

# Elegant Oak 12mm Flooring Installation Guidelines

## PLEASE READ COMPLETELY BEFORE STARTING INSTALLATION.

- This installation guide and our warranty must be read in conjunction with, any additional Clever Choice installation guides posted on [www.cleverchoice.com.au](http://www.cleverchoice.com.au), or guides provided to you by the seller. These instructions do not allow for every possible use or installation of this product.
- If you have any questions about suitability for application not covered in these instructions, please contact your supplier, or Clever Choice immediately. Check [www.cleverchoice.com.au](http://www.cleverchoice.com.au) for up-to-date details and articles relating to installation, care and maintenance.
- Elegant Oak is for indoor residential and commercial use only. It is not suitable for bathrooms, laundry's or wet areas. Installations outside these recommendations are not covered by warranty.
- Elegant Oak can be glued directly to the subfloor, with an approved moisture barrier and glue used. All installations as a floating floor installed over a 2mm closed cell high-density foam underlay with built in moisture barrier, such as Clever Comfort or Clever Sound Underlay over a timber subfloor or Clever 200 over a concrete subfloor (which also provides proven noise reduction and a solid timber feel)
- Elegant Oak is a natural product and colour may differ from the sample, depending on the time of harvest and manufacturing, and also depending on the age and position of the display sample in store.
- Clever Choice recommends that the installation of our flooring is carried out by a certified installer holding a *MSFFL2023 Install Laminate, Timber and Bamboo Flooring*.

## 1. The Installer

### 1.1 Storage & Handling

- All products should be handled with care and unopened cartons should be stored in dry conditions. Ensure the cartons are elevated at least 100mm off ground floor slabs and away from external walls at least 48 hours before installation. This will prevent extra moisture from entering the cartons.
- For optimum performance, install the flooring as soon as the cartons are opened, do not wait several hours, as the boards will acclimatise on the floor once clicked together.
- Conditions within the dwelling should reflect the normal living conditions of the home. For instance, if the floor is being installed at a time of the year when air-conditioning or heating is being used, then these conditions should be replicated prior to floor installation and then maintained relative to the season. Temperature should be between 18°C-27°C and Relative Humidity between 40%- 60%. Advise builder or home owner to maintain these conditions after installation.
- Boards should not be installed in extreme weather conditions
- When installing, use a thermometer and hydrometer to monitor the temperature and humidity in the house.

### 1.2 Safety Equipment & Tools

- Please wear all required safety equipment for tools being used.
- Tools to consider - hand saw, chisels, pulling tool, utility knife, drop saw, table saw, electric planer, router, circular saw, jig saw, multi-tool / undercut saw, moisture meter, pencil, spacers, tape measure

### 1.3 Board Moisture Content

- The optimum performance moisture specification for Elegant Oak is 8%-10%. Boards will expand and contract as the moisture level changes.
- As the moisture content increases or decreases outside of the recommended moisture content, the more the performance of the boards will change. Additional allowances may need to be made.
- Do not install the boards if they are wet due to transport or storage prior to installation.

### 1.4 Subfloor Preparation and Testing

- Check that the subfloor meets Australian standards for level and moisture content.
- Ensure all subfloor surfaces are clean and free of loose materials and contaminants.
- Check that the subfloor is flat, smooth and level with a tolerance no greater than 2mm over 1m using a straight edge. Correct any changes in levels by either diamond grinding the surface of the slab, sanding the surface of the timber subfloor and/or using a

levelling compound, as this removes high spots.

- After levelling, wait the manufacturer's recommended time to allow the compound to dry completely before laying your Elegant Oak Floor, to prevent moisture related issues.
- Check concrete slabs have been cured with the moisture content being less than 5% and Relative Humidity below 75%. Suspected dampness in a concrete slab, must be checked by moisture meter using "plugs" drilled into the slab.
- Keep a record of the moisture content of the subfloor on your installation checklist.

#### 1.5 Subfloor Heating

- Elegant Oak can be installed over under-floor hydronic heating. Max 27°C
- Installation over subfloor heating may cause moisture issues such as cupping or over expansion and will void any warranty, if a regular temperature is not controlled.

#### 1.6 Board Selection

- Check the correct flooring has been supplied and that you are satisfied that the boards match the colour selected at time of purchase. **Stop!** Do not start installing if you are not satisfied with the product.
- Please inspect every board for defect or damage before and during installation. Remove any boards from the installation area if they have a visual defect or if you will not accept the variation. It is our position that you, the installer, and/or homeowner, accept the appearance and take responsibility for any visual variation or defect in boards you choose to install and not separate for replacement. Any defects should be reported to the retailer immediately for inspection and/or replacement.
- Elegant Oak Flooring is a natural product and has variations in shade and grain. It should be installed from several cartons at the same time to ensure good colour and shade mixture.
- For best results, pre-select and set aside boards that blend best with all floor scotia, skirting boards or stairnoses and use these to ensure a uniform final appearance.

