



# FLOORING GUIDE

## INTRODUCTION

This booklet is designed to introduce you to the wide range of flooring materials available from WESTCO®/FLOORMAKER™ and provide information on preparation, fixing and maintenance. **This guide is generalised, it is therefore essential that you read the specific on pack instructions for both the material and accessories, such as adhesive, which you intend to use.** To achieve the best results buy only WESTCO®/FLOORMAKER™ fixing accessories as these have been designed to complement WESTCO®/FLOORMAKER™ floorcoverings and tested to ensure compatibility. We hope that this booklet is informative and useful as a reference guide.

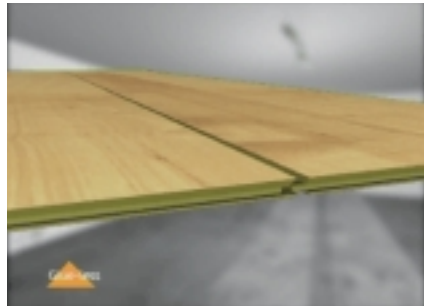
## OVERVIEW FLOORING AVAILABLE FROM WESTCO

### FLOATING FLOORS

A floating floor is laid by joining the tongue and grooves of the product together using either glue or gluefree methods. The floor does not have to be glued to the sub-floor – this makes installation quick and clean.

The two main types of 'Floating Floor' are LAMINATE and REAL WOOD Plank Floor.

### 3 main types of Floating Floor:-



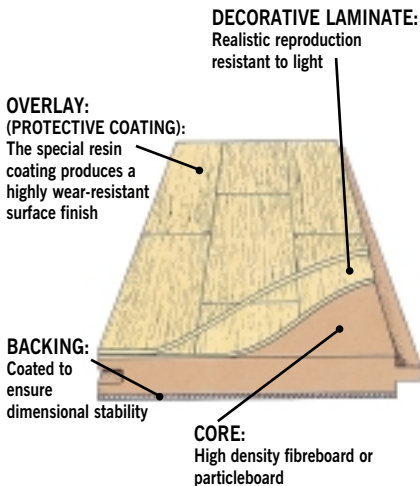
## LAMINATE FLOORING

LAMINATE FLOORING is resistant to impact, stiletto heels, cigarettes and solvents, yet never needs polishing.

LAMINATE FLOORING has the beauty of natural products without their disadvantages. It is easy to keep clean and is therefore ideal for most locations. The flooring is hygienic, non-allergenic and colour fast, even when installed in rooms exposed to the sun. No sanding, staining, varnishing, polishing or refinishing is required.

LAMINATE FLOORING consists of four components: the hard wearing top layer of specially impregnated film, a design paper, high density fibreboard (HDF) core or similar and a bottom layer of backing laminate.

LAMINATE FLOORING is between 6 and 12mm thick, which usually means door levels need not be raised which makes LAMINATE FLOORING ideal for refurbishment projects.



## REAL WOOD PLANK FLOORING

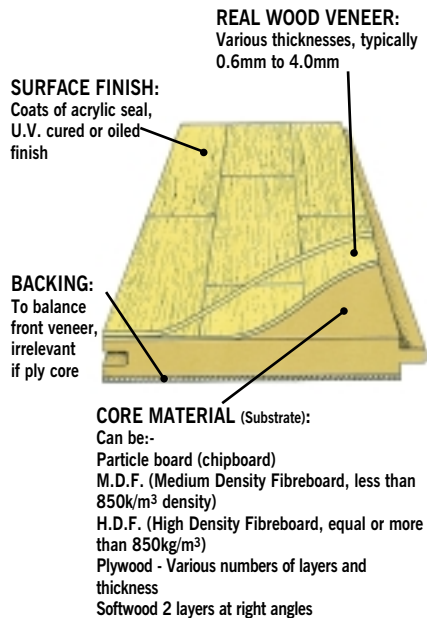
These floors give you the beauty of a traditional parquet floor but are designed to lay quickly and cleanly. Each board is tongue and grooved to fit snugly and conveniently together, giving the impression, once laid, of an original wood block or strip floor.

REAL WOOD FLOORING comes in two basic types:- solid and veneered.

SOLID REAL WOOD FLOORING is made from 100% of the species used.

VENEERED FLOORING uses hardwood veneers mounted on a core of plywood, MDF or softwood.

All Woodfloors are ready sealed or oiled and require no further treatment.



## FLOORS BONDED DIRECTLY TO THE SUBFLOOR

### CORK

Cork, the bark of the Cork Oak tree, is a sustainable material. It is removed from the tree every 9 years and regrows naturally. Corks natural cellular construction gives it resilience and strength in service.

### SOLID WOOD MOSAIC PARQUET

This is formed from sets of closely grouped timber fingers arranged in a “basket weave” pattern and is universally fitted in both domestic and commercial locations (with the exception of bathrooms). The relatively small size panels and consequent ease of handling has made mosaic parquet particularly popular in the DIY sector.

### CORK & MOSAIC OPTIONAL FINISHES

Both cork and mosaic parquet come in a range of finishes.

**Fine Sanded**, ready for sealing.

**Ready Sealed** to save time.

**Self adhesive** ideal for DIY as the factory applied adhesive and seal saves time and effort. (Cork only).

### VINYL FLOOR TILES

**1. Homogeneous** tiles are produced from a solid compressed sheet, made up of PVC and various quantities of fillers, which is then processed into tiles.

A small amount of contrasting coloured chips are added at the final stage to create a slight marbling effect on the surface. Alternatively, the sheet can be constructed using PVC chips of different colours so that the mottled effect you see on the surface will generally go through the tile.

