

Installation Instructions for Flooring

Keep It Dry...Before and After Installation!

Most "problems" are caused by moisture. All woods shrink as they dry and swell when they absorb moisture. Problems such as checking, splitting and nail popping are the result of these dimensional changes.

The good news is that most moisture-related problems are preventable through proper construction techniques. By limiting moisture's access to flooring, shrinking and swelling can be minimized.

Follow these instructions.....

Slope exposed soil underneath the porch away from the center to permit runoff of any water that may accumulate. Also, be sure that the surrounding landscaping slopes away from the porch so that rainwater and/or artificial watering systems do not cause a moisture problem.

Cover the ground under the porch with a 6-mill polyethylene film. Overlap the film at least 6" and cover lightly with soil to avoid damage to the film. This severely restricts the natural accumulation of moisture from the ground on the underside of the floor.

Provide adequate ventilation. This is critical for maintaining the optimum performance of a porch. There must be a minimum of 18" clear and unobstructed continuous airflow underneath the porch at all times. This can be accomplished by not enclosing the porch with a solid foundation wall. The best wrapping around a porch is with a lattice skirt. If this is not possible, then use *LARGE* and numerous vents on the sides as well as ornamental vents on the floor surface itself. Inadequate ventilation is the #1 cause of moisture problems experienced with porch flooring.

*Slope the porch framing 1/4" per foot away from the house to permit adequate water runoff.

*Install under covered porches. Flooring should not be used on uncovered decks exposed to the elements.

*Vent columns and newell posts at top and bottom.

Store it right!!!

Some builders allow for one to two weeks' acclimation of the boards prior to painting and installation. The material should be kept in a dry place and stacked on stringers to permit adequate air circulation.

- DO store flooring under roof.
- DO keep flooring dry.
- DO store flooring off the ground.

- DO NOT keep flooring wrapped tightly in plastic covers.
- DO NOT leave flooring in the sun or cover in dark plastic.
- DO NOT let flooring get wet or dirty.

Follow these ideas for installation

*Allow the installed framing to acclimate for one to two weeks prior to application of the flooring. Many builders apply a coat of water-repellant sealer on the top of all floor joists, providing added protection against joist expansion.

*Prime each piece completely prior to installation. Brush-apply one to two coat of a top-quality oil-based deck and porch enamel on both sides, edges and ends. The best primer is the finish coat thinned with one pint thinner per gallon (see finish recommendations). Do not use a typical exterior house paint primer, as it is too soft and easily damaged through abrasion.

* Blind-Nail at every joist using properly sized nails. Nails should penetrate joists by a minimum of 1 1/2".

* DO use non-corrosive nails - top quality 8d ring shank hot-dipped galvanized, aluminum alloy or stainless steel nails.

* DO allow a minimum 1/2" expansion space between the flooring area and house (or wall) to allow for dimensional change. This space can be concealed with decorative exterior trim (also acclimated).

*DO extend floor to create 1" overhang beyond the band joist.

*DO NOT use pneumatic staple or nail guns.

*DO NOT space floor joists further than 16" O.C. (12"O.C.) is preferable.

You're Not Done Yet.....Finishing Instructions

* Brush-apply TWO coats of oil-based porch and floor enamel. Porch and deck enamel is formulated to provide a hard abrasive-resistant finish. Sanding thoroughly between each coat to insure a proper bond. Solid-color stains should never be used on a porch floor due to their low resin content.

Keep your eye on it...Maintenance

Conduct a periodic inspection for water accumulation, integrity of the soil barrier and raised boards. Refinishing porch flooring can be expected every 3 to 5 years, depending upon weather conditions and the amount of exposure to direct sunlight.

Of course the manufacturer and merchant have no control over the variables that exist and cannot be held responsible for flooring that was not handled properly. These recommendations will not guarantee flawless performance, but are intended, instead, to relate to our customers the latest and best information regarding proper handling of porch flooring.