

## **Strandwoven® Bamboo - Installation Instructions**

**Important:** COMPLETELY READ ALL OF THE FOLLOWING GUIDELINES, AS THEY ARE PROVIDED TO HELP WITH THE INSTALLATION PROCESS. INSTALLATIONS SHOULD BE DONE BY A PROFESSIONAL FLOORING INSTALLER AND SHOULD ADHERE TO THE INFORMATION AND GUIDELINES PROVIDED BY THE NATIONAL WOOD FLOORING ASSOCIATION ([WWW.NWFA.ORG](http://WWW.NWFA.ORG); 800-422-4556). WHERE THESE INSTRUCTIONS DIFFER FROM THE NWFA'S, THESE GUIDELINES TAKE PRECEDENCE. IF YOU HAVE ANY QUESTIONS OR CONCERNS, PLEASE CONTACT A SUSTAINABLE MATERIALS REPRESENTATIVE PRIOR TO STARTING THE INSTALLATION PROCEDURE.

### **Pre-Installation Jobsite Requirements:**

- Carefully inspect all material before installation. Any material installed with obvious defects (grade, color, finish, quality, or other visual defects) will not be warranted.
- Please note that bamboo is a natural material and slight variations in color occur naturally.

#### **Jobsite Requirements:**

Prior to the installation of Strandwoven® Bamboo, the installer must ensure that the jobsite and site conditions are suitable for installation. Sustainable Materials is not responsible for flooring failure resulting from unsatisfactory jobsite/subfloor conditions.

- **Structurally sound subfloor** (5/8" plywood, 3/4" OSB, existing solid-wood subfloor, or concrete; particleboard is not an acceptable subfloor for the installation of hardwoods)
- **Level subfloor** (within 1/8" height difference over 10 linear feet in all directions); if wooden subfloor is used, ensure subfloor is well fastened to joists (6" on center nail pattern is suggested)
- **Dry subfloor** – subfloor must remain dry year-round.
  - On wood - when installing on a wooden subfloor, the difference between the moisture content of the flooring and the subfloor must not be greater than 2 percentage points. If you are unsure how to determine this, contact Sustainable Materials. **Note: Acclimating is one of the most important steps to ensuring a healthy floor.**
  - On concrete - when installing on a concrete slab, you must ensure that the flooring installed is separated from any potential moisture coming from or transferring through the slab (see NWFA guidelines if you have questions). In addition, slab must not exceed 3lb. - as per the Calcium Chloride test; a general rule of thumb is that 60 days is the minimum for a concrete to properly cure. While bamboo flooring is much more stable than most woods, it is still subject to damage when in direct contact with a constantly wet slab. The bamboo must be isolated from this type of slab by using a reverse vinyl, sleeper sub floor, or alternative. Urethane adhesives will usually fail when vapor pressure exceeds 3 pounds per 1000 sq. ft. in 24 hours. Bamboo flooring cannot be glued down under those conditions.
- **Site Conditions**- the temperature and relative humidity should be consistent for at least 10 days prior to installation (the minimum suggested acclimatization period; longer is always better). Hardwood flooring functions best when the room temperature ranges from 60-70 Fahrenheit, and the room relative humidity stays between 40-60%.
  - **Important Note:** Room temperatures above 80 Fahrenheit, or below 50 Fahrenheit, or rooms with relative humidity's above 65%, or below 35% will void all warranties. These conditions must be met not only for installation requirements, but also with year-round conditions. A humidifier or dehumidifier may be needed to remedy these conditions, which not only will ensure a healthy Strandwoven® Bamboo floor, as well as help ensure healthy indoor air quality.
  - **Note:** In extremely dry climates, care should be taken to avoid shrinkage by allowing flooring to acclimate under actual use conditions. Remove the planks from the box and expose them to local conditions until the material has sufficiently acclimated to the site.
- **Debris-free subfloor** – prior to installation, the subfloor should be thoroughly cleaned to ensure all debris is removed.