**2. Printed** tiles are manufactured by laminating a plain PVC backing to a clear wear layer. The pattern is printed on the underside of the clear wear layer so that

the pattern itself is fully protected. This method allows the use of different textures, such as slate effect, beaten copper, etc. See also “EMBOSSSED”.

**3. Embossed or textured** tiles are manufactured by the same method as PRINTED tiles. Afterwards they go through a special press that compresses certain features of the pattern – such as the grout lines on a ceramic-look tile or the brick outline on a parquet-effect pattern – to give a distinctive “natural” look to the surface.

**4. Cushion vinyl** tiles utilise a pre-formed sheet of specifically formulated vinyl which is passed through a number of printing cylinders, each one responsible for one colour within a pattern. This is followed by the application of a clear wear layer. The printed sheet is then subjected to heat which makes it expand to its “cushion” form. By using chemicals mixed in with selected colours this “cushion” process can be stopped, to provide an embossing effect in the exact areas where the selected colours are printed. This enables designs and textures to be produced without the need for mechanical pressings.

All our PVC tiles can be used in any area of the house, including kitchens and bathrooms, **and are very easy to keep clean.**

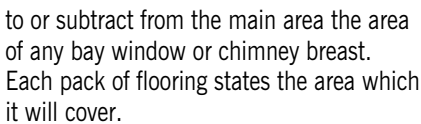
## PURCHASING YOUR FLOORING

**IMPORTANT** – Always read **all** the instructions on **all** labels on **all** the products you are going to use before you start laying the floor.

### SUITABILITY

Conservatories can also provide difficult conditions for flooring due to intense sunlight, high temperature and humidity. This can lead to colour bleaching in concentrated sunlight or sometimes the softening of the adhesive due to unusually high but sustained temperatures.

Measure the width of the room (into the alcoves and door threshold) and multiply by the length to find the MAIN AREA. Add



It often helps to draw the room on a piece of graph paper.

Divide area of room by area of pack – and round up to the nearest whole number. Add 5%. This is the number of packs to buy.

You may be unfamiliar with the metric system but most flooring is sold in square metres. If you measure in metres and work consistently in metres it should present no problems.

Should the instructions request it, ensure packs have the same batch number.

Westco have developed a range of accessories specifically for our flooring.

**ADHESIVE:** The correct type of adhesive must be used, which will depend on the flooring chosen.

**Westco Cork Tile Adhesive.** For sanded and sealed cork.

**Westco Mosaic Parquet Adhesive.** For all sanded and sealed mosaic parquet, felt back, paper back, mesh back and unbacked.

**Westco Plank Adhesive.** For all floating flooring including real wood veneer and glued laminate.

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**SEALS.** These must be used on fine sanded products (at least 3 coats for a satisfactory finish) or as additional protection on ready sealed products, choose from gloss or satin.

**Westco Timber & Cork Polyurethane Seal,** which enhances the colour and grain of the wood.

**Westco Underlay** will be needed for all floating floors. White foam Underlay or Fibreboard Underlay should be used in conjunction with Westco Vapour barrier on ground floors to prevent moisture ingress

**Westco High Performance Underlay** combines the underlay with a moisture resistant barrier in a single product thereby saving time.

**Westco Cork Expansion Strip** must be used to fill expansion gaps around mosaic and all plank floors.

**Westco Threshold Strips** marry the new floor to the existing. Use a Tbar for laminate to laminate and a Reducer for laminate to vinyl/ceramic. **Scotia** should be used to cover the expansion gaps.

**Westco Felt Pads** protect your new floorcovering from point loading.

**TOOLS** – You should check what you need, which will include all or some of the following:

- Tape measure
- Metal rule or straightedge
- Profile template (or card and scissors)
- String & chalk
- Pencil
- Trimming knife
- Cutting board
- Plank laying kit (for floating floors)
- Fine toothed saw
- Damp cloth

## SUB FLOOR PREPARATION

A successful flooring project is always dependant on the quality of the subfloor.

These tips are relevant to all subfloors.

All floors **must be dry**, clean, flat and sound.

**DRY** – Moisture in floors is the biggest enemy of all types of floorcoverings. Ground floors must incorporate an effective damp proof membrane. Dryness should never be taken for granted – what seems to be dry on the surface could still be damp underneath.

**Concrete** – As a general rule new concrete floors dry out at the rate of one inch (25mm) of thickness **per month**, two inches will take 2 months but from then on it takes longer; 3 inches could take 4 months, 4 inches could take 5 to 6 months. These times are based on the room being well ventilated so that the moisture coming out of the floor can circulate into the air. Cold or wet weather prolongs the drying period. Keeping doors and windows tightly closed and turning up the heating does not work! Blotting paper that is already wet will not be able to absorb much more water; similarly, air that is already full of moisture will be unable to absorb further moisture – hence the need for ventilation to help move the moisture laden air out of the room to enable dry air to take its place.

Technically moisture in the subfloor can be measured as follows:

Tested with a Hygrometer, relative humidity must not be higher than 75%. Tested with a Protimeter Concrete Master, the degree of moisture must not exceed 5.5%. An effective Damp Proof Membrane is essential. Materials and methods for damp-proofing solid floors, are described in British Standard 8102.



**Suspended timber** ground floors rely on ventilation provided by grills or airbricks to keep them dry. It is essential that these are not blocked as dampness will result.

