



Laminate Floor Installation Guide



Introduction

This guide will take you through the necessary steps to install your Bel-Air Laminate Flooring. Make sure to carefully read through this guide so that you may know the best way to prepare for the installation. Before reading this guide please make sure to read the **Bel-Air Flooring Pre-Installation Guide, Bel-Air Laminate Flooring Maintenance & Care Instructions and Bel-Air Laminate Flooring Warranty** available at www.belairwoodfloor.com. Failure to follow the instructions given in these guides, as well as improper installation, will void the warranty given by Bel-Air Wood Flooring. If you have any questions regarding this guide, or have any questions not covered in these documents; please contact Bel-Air Wood Floors at: (888) 800-9206 Monday – Friday, 8am – 5pm PST.

CAUTION: WOOD/SAW DUST

The International Agency for Research On Cancer has classified wood dust as a nasal carcinogen. The sawing, sanding, and/or machining of wood products can produce wood dust that can cause respiratory, eye, and skin irritations. Wood machining power tools should be equipped with a dust collector to reduce airborne wood dust. Wear an appropriate NIOSH designated dust mask to reduce exposure to airborne wood dust. Avoid contact with eyes and skin by using proper safety glasses and protective clothing. In case of irritation, flush eyes or skin with water for at least 15 minutes. For further technical for installation questions or to request a Product Specification Data Sheet contact the manufacturer at 888-800-9206 Monday – Friday, 8am – 5pm PST.

Attention California Installers and Consumers:

WARNING! Installation of this product and any wood product may create wood dust, which is known to the State of California to cause cancer. Avoid inhaling wood dust or use appropriate protection such as NIOSH mask for personal protection

It is up to the homeowner and/or installer to ensure the correct type, model, collection, and color were delivered to the jobsite prior to installation. The homeowner/installer can do so by comparing it with the “sample” that the floor was selected from, ensuring the floor received is the desired floor and is acceptable for installation. It is the homeowners/installers responsibility to inspect the product for any visible defects or damages prior to installation. If the floor does not meet the homeowners/installers expectations and/or is not acceptable for installation; please contact Bel-Air Wood Floor before beginning installation! The Bel-Air Wood Flooring Warranty does not cover any claims related to incorrect type, model, collection, color, visible defects or damages once the floor was installed. No replacement or refunds will be offered or issued once floor is installed!



Please Note: Bel-Air Laminate Flooring are not recommended in high-humidity areas where the floor is normally wet (e.g., steam rooms, or saunas).

1. Defect & Irregular Tolerance

Bel-Air Laminate flooring is manufactured in accordance with accepted industry standards, which permit manufacturing, grading and natural deficiencies to not exceed 5%. If more than 5% of the material is unusable, do not install the flooring. Immediately contact the retailer from which the flooring was purchased. No claim will be accepted for materials with visible defects once the floor was installed. Installation of any material serves as acceptance of the material.

2. Calculating & Ordering

When calculating square-footage and ordering laminate flooring please consider adding at least 10%-15% for cutting & waste. Laminate flooring like any other wood flooring must be cut to fit around obstacles such as but not limited to: Stair-cases, wall contours, pipes, and other household items.

3. Shipping, Handling & Storage

Please refrain from shipping, loading or unloading laminate flooring in rain, snow or other humid conditions. Make sure to store laminate flooring in an enclosed building that is well ventilated. When storing the laminate floor boxes make sure to leave adequate room around the stacked boxes to allow air circulation. Do not store Laminate-flooring cartons near heating, cooling ducts or direct sunlight.

Do not deliver wood flooring to the jobsite or install wood flooring until appropriate temperature and humidity conditions have been achieved. Appropriate temperature and humidity conditions are defined as those conditions to be experienced in the building after occupancy.

4. Acclimation

Bel-Air Wood Flooring products are made to perform best when wood reaches its EMC of 6%-9%, which directly coincides with a relative humidity range of 30%-50%, and within a temperature ranging from 60° to 80° Fahrenheit. These conditions are usually the normal living conditions of any normal household. Therefore, it is recommended to acclimate Bel-Air Laminate flooring for at least 3-5 days in order to allow the planks to adjust to the new environment.

Please refer to the Bel-Air Pre-Installation Guide for more detailed information regarding acclimation, relative humidity (RH) and floor equilibrium moisture content.



5. Job Site Conditions

It is the sole responsibility of the homeowner/installer to determine if the job site conditions, environment, and installation surface (Sub-Floor) are acceptable for Bel-Air Laminate flooring installation as well as meet or exceed the NWFA (National Wood Flooring Association) industry standards and regulations. Please make sure to evaluate the job site for potential problems before wood flooring is delivered and installation begins.