**PLEASE NOTE:** Due to the unique construction of the compressed Strandwoven® bamboo/wood products, excessive moisture such as subfloor moisture will have different effects on the product than traditional solid hardwood flooring. Strandwoven® Bamboo is made of layered scraps that are compressed like other composites. Excessive moisture, such as subfloor moisture can potentially cause it to expand and cup like normal solid hardwood but unlike normal hardwood, it can also expand vertically. This can cause the surface of the Strandwoven® Bamboo to bubble and blister when excessive moisture has entered between the layers and

can also cause checking and cracking on the ends. This is NOT considered a product defect but only an adverse effect due to excessive moisture. When the excessive moisture is removed from the area, the cupping may subside slightly, but any bubbling, blistering and cracking will most likely remain. Sustainable Materials therefore HIGHLY RECOMMENDS that all subfloors are dry and properly sealed before any installation, and any topical moisture beyond recommended cleaning is avoided.

## **General Installation Guidelines –**

- **Use spacers** – spacing around the perimeter and other fixed vertical portions of the room must be maintained to account for the typical fluctuations in relative humidity found in most interior environments (3/8" recommended).
- **Work out of multiple boxes** – though great effort is made to ensure color consistency, Strandwoven® shades do vary, and there are no standards for this so the shade differences between cartons may be noticeable. Mixing cartons creates a natural, random shade effect.
- **Stagger Seams** – this ensures a random and flowing pattern to the floor.

Strandwoven® Bamboo can be installed using the "nail/staple-down" method, the "glue-down" method, or the floating floor method.

### **Installation methods:**

**Nail/Staple Down:** Planks shall be square with the room and parallel to its longest dimension by positioning with a chalk line, leaving 3/8" expansion from base plate, wall, or any other stationary vertical areas (site-made spacers work well to ensure proper spacing). Ensure starter rows are firmly in place by wedging or face nailing. Once initial rows are secure, second and further courses shall be blind nailed directly above tongue at a 45–50-degree angle to the face. Fasteners shall be spaced at 4–6-inch intervals with a minimum of 2 fasteners per piece. **NOTE:** There will not be a guarantee for Bamboo flooring installed over or onto particleboard. The Sustainable Materials recommends using a pneumatic nailer using approx. 1 -1/4" to 1-1/2" cleats in length. Powernail is a brand that has worked well with our products. Compressor pressure should be tested to several test pieces to ensure the cleats are properly driven; splitting of the tongue and insufficient fastener depth are strong indicators that pressure is not properly adjusted. Sustainable Materials will not be held responsible for improper or inadequate installation in any event. According to NWFA, all boards over 5" wide should also be glued down to substrate along with nailing.

**Glue Down:** Use an elastomeric moisture cured urethane wood flooring adhesive like "Dritac 7600", "Bostik's Best", "Taylor 2071", or "Franklin's 811 Plus". If installing directly on a slab, follow the NWFA guidelines for properly isolating the slab. Follow the adhesive manufacturer's guidelines for safe use, storage and handling. Spread with a notched trowel as recommended by the adhesive manufacturer. Planks shall be started square with the room and parallel to its longest dimension by positioning with a chalk line, leaving 3/8" expansion space from base plate, wall, or any other stationary vertical areas (site-made spacers work well to ensure proper spacing). Follow the installation instructions of the manufacturer of the glue used. Continue laying the adhesive in useable quantities, until the entire floor is laid. Important: Remove any adhesive on the plank surface(s) immediately, as this is extremely difficult to remove once cured.

**Gyp-crete Underlayment:** If installing on **Gyp-crete**, it is essential that the slab material is completely dry (Delmhorst BD 2100 or G79 are recommended for an accurate moisture reading in gyp-crete). For detailed recommendations on installing over the Gyp-crete line of products, contact Maxxon Corporation (800-356-7887) - "Procedures for Attaching Finished Floor Goods to Maxxon Underlays". Options suitable for installation over gyp-crete are glue-down, install a 3/4" plywood subfloor, float two layers (perpendicular to one another) of 1/2" plywood, nail and glue sleepers, or float the material.

**Hydronic Radiant Systems:** Strandwoven® Bamboo can be installed over "hydronic" radiant systems but should not be used over "electric" systems. The surface temperature must **never** exceed 85 degrees

Fahrenheit. Due to the nature of radiant heat, the relative humidity must be kept between 40-60% (the use of a humidifier/ dehumidifier will likely be needed). It is important to ensure that the "hydronic" system is running for at least 7 days prior to the installation and then turned off prior to and during the installation. For detailed information of the installation procedures on hydronic systems, contact the Radiant Panel Association 800 660-7187, or your Strandwoven® Bamboo supplier).