#### 1.7 Expansion Gaps & Board Relief

- Undercut all architraves and plaster board (if skirtings are not being removed, undercut skirtings) to allow the boards' clearance for natural expansion.
- **Perimeter Expansion Gap** – leave a minimum of 10mm-15mm perimeter expansion gap (adjustments made when undercutting plaster), including around fixtures and cabinetry, to allow the Oak Flooring to move naturally in both directions (expansion and contraction depending on seasonal changes). Failing to do this may result in gaps appearing from under skirting or scotia during temperature changes. **Internal Expansion Gaps** – any installation exceeding 8m (width) and 12m (length) will require an internal expansion/contraction gap using a H-Trim or Universal Trim. Each room in the house will generally have its own Relative Humidity and temperature environment. Installing expansion trims between each room is necessary to allow boards in each room to move independently without being put under pressure. If the floor is installed outside these guidelines, it will have too much weight and restrict the natural movement of the floor. This could cause issues like bouncing, cupping, splitting and/or squeaking.
- **Solid Objects** – kitchens or built-in units are to be installed prior to the flooring being installed. They are not to be installed on top of Elegant Oak Flooring, as the weight of these structures will restrict the natural movement of the floor, causing such problems as, gapping, cupping or creaking. Ensure a minimum of 10mm-15mm gap is left around these solid objects, including pipes and any other permanently fixed objects.
- **Base Plates of Trims** - must be glued and screwed into place in all required areas as mentioned above, prior to flooring being installed to ensure they remain secure.

#### 1.8 Laying Direction

- Although Oak Floors can be installed in any direction, as a rule, floors are usually installed perpendicular to a wall with windows & with the length of the room.
- Installing the floor parallel to the longest walls or runs tends to make a room appear larger and flooring perform better during natural movement.
- Check that installation will remain within 8m (width) and 12m (length) or you will require an internal expansion/contraction gap using a H-Trim or Universal Trim. If the floor is installed outside these guidelines, it will have too much weight and restrict the natural movement and may cause issues like bouncing, cupping, gapping and/or squeaking.

#### 1.9 Quality Underlay

- Elegant Oak is to be installed as a floating floor over a 2mm closed cell high density foam underlay with built in moisture barrier, such as Clever Comfort, Clever Sound or Clever 200 (which also provides proven noise reduction and a solid timber feel). This will reduce the chance of excess movement and boards squeaking.
- Lay underlay by taping the overlapping moisture barriers together using the included tape. For additional moisture protection, also apply a wide adhesive tape to the joins.
- To reduce the moisture transmission rate from your concrete slab, use Clever 200 which has a 200-micron plastic taped on all joins and fitted up walls and fixtures to the thickness of the flooring to prevent any excess moisture from penetrating into the flooring.

#### 1.10 Cutting & Staggering Boards & Ends

- When preparing to saw a plank (use safety glasses and mask), always ensure that the teeth of the saw will be cutting into the decorative surface of the plank. (using a table saw face side down).
- The end joints in adjacent rows needs to be more than 400mm apart and planks at the end of each row must not be shorter than 400mm, to ensure stability. If your last plank is shorter than 400mm, it is advised to re-cut the first plank in the row.
- When installing boards of random length, ensure that the staggered length is at least 400mm. This will help to ensure a more structural and favourable overall appearance of the floor.

- The remainder of the plank from your first row can be used as the first plank of the next row. Stagger the planks so no pattern is visible. You may need to adjust your off-cut or have 2 or 3 off-cuts to allow rows to be staggered.
- Should you have an irregular wall for the first row, the plank must be cut to follow the wall's irregularities.

