

Frequently Asked Question

Common Hardwood myths

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Common Hardwood Myths**1. Wood floors should not be used in a kitchen.**

Kitchens are one of the most popular rooms in the house for hardwood floors. Built to withstand heavy traffic and give long lasting beauty with minimal maintenance, hardwood floors are a perfect choice.

2. Damp mopping is the best way to clean a wood floor.

To the contrary, water and wood do not mix. Throw away that bucket and mop! Water causes deterioration of the wood itself as well as the finish. Use maintenance products and procedures that will not harm your urethane finish. Ensure compatibility with urethane finishes.

3. Hardwood floors should not scratch or dent.

Although Hardwood floors of all species are durable enough to withstand the wear and tear of daily life, top finishes and wood can still scratch or dent given enough applied pressure or resistance. Higher gloss will show more imperfections.
Manufactures do not warrant against scratching and denting

4. High heel shoes will not damage a wood floor.

High heels or spiked heels are damaging to hardwood flooring. They strike the floor with more force per inch than an elephant's foot. High or spiked heels in disrepair are especially harmful, as the heel acts much like a tiny hammer pounding away at the floor with as much force as 10,000 pounds per inch!

5. When wood floors warp or cup, it is because the wood flooring is defective.

Cupping is due to excess moisture or over drying and is considered jobsite related. Improper water maintenance, a plumbing leak, or moisture from the crawl space, basement, concrete slab or high/low-relative humidity can be the reasons.

6. If my wood floor changes colors or fades, it is because the finish or wood is defective.

No. Actually all wood floors can experience color shade change overtime. American cherry and many exotic species like Brazilian Cherry, Tiger wood, are photosensitive and will gain a richer, darker patina. Area rugs and large furniture that cover the floor should be moved periodically to allow exposure to UV light and air on the area. Eventually, the entire floor will reach the same even shading. There are no known values established for this natural condition, therefore, *Manufactures do not warrant against these natural characteristics beyond its control.*

7. I should be able to use every piece of wood I purchase.

Realistically, wood is a product of nature not perfect. The industry allows a tolerance not to exceed 5% for defective boards, natural or manufacturer related, based on the total purchase. Some 8-10% for the exotics. If board width size seems to vary during installation, place boards of the same width size together in the same row.

8. If I find a defective board *after* the floor is installed, the manufacturer will replace or repair it.

No. It is the responsibility of the installer/customer to inspect the floor to be installed and be selective in choosing each board in quality, grading, and natural color variation *before* installing it. Once installed, the floorboards are deemed to be acceptable to both the installer and the end-user. If necessary, individual board replacements can be accomplished.

9. If my wood floor shows gaps between boards in the winter months, it is defective.

Nearly every wood floor endures some separation in between boards. In winter, when homes are heated and the air is dry, wood flooring gives up some of its moisture and shrinks. When that happens, cracks appear between the boards. In the spring, when the heat is off and the indoor environment regains moisture, most gaps normally close. Wood boards become dormant, neither shrinking nor expanding with indoor humidity levels of 30-55% and temperatures of 60-85F.

10. Kitchen floor cleaner with vinegar, ammonia, or abrasive cleaners are the best products to use when cleaning my floor.

Never use these kinds of cleaners, as they can dull and damage your hardwood floors and void warranties. Use products safe for urethane finishes.

11. It is best to keep the relative humidity low or dry in my home.

The wood flooring industry recommends that you keep the environment at "normal living conditions". That is, a temperature from 60F to 85F, and a relative humidity at least 35%, but preferably 45% to 55%, with a continuous flow of air across the floor.

12. My floor has more different colors and grain variations than the store sample, so I must not have received what I ordered.

Wood floors are like snowflakes. No two trees are alike; no two boards will be alike, even if taken from the same tree let alone from the same species growing different part of the world. Furniture, cabinetry, doors, etc., are fabricated under ideal conditions and may contain 1-10 different pieces of wood. Your floor is assembled in your own home, and is made up of 300 to over 1,000 different pieces of wood. Your custom floor is unique, never to be duplicated!

13. All hardwood species and wood floors have the same hardness factor.

Not true. All hardwood floors can dent, mar and scratch under various conditions. The wood industries have developed a Hardness rating scale or Janka scale that represents the resistance of wood to denting, marring, and wear. The higher the number, the harder the species, and the more resistant it is. Red Oak is 1290, Brazilian Cherry is 2890, and Brazilian Walnut is 3680. Bamboo is a grass product; its hardness can be compared to that of Maple or Hard Pine, though not held to the same standards.

14. **It is always best to use my vacuum with a rotating brush to remove grit and debris from my wood floor.**

While weekly vacuuming is important for removing dirt and grit, A hard bristle brush beater bar can scratch and damage your hardwood.

15. **My roller chairs should not damage my wood flooring.**

Roller chair wheels can damage a wood floor if equipped with hard plastic or metal rollers. The wood industry recommends barrel-type rollers made of non-marring rubber.

16. **Tables, chairs, and furniture should not scratch or dent my wood floor.**

Wood is a natural material and can dent or scratch. Place adhesive felt furniture pads on the legs of chairs and all furniture to prevent damage to the floor's surface.

17. **Wood floors require a lot of time and effort to maintain them.**

Unlike other types of floor coverings, hardwood floors can be kept looking like new with a minimum amount of effort. Never damp mop your floor. Use only products designed for wood floors. Just spray and dry mop the floor.

18. **Will Wood floors increase the value of my home?**

A quality hardwood floor will offer a lifetime of beauty and service and is an investment that will add considerable value to your home whether for your own enjoyment or for resale value.