PLEASE NOTE: Bel-Air Wood Floors warranty does not cover any failures resulting from, or related to, job-site environment/condition or sub flooring deficiencies.

The Homeowner/Installer must make sure of the following prior to installing the floor:

- Homeowner/Installer must ensure that the building is structurally complete and sound.
- Homeowner/Installer must ensure appropriate/consistent temperature and humidity conditions have been achieved. Appropriate temperature and humidity conditions are those that replicate conditions to be experienced in the building once occupied
- Insure that moisture and humidity test have been performed prior to shipping flooring to the job site.
- Ensure proper drainage exists around the structure.

6. Installation Surface & Sub-Floors

Bel-Air Laminate Flooring is considered a “floating” floor and is installed using a click floor system. This allows Bel-Air Laminate floor to be installed over most hard surfaces such as:

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| • CD Exposure 1 plywood. | • Ceramic tile. | • Slate. |
| • OSB Exposure 1 subfloor panels. | • Resilient tile & sheet vinyl. | • Marble. |
| • Concrete slab. | • Cork Ceramic. | |
| • Existing wood or laminate floor. | • Terrazzo. | |

Sub-Floor Requirements: The homeowner and/or installer must make sure

- **Safe & Sound** - That the sub-floor is properly fastened, structurally supported, and meets or exceeds all applicable local building codes & regulations as well as the NWFA (National Wood Flooring Association) guidelines.
- **Clean & Dry** - The homeowner and/or installer must make sure that the installation surface (sub-Floor) is clean, dry and free of any debris such as nails, wax, oil or any adhesive residue.



- **Flatness** - Installation Surface / Sub-Floor Must be flat to a tolerance of 3/16" per 10' radius (4.76mm, In a 3.05m.) and the surface slope must not exceed 1" in 6' (2.54 cm in 1.83 m). If installation surface (Sub-Floor) does not meet the requirements stated below necessary steps must be taken to correct the problem.
- **Soft Installation Surfaces / Sub-Floors** - Soft Sub-Floors such as carpet or padding must be removed prior to installation
- **Nail Or Glue** - Do not nail or glue flooring to the subfloor at any point, unless a glue-down and or nail-down application is desired.
- **Radiant Heat Sub-floors** - Radiant heated subfloors should not exceed 85°F (29°C).

7. Prerequisites

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| • Pull Bar | • Hammer | • Safety Glasses |
| • Tapping Block | • Drill | • NIOSH-Designated Dust Mask |
| • Spacers | • Saw | • Touch-Up Kit/Filler Kit |
| • Carpenter's Square | • Utility Knife | |
| • Tape Measure | • Painters Tape | |

Suggested Underlayment

- Bel-Air Combo Foam (Blue Foam) – 2mm. (200 Ft 2. /Roll)
- Bel Air Aluminum Back (White Foam) – 2.8mm. (200 Ft 2. /Roll)
- Bel-Air Combo Foam (Purple Foam) – 3.0mm. (200 Ft 2. /Roll)
- Bel-Air Silent Green (Green Foam) – 3.0mm. (100 Ft 2. /Roll)
- Bel-Air Brown EVA Foam – 3mm. (100 Ft 2. /Roll)
- Bel Air Black EVA With Aluminum Back – 2.8mm. (100 Ft 2. /Roll)
- Bel-Air Rubber With Aluminum Back – 2.0mm. (101 Ft 2. /Roll)

Suggested Transition Pieces

- T-Molding
- End-Cap
- Reducer
- Quarter-Round
- Flush Stair Nose



8. Preparing For Installation

Trim Pieces & Door Casings - Prep the installation by removing any existing baseboards trims and transitions moldings. Undercut all door casings at the height of the new floor so it will fit underneath (Remember to allow a gap for expansion).

Plank Direction - Lay down planks to determine in which direction the panels will be laid. As a general rule, the floor should be laid parallel to the longest wall. This will create an aesthetically pleasing look.

Inspect Planks - Inspect each plank for imperfections and damage as well as remove any manufacturing residues from the clicking channel before installing or cutting.

Expansion Gap - An expansion gap of 1/2" to 5/16" must be provided at all walls and fixed vertical surfaces to allow for expansion.