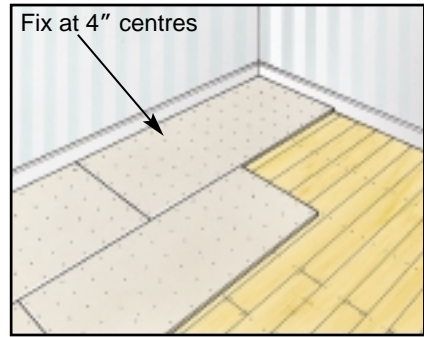


**CLEAN** – There should be no surface dust, grit or sand, no oil or floor paints. When existing floorcoverings are taken up all old adhesive must be cleaned off. Use a hot air gun to soften the adhesive, and remove using a wide bladed paint scraper.



**FLAT** – There should be no discernible bumps, cracks or creases. Quarry or ceramic tiled floors are unsuitable unless they are covered with a suitable floor levelling compound.

Timber boards must be covered with flooring grade hardboard or plywood. The boards to be overlaid must be secured and levelled, in particular ridges should be planed and damaged boards replaced.



Punch pins or fixings below the surface of the overlay boards. Timber treated with wood preservatives is not suitable as a sub-floor, even if overlaid.

Check on the flooring pack for specific instructions regarding which side of the hardboard to use; typically smooth side for self adhesive products and rough side for products laid using adhesive.

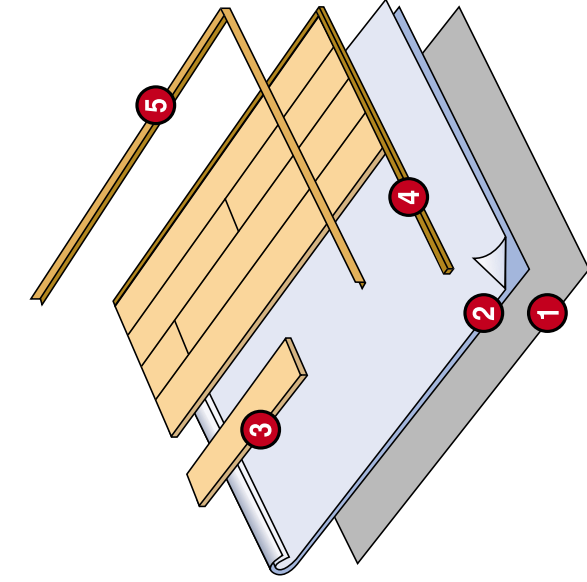
**SOUND** – There should be no surface grit or sand. The surface should be hard, firm and should not crumble. Old floor levelling compound should be tested to see if it is still completely bonded to the floor. If in doubt remove old compound and replace.

**PRIMED** – If sticking tiles down on porous surfaces such as concrete, sand and cement screed, plywood, hardboard and chipboard should be primed using a dilute solution of PVA as per manufacturers instructions for priming. This ensures that the adhesive can “grip”.

**ASPHALT** – Is an unsuitable subfloor for stick down products unless suitable preparation is carried out. Roughen the asphalt surface using a wire brush to form a ‘key’. Lay a suitable latex self levelling screed (approximately 3mm) following the manufacturer’s instructions. Prime when dry.

**BITUMEN** – Is an unsuitable subfloor.

# WESTCO 5 EASY STEPS TO A PERFECT FLOATING FLOOR



## 1 **Preparing the Original Surface**

Sub floors must be dry, flat, sound and clean. A floor covering is only as good as the sub floor it is laid on.

## 2 **Laying the underlay**

You must always use underlay, on ground floors you will also need a vapour barrier followed by underlay. Choose your underlay from foam, fibreboard or high performance (combined vapour barrier/underlay) for best results.

## 3 **Laying the laminate boards**

Start on the longest wall or facing the source of light, lay end on end, then start the second row with an offset from the first. Always overlap boards by 300mm.

## 4 **Inserting the cork expansion strips**

Cork fits into the expansion gap that is essential with wood based floating floors. The cork helps to keep your floor tight during its lifetime.

## 5 **Adding the Scotia to finish the job**

This attaches to your skirting and covers the expansion gap and cork. Use softwood and paint it to match your skirting or use a coloured scotia to match your flooring. *Tip: Do not fit the scotia tight to the flooring as it will trap it and undo the good of the expansion gap.*



## LAYING A FLOATING FLOOR

(A rough guide - double check on pack instructions for key details)



### PREPARE THE PLANKS

Acclimatise the unopened packs in the room where they are to be laid for at least 72 hours. Immediately prior to laying, open all packs and shuffle to ensure a random mix of shades and texture. No attempt should be made to exactly match planks as this may produce an un-natural finish.

When you open the packs, check that the tongues and grooves are free from obstruction. Defective planks or planks with unacceptable shade variations should not be fixed, as once installed no credits can be given.

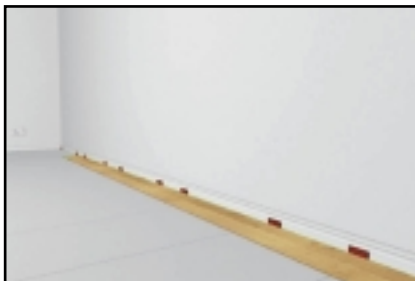
Normally lay the floor towards the main source of light. In narrow areas it is best to lay in the direction of the longest wall.



Lay a Vapour barrier. Lay Underlay use either Foam (over concrete); Fibreboard (over timber) or High Performance Underlay (over either). NB High Performance Underlay has an integrated vapour barrier to save time.



Leave an expansion gap of 12.5mm at all skirtings and around other obstacles like hearths and pillars. The gap is established using the spacers from the laying kit, later it will be filled with cork to maintain it and hidden by scotia or new skirting. (Larger areas need to be broken down into sections and expansion joints made).