19. **Wormholes, mineral streaks, and knots are defects in wood.**

Because wood is a product of nature, most character marks such as pinholes, mineral streaks, and knots are allowed in most grades. If a board is undesirable to you, tell your installer not to install it or cut it out. All wood manufacturers state that the responsibility for final inspection and approval is that of the installer and consumer. Once the board has been installed, it is deemed to have been accepted by the installer and homeowner. No claim for an installed board that is visibly defective will be honored.

20. **Wood floors that are sanded and finished at the job-site are more durable than a factory manufactured finished floor.**

A pre-finished floor gives you the added benefit of a perfect finish applied under dust-free, ideal conditions at the factory. Ours include from five to eight coats with aluminum oxide suspended in the finish. The only thing harder is diamonds! Factory finishes are much harder than any product site-applied, requiring air-drying.

21. Repairs are easier to make on a sanded and finished floor than a pre-finished floor.

If needed, pre-finished boards can be replaced one at a time. Job site finished boards require four or five days of sanding, staining, finishing and then waiting for the finish to dry. After that, it may still not match the sheen of the floor.

22. I have heard the oil-soaps are the best way to clean my wood floor.

Soaps and detergents can leave a harmful film causing the top finishes to yellow, alligator or crack. *Consult the product labeling for its expressed warranties.*

23. My wood flooring can be delivered and installed the same day.

The industry and most wood manufacturers recommend that solid wood flooring be delivered to the job site at least 3-5 days before the installation. This properly acclimates the wood to 'normal living conditions'. Temperature of 60F to 85F and a relative humidity of 35% to 50% with the HVAC fan left in the "on" position to provide a continuous flow of air across the floor are ideal. Most engineered wood floors require about three days for acclimation. Be sure to check our installation guidelines for various products on our web site.

24. I only have white oak and red oak to choose from.

Although White and Red Oak is still very popular, we have hundreds of beautiful Exotic wood species along with Cork and Bamboo from forests from all over the world. Many are offered in wider widths of 3", 4", 5". The choice is yours.

25. When my wood is delivered can I store it in the garage, out of the weather?

No. Wood flooring should *never* be stored in a garage, in a basement, directly on cement or in out buildings. No exposure to moisture of any type should be permitted. Uncontrolled humidity or moisture vapors can penetrate into the wood flooring, causing it to swell or cup.

26. Wood floors cannot be installed in a basement on a concrete floor.

Not so. We offer many fine quality engineered wood floors that feature cross-grain ply construction. These floors are very stable and resist expansion and contraction. Be sure to test your concrete floor for excessive levels of moisture over 3%. *Concrete installations (Gluedown or Floating) normally require moisture barriers.*

27. I expect to get a wood floor to be all the same color, like the store sample.

Wood is a natural product with patterns and color variations created in a living tree, like all of nature never to be repeated. A small sample containing only a few grain patterns and shades of a species could never completely represent a fully installed floor with hundreds of pieces. If you prefer more uniformity in color and shade exotics may not be for you, consider our Dura-wood stained products.

28. I expect my floor to have a "table top finish".

Wood floors are not tabletop material. Hardwood floors that are pre-finished are milled to exacting specifications. However, you may feel a slight variation from plank to plank, when walking across the floor in your bare feet. We offer both micro bevel and square edged materials.

29. Hardwood floors are indestructible.

Despite today's advanced technology, water spills, dirt and other abrasive substances can damage a wood floor's finish. Location, traffic patterns, how often the floor is vacuumed and cleaned, children and/or pets are all factor that influence wear.

30. Engineered floors are not "real wood" floors.

Engineered floors have a *real* hardwood veneer wear layer with a multi-layer cross grain construction, perfect for at-grade or below-grade cement installations. These can be re-sanded about two times.

31. If I get down on my hands and knees, I can see all kinds of small defects.

Product claims are viewed/determined from a standing position.

32. My basement, crawl space, or concrete slab looks dry so I should not have any problems with a new wood floor.

About 90% of installation complaints are due to moisture, your installer should *always* check the subfloor and protect against moisture *before* installing the floor. Moisture issues are job site related.

33. I have radiant heat, so I can't install a new wood floor.

Many of our floors work well over radiant heat such as Floating, Laminates and Engineered. For solid wood, always shop for stability. Ask your sales assistant about this. Be sure to follow the radiant heat manufacturer's guideline for thermostat controls. *Do not exceed 85F surface temperatures.*

34. Pet urine should not damage my wood floor.

Pet urine is caustic and will harm your floors

35. The area is prone to moisture and/or high humidity, can I still have a wood floor?

If using wood, Engineered is the floor of choice. However Ceramic tiles and Vinyl may be best.

36. Full bathrooms and laundry rooms are fine for wood floor

installation.

Not recommended

37. Is your Aluminum Oxide floor finish harmful?

There are no issues with Aluminum Oxide floor finish. These microscopic Aluminum Oxide crystals are added into the finishes. Once cured, it is completely safe for our children and pets.

It is recommended, however, to do all board cutting outside in order to protect against breathing even normal wood dust. It is in this dust state that Aluminum Oxide and wood fibers can have a respiratory effect on people.

38. Do I have any way to get my technical installation questions answered?

Yes, you do. Just call 1-800-366-4204 and ask to speak with our installation specialists or leave a message. You can also go online and visit our web site and receive installation instructions and advice.

FLOORING 101; Link

<http://www.lumberliquidators.com/custserv/aboutus.jsp?pageName=Flooring101>

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