, if a plank becomes damaged, it can be replaced. If the damaged plank is along the perimeter of the room, the easiest technique is to disconnect the planks until the damaged plank is removed. Replace the plank and reassemble the planks. If it is impractical to disconnect and reassemble the flooring, the following procedure should be followed:

- Using a straight edge and a sharp utility knife, cut out and remove the centre of the damaged plank, leaving approximately a 25mm strip attached to the surrounding planks on all sides.
- Carefully cut back from the corners of the plank to the inside edge.
- Remove the plank edges by wiggling the cut plank out from the tongue and groove of the surrounding planks.
- Prepare the replacement plank by placing the plank face down and folding back and removing the groove strip on both the long and end profile. Using the decorative surface of the tongue end as a guide cut away this overhanging profile using a sharp utility knife.

- Place some double sided carpet tape onto the subfloor covering sufficient area of the removed plank.
- Position the replacement plank by engaging the tongue of the long side into the groove of the adjoining plank. “Hinge” the prepared replacement plank into position.
- Use a hand roller to assist in aligning the plank edges into position

CAUTION: Some types of nails, such as common steel nails, may cause a discoloration of the *Natural Impressionist*. The method of gluing and screwing the underlayment panels is not recommended. Solvent based construction adhesives are known to stain *Natural Impressionist*. All responsibility for discoloration problems caused by the use of the above mentioned products is not the responsibility of the producer but rests with the installer.

V. MAINTENANCE

Use doormats outside each entrance to your home to prevent dirt, sand, grit and other substances from being tracked onto your floor. Use non-staining mats on your floor. Do not put rubber-backed, latex-backed or coco fiber mats on your floor because they will stain or damage the surface. Close your curtains or blinds where extreme sunlight hits the floor. A combination of heat and sunlight causes most home furnishings to fade or discolour.

Support furniture with wide-bearing, non-staining floor protectors. Ideally, the protectors should be at least one inch in diameter, made of non-pigmented hard plastic, and rest flat on the floor. Non-staining felt protectors are also acceptable. Casters (type W), felt pads or floor protectors are recommended for all moveable furniture.

Use protection mats under chairs with caster in order to avoid abrasion of the vinyl flooring. Make sure that any metal protectors are rust-proof.

If you need to move heavy furniture and/or appliances across the floor, always use strips of wood or hardboard runways to protect the floor. Always use runways even if you have an appliance dolly, or even if the heavy objects are equipped with wheels or rollers.

Sweep your flooring regularly with a damp cloth and only with water at least once a week.

Prevent stains by wiping up spills promptly.

Occasional mopping with Rinse-Free Cleaner is recommended when dirt builds up and sweeping alone is not sufficient. Follow strictly the guidelines given on the bottle. Do not use soap or detergent products as they will leave a dulling film.

Natural Impressionist Stain Solver

The overall stain resistance of our *Natural Impressionist* is excellent and most spills will wipe off quickly and easily with a clean, white cloth. Removing certain substances may take a little extra effort, as outlined in the chart below.

Start with first step listed. Only do steps necessary to resolve the problem. Always use a clean, white cloth for wiping up stains and turn it frequently to avoid spreading the stain. Rinse with clean water and allow area to dry between steps. If stain removal causes a change in gloss level, apply polish to restore the shine. Do not use wax, do not buff. Allow polish to dry “tack-free” between coats.

Food, Beverages	If a substance is gummy, scrape off with dull knife. Clean using Heavy Duty Cleaner and Stripper and a soft nylon pad or soft bristle brush. Saturate a clean, white cloth with bleach solution, cover stain and allow standing for no more than 1 hour.
Tar, Oil, Asphalt, Grease, Wax, Paint (oil-based) Scuffs, Marks, Scratches	Scrape excess substance off with dull knife. Clean using Heavy Duty Cleaner and Stripper and a soft nylon pad or soft bristle brush. Wipe with a clean, white cloth dampened with isopropyl alcohol.
Minor Cuts, Burns	Limit traffic over damaged area, cover with masking tape, refer to section IV for repair.
Lipstick, Antiseptics	Scrape excess off with a dull knife. Clean using Heavy Duty Cleaner and Stripper and a soft nylon pad or soft bristle brush. Wipe with a clean, white cloth dampened with isopropyl alcohol. Saturate a clean, white cloth with bleach solution, cover stain and allow standing for no more than 1 hour.
Rust	Clean using Heavy Duty Cleaner and Stripper and a soft nylon pad or soft bristle brush. Saturate a clean, white cloth with bleach solution, cover stain and allow standing for no more than 1 hour.
Crayon, Ink, Hair Dye, Permanent Marker	Clean using Heavy Duty Cleaner and Stripper and a soft nylon pad or soft bristle brush. Wipe with a clean, white cloth dampened isopropyl alcohol.