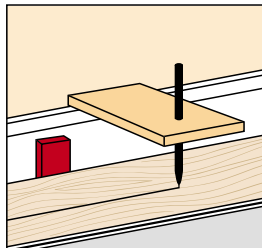
Take time to get your first 3 rows straight, this will make the rest of the job much easier later.

If the wall is uneven use a compass and pencil to scribe the undulations onto the boards lengthwise and cut them to fit. See below:

If the wall is more uneven than the flexibility of the spacers allows then a small offcut of 6mm plywood or flooring makes a good scribing tool. Cut it as big as you need to get the scribe line to the depth you want. Remember to allow for the expansion gap.

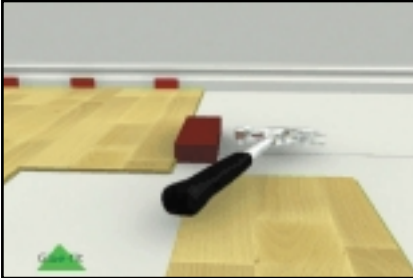
Drill a hole that will hold a pencil tightly. Push the pencil through until the tip meets the plank. Now run down the wall.

Trim the boards lengthways along the line using a jigsaw so that they mirror the deviations in the wall.





Ensure the boards overlap by 300mm.



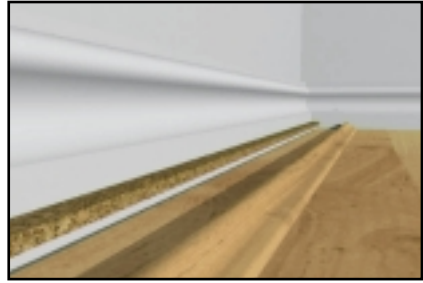
Use the block to protect the boards from the hammer.



Use the jemmy to fit boards around the perimeter.



Holes for pipes should be cut 10mm larger than the pipes.

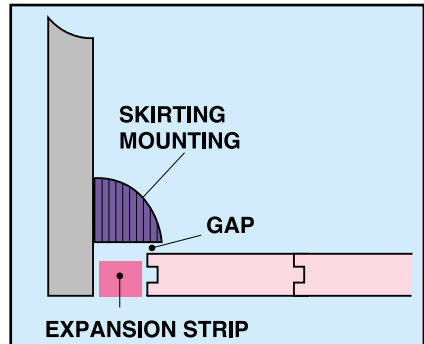


Now remove the spacers and replace with cork expansion strip.



Cover the gap with Scotia or new skirting NB make sure the Scotia/skirting does not trap the floor.

**Leave an expansion gap**



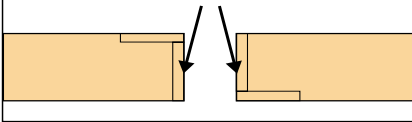
### Useful tips for laying Herringbone Laminate Flooring

The design of the herringbone is unique and whilst we strive for perfection in the pattern match we have to work within a + or – 2mm tolerance in the length of design on each board. This basically means that whilst all the “staves” along the length

of the board measure 55mm in width - the 2 staves on the ends in a worse case scenario - may differ in width from 53mm to 57mm. To counter this and enable the panels to be laid so the pattern matches - it is advisable to compensate for these tolerances. The easiest way is to ensure that where the short ends join - the total width of the 2 staves on the ends of the boards when snapped together will be 110mm.

#### USEFUL TIPS FOR LAYING HERRINGBONE

To try and compensate for any tolerance variation, it is useful to try and ensure that the total width of these 2 vertical end stave designs when fitted is 110mm.



This is made easier before the product is laid, by opening the packs and measuring the end stave of each panel then sorting these into piles depending on the width of the staves. For example - a stave measuring 53mm on one end will measure 57mm at the other, therefore it would be best to fit a stave measuring 57mm next to the 53mm end and vice versa to compensate for any tolerance deviation.

#### CLIP SYSTEM

WESTCO also have a gluefree clip system for laying 15mm or 22mm Solid Wood Flooring. Full instructions are included in each pack. All principles remain as for Floating Floors but the boards are linked by metal clips underneath to allow the solid wood to 'move' independently.



## LAYING A STICK DOWN FLOOR

### PREPARATION

General rules for products such as cork, solid wood mosaic parquet and vinyl – but not plank or laminate flooring.

Refer to the previous section on Subfloor Preparation. Additionally remove all existing floorcoverings - you must be sticking the floor directly to Concrete/Plywood/Chipboard/Hardboard or Screed. These must be prepared as previously directed.

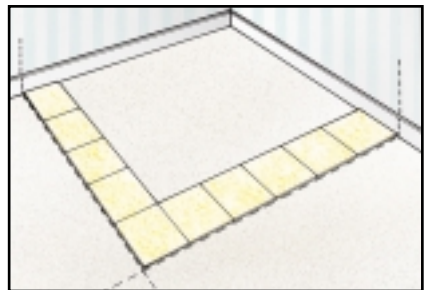
### ACCLIMATISE

The acclimatisation recommendations and period varies according to the material – check on the pack for details. It is important that the acclimatisation takes place in the conditions and temperatures that will prevail when fixed.

### CHECK

**Cork & Solid Wood Mosaic Parquet** tiles should be shuffled to achieve an even distribution of the natural shade variations. **Vinyl** tiles should be of all the same batch number

## PLANNING THE FLOOR



Using string and chalk mark guide lines from centres of opposite walls. Lay rows of tiles in both directions from the centre, adjusting if necessary to give the most economical and balanced cutting at borders. Avoid leaving small strips in doorways or high traffic areas.