### 1.11 Installing the Boards

- Flooring should be installed from left to right, with the tongue sides facing the walls. Starting in one corner of the room, place spacers between the plank and the wall, one spacer on the width and one spacer at each end where one plank joins another.
- A minimum 10mm-15mm expansion gap around the entire floor is required. Adjustments are to be made when going under doorframes and plaster board that has been undercut. Ensure there is another clearance for boards to pass under during natural movement.
- When laying the planks for the first row, place the first plank flat and against the spacers. The next plank being laid must be elevated at a slight angle to allow the Click to slip into the groove of the first plank.
- Once flat, push and gently tap the planks together ensuring they "click" in tight and sit level.
- For the second and consecutive rows, elevate the plank on the long side at a slight angle to allow the Click to slip into the groove.
- The next plank should be laid the same way but with the Click on the left side of the plank falling just next to the previous plank. Once flat, you can lift and lock the planks together until they "click" in tight.
- When you reach the final plank in the row, place a loose plank precisely on the last laid plank. Place another plank on top, but with its edge a minimum 10mm from the solid object. Trace a cutting line along the middle plank, and saw it along that line.
- Lay the plank you just cut and ease it into position. Insert spacers between the wall and the last plank laid to ensure floor doesn't shift during installation.
- Check that the skirting or scotia will cover the board by minimum 10mm-15mm to allow coverage during natural movement.
- To allow natural movement around obstacles (pipes, solid built-in units, etc.), use a pencil to trace around the object, making allowances for an even minimum 10mm-15mm clearance.
- For the final row, lay the board overlapping the second last row. Place a straight edge on top at the edge of the second last row. Using a pencil, draw a line along the board. Cut the board on the line, ensuring that a minimum of 10mm-15mm clearance will be allowed.

### 1.12 Changing Rooms and Size of Rooms

- Check that the trim base plates are fully secured between rooms. Any room that exceeds 8m (width) or 12m (length) will require expansion/contraction trims to be installed at the parameters.
- When going from one room to another, make sure to leave a minimum 10mm gap to the base plate of the trim. This will allow the floor to naturally move freely.
- Colour matching trims are available so that they can be installed to blend in with the floor for a pleasing appearance.

### 1.13 Fitting Scotia or Skirting

- Remove all spacers.
- Fold the moisture barrier along the edge of the walls under the skirting or scotia.
- Cover the expansion/contraction gaps around the perimeter of the floor ensuring a minimum of 10mm-15mm coverage of the boards is achieved.
- Fit the skirting or scotia to the walls, ensuring a 0.5mm-1mm gap is left between it and the floor. This will allow the floor room to move, naturally and freely.

### 1.14 Fitting Finishing Trims

- Install the top plate of finishing trims to neatly finish off in all doorways, against fixed objects, kitchens, sliding doors and between rooms over 8m (width) and 12m (length).
- Colour matching trims are available so that they can be installed to blend in with the floor for a pleasing appearance.

### 1.15 Fitting Stairs & Slip Resistant Tape

- When installing Oak to stairs, it is recommended to use an approved flexible flooring glue to stick the stairnoses and boards to the solidly constructed staircase.
- When fitting boards to each step, it is recommended to leave a minimum 5mm gap under the riser, that is fitted on top of the tread.
- Where the stairnoses are installed to a top landing leading into a room of flooring, remember to make allowances for natural movement. An expansion trim could be installed between the top stairnose and floor boards.
- Slip resistant tape, complying with Australian standards, is available to be applied to the stairnoses of the finished staircase.

### 1.16 Checking Door Heights

- Check door and doorframe clearances to insure that doors will move freely without contacting the flooring surface.

### 1.17 Clean Up & Go Through Checklist

- Sweep the floor and clean up any mess.
- Go through the checklist and ensure all steps have been followed and completed.

## 2. The Home Owner

### 2.1 External Property Inspection - Locality and Dwelling Environment

**The flooring installed can be affected by many external factors - removal of causes prevents problems.**

- Flooring can be damaged by the external environment of the home; what happens under and around your home will affect your floor's performance. Please check for any water run off, ground moisture source, and Relative Humidity (RH) and temperature factors that may be affected by overhanging tree canopies and sun direction.
- Site Inspection should include checking for soil or debris built up higher than weep holes, or under floor ventilation of the subfloor.
- These external factors are very important when selecting the correct floor to suit your environment and ensuring your floor performs to optimum levels.

### 2.2 Building Site Conditions

- For new home installations, other wet trades are to be completed and weather must be considered during installation.
- For the exterior of the building or dwelling – all gutters, downpipes and drainage systems need to be in place and operational prior to laying the floor.
- Similarly, ground work needs to be sufficiently completed to ensure water drains away from the building and that no pooling of water occurs either adjacent to slabs and footings or beneath the building.
- Prior to product being delivered to site, the building should to be weather tight with all windows, doors and seals in place.
- Wet trades including plastering, tiling, painting and plumbing should be complete and the building should be given time to dry out from the higher levels of moisture released from these trades.

**For more information on Clever Choice Design floors, please contact your supplier or go to our website  
[www.cleverchoice.com.au](http://www.cleverchoice.com.au)**