Layout - Measure the area of the room to get an idea for a "balanced" layout. The width of the first row of planks at the starting wall should be approximately the same width as the last row on the finishing wall. This can be adjusted by rip cutting the panels. The starting or finishing rows should not be less than 2" in width. Or half the plank (whichever is greater)

Installing Cabinets

Install cabinets and then the laminate around the cabinets, leaving the 1/4" (6.35 mm) to 1/2" (12.7 mm) expansion zone.

- If installing cabinets after the laminate has been installed, most or all of the cabinet weight should be supported by the wall mountings. To secure the cabinets to the substrate with screws or nails, drill holes through the laminate 1/2" (12.7 mm) diameter larger than the screw or nail to allow for expansion.

Installing Kitchen Islands

- The island must be freestanding and weigh less than 250 pounds if it is to be installed over the laminate.
- If the island weighs more than 250 pounds, the laminate is to be installed around the island, allowing the normal 1/4" (6.35 mm) to 1/2" (12.7 mm) expansion area around the base of the island.
- If the laminate has already been installed, and the island must be installed over the laminate, and the island weighs more than the 250 pound maximum, drill holes through the laminate 1/2" (12.7 mm) diameter larger than the bolts (to allow for expansion) and bolt the island to the subfloor.



9. Installation Process

A. Underlayment - Lay out your underlayment in the area you plan to lay down floor panels. Unroll only one sheet at a time during panel installation to prevent damaging the underlayment. Once the first sheet of underlayment is covered with laminate floor planks, repeat the process. Butt the two edges of the sheet together and seal with sealing tape. Do not overlap sheets.

B. Getting Started With The First Row - Begin the installation in the top left hand corner against the wall and work right. Remove the tongue on the long side of the planks in first row to provide a straight, solid edge along the wall. Place the plank a minimum $\frac{1}{4}$ " – $\frac{1}{2}$ " from wall on the left. Use the installation spacers throughout all edge areas to insure the correct expansion space is maintained. Continue this down the entire length of the wall. Insert the next plank to the right of the first one by slightly angling the short side of the plank's tongue into groove until plank locks into position. Press the plank forward and fold down into place. Continue working right until the first row is assembled.

C. Last Plank In The Row - Continue installing planks until you reach an obstacle that requires cutting. Measure the distance between the wall and the edge of the last plank in the row and subtract $\frac{1}{4}$ " – $\frac{1}{2}$ " and cut the board accordingly (Ensuring a $\frac{1}{4}$ " – $\frac{1}{2}$ " gap between the edge of the plank and the wall)

D. Installing The Remaining Rows - Assemble the first panel in the second row to the adjacent panel in the first row by slightly angling tongue into groove until plank locks into position. Press the plank forward and fold down into place. (Use painter's tape to secure the panel across the assembled joint to hold it in place.)

Continue in the same trend, laying down additional rolls of underlayment as required until you reach the end wall. Be sure to maintain a $\frac{5}{16}$ " expansion gap at all fixed vertical. Work from several different cartons to minimize "clustering" of patterns. Maintain a random stagger of end seams.

E. When you get to the end wall; measure and cut the planks in the last row to fit. Be sure to use full width planks. Remember to allow for a minimum of $\frac{1}{4}$ " – $\frac{1}{2}$ " expansion space from the wall. You can use the plank and $\frac{1}{4}$ " – $\frac{1}{2}$ " spacer to mark your cutting line on the last row.

F. In areas such as doorjambs or cabinet kick bases, where planks cannot be angled to lock into place, use a chisel or a utility knife to remove the locking ridge from the bottom of the plank groove. Apply a $\frac{1}{8}$ " bead of adhesive to the bottom groove, and gently tap the plank into place using a pull bar and hammer. Once in, be sure to apply enough strips of painters tape across the seam to hold the joint



securely in place until the adhesive sets. Use a clean, soft, cloth to carefully clean up any excess adhesive on the surface of the planks.

10. Moldings & Trims

Once all planks are installed, and any adhesive is cured, remove spacers and install appropriate trims and moldings in applicable places.

When installing baseboards or wall-base make sure that the transition piece doesn't press against the floor therefore allowing it to move freely.

Repairs

Always inspect panels before installation; however, if damage occurs during installation, the following repair procedures may be used: If a panel is slightly damaged or chipped, fill the void with a color matched filler. Bel Air carries an array of colors to match your floor.

If a panel is severely damaged and must be replaced the flooring will need to be disassembled back to the damaged planks. Determine the shortest distance from a sidewall and remove the molding. Lift the planks a few inches and tap along the joint. Remove the entire row back to the damaged area. Replace the damaged plank and reassemble the flooring.



Bel-Air Wood Flooring • (888) 800-9206 • www.BelairWoodFloor.com