## CUTTING



### PART TILES

To fit part tiles, lay the tile to be cut exactly over the last full tile; place another full tile against the wall and mark the cutting line where the tiles overlap.



### SHAPED CUTS

To fit around pipes, door frames, etc., make a cardboard pattern as a guide and use this to draw an outline on the tile. Cut to shape and check that it fits before fixing.

Before peeling the backing paper or spreading adhesive check that the cut tile fits correctly. Part tiles should fit snugly and should not be forced into place.

## FIXING

Different products have different fixing methods, read the instructions on pack and if appropriate on the adhesive container. Defective tiles and vinyl tiles

with shade variations should not be fixed as once installed no credits will be given.

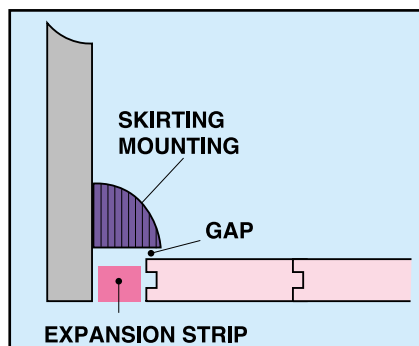
### DRY BACK PRODUCTS

These are products that require adhesive to stick them. Only use the spreader provided with the adhesive. Spread only sufficient adhesive to cover approximately one square metre.



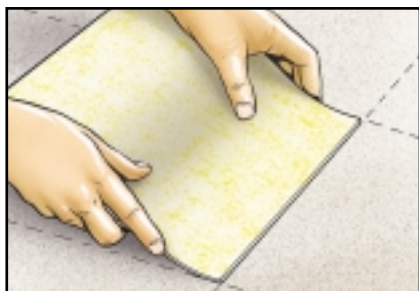
Lay all full tiles, making sure that they are pressed firmly into the adhesive, especially the edges and corners. Do not put adhesive on floor areas that need part tiles until you have cut the part tiles to size, otherwise the adhesive may dry out before you are ready to lay them.

NOTE: Parquet mosaic tiles require an expansion gap of 12.5mm (1/2") at all skirtings or obstructions. This gap should later be filled with cork expansion strip and covered with a quadrant or Scotia moulding fixed to the skirting.



## SELF ADHESIVE

These are products with the adhesive already applied to the back of the tiles, with a release paper protecting the adhesive until you are ready to fix.



Peel the backing from a tile and **CAREFULLY** place it at your centre point. Check that it is correctly positioned and then apply firm all-over pressure to achieve complete contact. Lay all full tiles, ensuring a close fit but do not force tiles together.

**WARNING** – As the backing paper is slippery, dispose of it as soon as it has been removed.

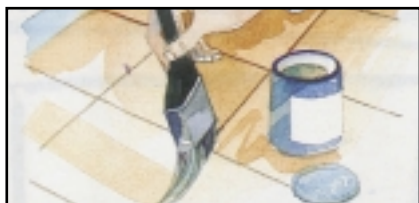
## FINISHING

### CORK TILES AND SOLID WOOD MOSAIC PARQUET:

#### Fine Sanded Bathroom or Natural Tiles

These must be sealed.

Before applying a seal, wait for the adhesive to dry, during which time you should protect the floor from dirt, water, moisture and condensation. Brush the floor clean and remove all traces of excess adhesive and other marks.



Apply 3-4 coats of WESTCO Timber and Cork Floor Seal. Choose Gloss or Satin. This process seals the tiles and the tile joints against possible water and dirt penetration.

### Ready Sealed/Ready Finished/Heritage/Corkfast/Tilefast

Refer to the on pack instructions regarding the necessity for and type of additional treatments needed.

**NOTE:** It is suggested that you should lightly sand dry seal between coats to provide a key for the next coat.

## WOOD PLANK.

These have real wood veneers and are ready sealed, however you should add additional coats of seal if you can anticipate high traffic or possibilities of standing water (eg. kitchens).

## LAMINATE FLOORING.

These have a special wear layer that requires no more treatment.

**VINYL TILES.** These are ready finished and require no more treatment.

## MAINTENANCE

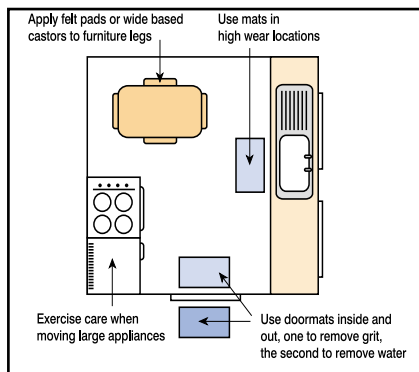
Use Doormats, one on the outside and one inside the door, to avoid unnecessary wear caused by grit etc.

In contract situations use an efficient dust control system corresponding to the anticipated traffic level. These mats should be capable of removing and retaining gravel/grit etc. and moisture. It is important to ensure that the matting is of a sufficient size so that several steps are required to be taken before reaching your floors.

Always lift heavy furniture and household appliances to prevent scratching and scoring.

**Use Westco Felt Pads or cups under furniture legs.**

## PREVENTIVE CARE OF HARD FLOORING



## CORK, SOLID WOOD MOSAIC PARQUET AND REAL WOOD VENEER

In normal domestic use the floor should be swept regularly with a soft broom or vacuumed and occasionally wiped using either a mop or cloth **well wrung out** in warm water. USE AS LITTLE WATER AS POSSIBLE. Any spillages should be removed immediately. Stubborn stains may be treated using a mild detergent solution.