**Floating Method:** Install a suitable vapor barrier and/or underlayment, taping the seams to ensure full coverage over the subfloor (call for recommendations if needed). A recommended adhesive is E-Z Bond (Medium Viscosity formula - 1-866-239-2663), though it is important to understand this material "sets" in approximately 15 seconds (it is a derivative formula of "super-glue"). **Important Note: Prior to applying adhesive to planks, ensure they properly fit** – once they are glued together, there is no recommended way to separate the planks – **proceed cautiously**. Begin the installation using spacers to ensure recommended expansion perimeter is maintained (3/8"). Place the groove of the starter row against the wall and apply adhesive (once proper fit is confirmed) along the bottom of the groove – quickly tap the flooring planks together using a tapping block. For the first several rows, it is also recommended to apply glue to the bottom side of the groove at the end joints.

- **Moisture: While bamboo flooring is much more stable than most woods, it is still subject to damage when in direct contact with a wet slab. The bamboo must be isolated from this type of slab by using a reverse vinyl or sleeper sub floor. Urethane adhesives will usually fail when vapor pressure exceeds 3 pounds per 1000 sq. ft. in 24 hours. Bamboo flooring cannot be glued down under those conditions.**

## **Care and Maintenance Instructions**

### **Cleaning**

- Blot up spills and spots immediately (Standing moisture will penetrate the 'wood' which can cause irreversible discoloration and damage).
- Vacuum, dust mop, or sweep the floor to minimize abrasive grit and dirt. *Note: Do not use vacuum with beater bars.*
- Periodically clean floor with BonaX hardwood floor cleaner available from your local flooring retailer or [www.bona.com](http://www.bona.com) (*Never use other cleaning products or detergents.*) Sustainable Flooring recommends a Terry Cloth style mop. For daily wiping the Sustainable Flooring recommends the use of distilled water applied to the mop with a spray bottle. (Tap water contains ingredients that may leave an unsightly film).
- ALWAYS WIPE DRY IMMEDIATELY until no moisture is visible on the floor. Do not use wax, polish, oil soap, abrasive cleaners, steel wool, scouring powder, or ANY appreciable amount of water
- Do not use wet mops, wet scrubbers or steam cleaners as these products will cause irreversible discoloration and damage.

### **Protecting Your Investment**

- Your newly installed floors are 'real' wood and therefore are subject to change from excessive moisture, or non-conforming environmental conditions. Remove any standing water immediately and maintain an indoor relative humidity level of 35-55% throughout the year. To minimize the natural expansion and contraction of wood Use quality vinyl-back breathable area rugs and doormats by outdoor entrance areas to prevent dirt, sand, grit, and other substances such as but not limited to water, oil, asphalt, driveway sealer from being tracked onto your floor.
- Use felt floor protectors and wide-bearing cylinder leg bases to minimize indentations. As a rule of thumb, the heavier the item the wider the floor protector should be. The Manufacturer does not recommend the use of wheeled furniture as they will accelerate wear not covered by this warranty. Chair mats with a non-slip breathable pad should be placed under chairs with wheels. Clean under mats frequently to minimize grit build up.



- Avoid gouges or cuts on your floor from sharp objects. While your newly installed floor with a high-quality factory finish, it is not impervious to scratch or damage.
- Rearranging rugs and furniture periodically so the floor will age evenly. UV sunlight will change the color of different species to varying degrees. Use breathable non-slip pads under area rugs.
- Use a wide base air tire dolly when moving heavy appliances, furniture or office equipment. But first, put down a sheet of quarter inch clean plywood to protect the floor. Never try to slide or roll objects across the floor without precautions

### **Repairing**

Minor damage can be repaired with touch-up finishing putty, sharpie floor pens and or the Wearmax Repair Kit or Mohawk Repair Kit. For more extensive damage, Plank replacement may be an option. (NOTE: This option depends on product availability)

If you have any questions relating to the installation or care and maintenance of your Strandwoven® Bamboo flooring, please contact your Sustainable Materials representative.