**WARNING:** Never leave excess water to dry on these floors – mop up at once!

In higher traffic situations additional coats of WESTCO floor seals should be applied and a regular routine of maintenance instituted.

High traffic areas that eventually show signs of wear should be treated immediately with a coat of WESTCO Seal. Wear is usually indicated by a dulling of the surface and grey appearance.

Most of these floors can be sanded and resealed, if serious surface damage occurs.

However, it is much better to maintain the floor with frequent coats of seal rather than major sanding and resealing.

## LAMINATE FLOORS

Laminated floors can be cleaned using a vacuum cleaner or damp cloth.

When necessary wipe using a mop or cloth **well wrung out** in warm water. USE AS LITTLE WATER AS POSSIBLE. Dry the floor immediately after mopping. Any spillages should be removed immediately. Stubborn stains may be treated using a mild detergent solution.

The floors should not be treated with wax or polish. Never use scouring powder or steel wool on laminated flooring.

These floors cannot be sanded.

Use WESTCO Laminate Floor Cleaner to refresh the surface.

TYPE OF STAIN	CLEANING AGENT
Fruit, berries, juice, milk, creams, soft drinks, beer, wine, coffee, tea	Mild detergent
Chocolate, fat, oil, shoe-polish, shoe-heel marks, tar, asphalt	White spirit
Pen, ink, lipstick	Methyl alcohol
Blood	Cold water
Paint, oil, asphalt	Acetone, petrol, methyl alcohol

## VINYL FLOORS

Sweep when necessary to remove surface grit and dust. Wipe over with a damp cloth or mop. Clean with a non abrasive liquid vinyl floor cleaner, following the manufacturers instructions. These tiles do not require polishing, however with time, some heavily trafficked areas may dull with wear. If this occurs, a coat of "WESTCO FLOOR GLOSS" will restore the floor.

You must not use ammonia based cleaners.



## WARRANTIES

Certain products carry warranties for use in domestic locations. Check packaging for details but note that the warranty covers only the goods, which must have been installed and maintained in accordance with instructions. Warranties do not affect your statutory rights

## REPAIRS

### Floating floors

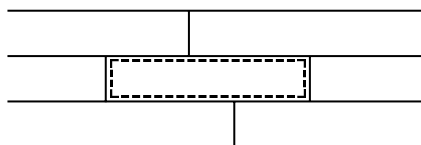
#### TO REPLACE SINGLE BOARDS IN FLOATING FLOORS (GLUELESS)

If you have used glueless flooring then you simply disconnect each board from the perimeter by lifting the edge thereby “springing” the joint or clip.

When you reach it – remove the damaged board. Replace it and relay the floor. A good hint is to use as a replacement board one that was previously used on the perimeter to fill your gap then replace that board with a new one.

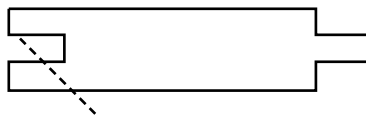
#### TO REPLACE SINGLE BOARDS IN FLOATING FLOORS (GLUED)

- a) Cut out the centre of the damaged board using bow saw, circular saw or chisel, leaving a border of approx. 3-4mm



- b) Lift out the oblong section.
- c) Using a chisel (or similar) detach the remains of the damaged board from its neighbours. Clean all dry glue etc off the tongue and groove of the neighbouring boards.
- d) Take the replacement boards and cut off

the lower portion of the grooved sides. See below.



- e) Lay in position to ensure good fit.
- f) Glue receiving tongues and grooves.  
Drop replacement board into position.

**Cork tiles** To remove these use a sharp craft knife to slice the tile into strips. Then apply hot air to the scars and work loose with a paint scraper.

**Solid Wood Mosaic Parquet** cut out the damaged finger or square by scribing around the area with a craft knife – cut right through the backing felt or paper. Lever out the damaged area with a chisel – avoid damaging the adjacent areas. If the area is large begin at the centre and work out thus protecting the perimeter. Scrape up all the old adhesive and backing using a paint scraper and hot air gun.

**Vinyl tiles** can be lifted using a hairdryer or hot air gun. Heat the tile (this takes longer on concrete subfloors than timber), then use a flat bladed paint scraper to lift the tile. Clean off the adhesive that remains on the floor using a blade and hot air.

### To use Westco Mosaic Parquet Adhesive when re-sticking self adhesive vinyl tiles

Remove the tiles which are lifting by warming them with a hairdryer or hot air gun, this will soften the tiles and stop them breaking.

Ease tiles up by using a wide blade scraper or similar.

Lightly sand the existing surface using some fine sandpaper to form a “key”.

Brush/wipe away any dust/grit which has formed.

Using the flat side of the spreader inside the lid of the tub, apply a thin even coat to

the existing surface, leave for approximately 30 minutes or until 'tacky'. Re-apply vinyl tiles by firmly pressing down, remembering to have a clean, damp cloth handy in case any adhesive seeps between the joints.

### **To clean floor gloss off sealed floors:**

- \* Use 2 parts water (cold)
- \* Use 1 part domestic ammonia
- \* Wash over with solution
- \* Clean off using clean cloth and fresh warm water
- \* Completely dry off before applying further coats of seal.

**Sanding:** When we discuss sanding we are usually referring to the light sanding known as "keying". All sealed floors will show signs of wear eventually eg. in doorways. The best way to maintain floors is to treat them well before the seal wears off. To do this 'key the surface i.e. roughen the surface using medium sandpaper and re-apply seal (see on pack instructions). Major sanding using a drum sander (or similar) should only be done to refurbish old floors it should never be necessary to do this on WESTCO products in a domestic environments.

## **UNDERFLOOR HEATING**

Some products are unsuitable for laying over underfloor heating.

### **LAYING MOSAIC PARQUET FLOORING**

The parquet flooring needs to be acclimatised in the area concerned with the underfloor heating on for approximately 7 days. The heating then needs to be switched off for 48 hours prior to the flooring being laid. An alternative heating method should be introduced to the area to compensate for the loss of heat from the underfloor heating, and to ensure similar

conditions whilst the flooring is being laid. When the flooring is completed the underfloor heating needs to remain off for a further 48 hours to allow the floor to 'settle' and the adhesive to 'set' before being switched on and brought gradually up to temperature over the next several days.

### **LAYING GLUED LAMINATE/WOOD**

The laminate/wood flooring needs to be acclimatised in the area concerned with the underfloor heating on for approximately 3-4 days. The heating should then be switched off for 24 hours prior to the flooring being laid. An alternative heating should then be introduced to the area to compensate for the loss of heat from the underfloor heating and to ensure similar conditions whilst the flooring is being laid. When the flooring is completed the underfloor heating should remain off for a further 24 hours to allow the floor to 'settle' and the adhesive to 'set' before being switched on and brought gradually up to temperature over the next several days.

### **LAYING GLUELESS LAMINATE/WOOD**

The laminate/wood flooring need to be acclimatised in the area concerned with the underfloor heating on for approximately 3-4 days. The heating then needs to be switched off for 24 hours prior to the flooring being laid. An alternative heating should then be introduced to the area to compensate for the loss of heat from the underfloor heating and to ensure similar conditions whilst the flooring is being laid. When the flooring is completed the underfloor heating can be switched on straight away, if necessary, and brought gradually up to temperature over the next several days.

**NOTE:** Laminate should only be laid over warm water system underfloor heating. The surface temperature of the laminate flooring should not exceed 26°C.

## MORE INFORMATION ABOUT WOOD PARQUET

There are many reasons to choose parquet. Some of the most important are:

- Parquet is a natural product, made from wood.
- Parquet is durable and economic. In case of occasional damage, it can be cleaned and renovated without any problem.
- Parquet is attractive, appealing, and full of character.
- Parquet is hygienic and anti-allergic.
- Parquet is versatile and available in many design and wood species.
- Parquet can be used in all decorating styles from minimalist to classic.
- Parquet is also an ideal choice for shops, schools, offices and sporting arenas. (Check individual product suitability).
- Parquet brings nature straight into your home.

## COLOURS OF WOODS

Whether choosing real hardwood or laminate wood effect it is useful to know the basic colours of wood:



OAK



BEECH



CHERRY

Golden brown with green, light and dark variants, heavy graining and figuring.

Light, pink, plain wood, straight grain.

Warm, reddish tone, natural cherry darkens with age, very decorative wood.



BIRCH



MERBAU



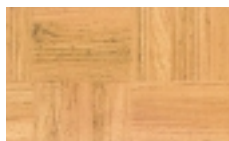
MAPLE



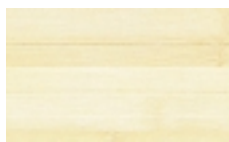
PARAWOOD



ASH



RHODESIAN TEAK



BAMBOO LIGHT



BAMBOO DARK

Light with 'golden'/reflective aspect, small dark knots.

Dark redwood with straight grain, some golden ribs possible.

Very light, pretty figuring in the grain structure.

Light, golden colour. Straight grain with beech-type effects. Some dark scars.

Ash is light with a characteristic high level of grain – often in 'cathedral' shapes.

Rhodesian Teak is very hard, dark wood suitable for contracts.

Bamboo is available light or dark. It is not a timber but a grass. It works in rooms with higher humidities.

## SECRET NAILING

Secret nailing: You can secret nail over chipboard, decking, floorboards or joists if flat etc. It is very important that the first row is parallel to the centre of the room. Measure the room in a number of places and mark the centre using a chalk line. Now measure from the centre of the wall leaving an expansion gap of 12 mm from the wall - mark several points and make a chalk line (this will be 12 mm off the wall). If the wall is very uneven you will need to scribe the boards and cut them accordingly - see earlier.

To lay the first row use the longest boards you have available. These make keeping a straight edge easier. (If laying on joists mark the joists lines on the wall. NB You can only lay at right angle to the joists, centres should be no more than 400mm. Nail (or screw) through the face of the first

row to secure this straight line. (Use a drill marginally smaller than the diameter of the nails to ease the work).

Now fit the next row onto the protruding tongues of the first row. Use an off cut or block to force the rows tight together. Now nail through the tongue at 45-50 degrees. **DO NOT PUNCH THE NAIL HOME WITH THE HAMMER AS THIS WILL BRUSE THE EDGE OF THE FLOOR.** Use a nail punch to drive the nails in.

You can also use a pneumatic nailer or stapler from a hire shop - follow their instructions and obey the safety advice.

Stagger the boards so that there is at least 300mm overlap at each joint. When you reach the last row, use the tool from the fitting kit to position the boards then nail/screw through the face and fill.

NB Only lay flooring on joists if the on pack instructions confirm it is self-supporting.

## GLOSSARY

### **ABRASION RESISTANCE**

Defines the wearing properties of the surface laminate and specifies the appropriate range of applications. This was measured using the famous (infamous) Taber Test, which now forms part of a basket of tests that lead to a usage classification from BS EN 13329.

### **AC RATING**

See EN 13329.

### **ADHESIVE**

The manufacturers recommended adhesive must be used, always read the instructions on both the adhesive container and the flooring pack.

### **BALANCING LAYER**

Refers to a layer on the underside of the core material. Has similar physical characteristics (expansion coefficient,

moisture resistance etc.) to top layers. This layer balances the top layer in a traditional "ply" construction.

**BS8203:-** says "The quality of the finished floor will only be as good as the subfloor over which it has been laid."

### **CORE**

Depending on the product, the core consists of particleboard, MDF (fibreboard), or softwood.

### **CHIPBOARD**

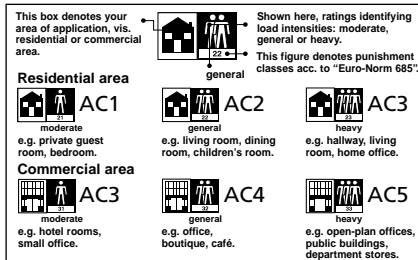
See particleboard.

### **EMISSION CLASSIFICATION**

The term emission classification or similar followed by the rating E1 is an indication that formaldehyde emissions are within the permissible levels for wood derived products.

## EN 13329

European standard that describes the quality, grade and recommended applications of the laminate flooring. A standardised form of labelling relating to grading of the laminate flooring has also been introduced. Usually these classifications are referred to "AC" ratings with AC1 being light/domestic and AC5 being heavy /commercial. An ISO standard is expected to follow.



## EXPANSION GAPS

Wood or wood based floors (laminate) need perimeter gaps, typically around 12 mm. These allow expansion and contraction. Larger areas should be broken down into portions. Note other obstacles such as pillars or hearths must have an expansion gap between them and the flooring. Always use cork strip to retain the gap.

## FIRE CLASSIFICATION

Contact us for specific advice.

## FINISH

Prefinished, pre-oiled etc. means the floor has already been treated with a seal or oil finish and requires no further coats (except in high traffic areas see on pack instructions).

## GLUELESS SYSTEMS

A mechanical jointing system for flooring allowing installation without the use of adhesives. Usually takes the form of a special interlocking profile tongue and groove section machined into the core or clips attached to the base of the planks, interlocking them.

## HDF

Abbreviation for High Density Fibreboard, commonly used as a compact core in laminate flooring products. Properties include good strength, durability and dimensional accuracy.

## LIGHT-FASTNESS

The ability of the decorative surface to resist colour change over time.

## MDF

Medium density fibreboard. Lighter in weight than high density fibreboard.

## MELAMINE RESIN COATING

A polymer coating made from melamine and an aldehyde that forms the wear layer in laminate flooring and protects the decor layer below. Also used on the balancing layer.

## OVERLAY

Term used to describe the resin-coated wear layer of laminate flooring products, rendering the product hardwearing and easy to clean. May contain additional mineral elements to enhance performance.


## PARTICLEBOARD

Particleboard, often referred to as chipboard, is a wood-derived product made by subjecting wood chips and a binding agent to intense pressure. There are many grades, largely determined by the density of the board.

## POROSITY

The capacity of a material to take in water.

## QUADRANT

A moulding shaped  used to cover expansion gaps.

## REPAIR

Floors can be repaired, refer to this section earlier.


## **RESISTANCE**

Refer to EN 13329.

## **SANDING**

See 'Repairs'.

## **SCOTIA**

A moulding shaped  used to cover expansion gaps.

## **SOUND INSULATION**

Insulation materials such as polyethylene foam, polystyrene, or cork sandwiched between the load bearing structure and floating laminate floor, ensures that noise from foot traffic is reduced.

## **STAIN RESISTANCE**

Refer to laminate guide.

## **SUB FLOOR**

The primary floor that the new floor (finish) is to be laid over. Basically this can range from directly to ground (unsuitable for all Westco products) via concrete to wood (both traditional floor board to modern chipboard effect) Understand your sub floor construction and check it is dry, level, clean and sound before fixing Westco products.

## **TABER-TEST**

The much quoted taber value denotes a test performed according to European standard EN 438-2.6, with the aim of analysing resistance to abrasion. During the experiment, a section of laminate flooring is rotated under two abrasive sanding wheels. Rotational speed, sandpaper grain and replacement frequency are meticulously

laid down in the procedural guidelines. The unit of measurement is the number of rotations before wear becomes apparent. The initial point (IP) value describes the point at which the first signs of scuffing begin to appear, the final point (FP) is reached when the wear and decor layer have been 95% obliterated. By this time, the product is considered to have reached the end of its useful life. The DIN standard allows for a mean wear index number by taking the average of the IP and FP values.

## **THICKNESS**

The total thickness of the product is usually expressed in millimetres. Vinyl floors range from 1.1mm to 2.0mm; cork 3.00 to 4.00mm; Solid Wood from 6 to 22mm; Engineered wood from 8 to 14mm and Laminate from 6 to 12mm. Note the use of underlay adds 2 to 4mm to a floors' total thickness. Thinner products are advantageous in refurbishment projects where they can be laid over existing sub-floor without unnecessarily adding to the height of the floor.

## **TONGUE & GROOVE JOINT (T & G)**

A method of joining boards using a protruding tongue which mates with a matching groove. With a conventional t & g joint a bead of glue is applied to the concealed joint to give a tight-fitting bond. By making the tongue and groove of an interlocking profile, the need for glue may be unnecessary see 'glueless'.

## **UNDER FLOOR HEATING**

See earlier in the guide.

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