

## Stewartfloor® 3/4" Solid Installation Instructions (Includes 3", 3-1/4", 4" & 5" widths)

Stewartfloor® thanks you for choosing our classically modern hardwood flooring. By reviewing and following the installation instructions, you will be protecting your investment. These instructions are intended for the experienced hardwood flooring installer. For further details and technical assistance in the basics of installing hardwood flooring, please contact the National Wood Flooring Association (NWFA) at 1-800-422-4556 or visit [www.nwfa.org](http://www.nwfa.org).

### Installer/ Homeowner Responsibility

Hardwood flooring is a product of nature and therefore defects can occur in the manufacturing process or in nature. Stewartfloor® 3/4" hardwood floors are manufactured to exacting industry standards, these standards do allow for up to 5% defective product based on the original hardwood flooring square footage ordered. Please order 5% additional flooring product above your measured requirements to allow for cutting and grading of material.

Before installation, the installer and homeowner assumes all responsibility for final product quality inspection and acceptance. Do not install hardwood flooring which is unacceptable; contact your distributor or Stewartfloor® immediately. Final grade, manufacturing and finish quality are the sole responsibility of the owner and the installer, NOT Stewartfloor®. The installer is to use common sense and judgment before and during installation. Flooring material with obvious defects should be cut and used in unnoticeable places or thrown out. Once the installer has finished the installation, the floor has been accepted by the owner and installer. Stewartfloor® will NOT in any case be liable for lack of judgment by the installer, quality of installation, labor installation or any other associated costs.

The installer must determine that the job-site environment and sub-floor surfaces meet the acceptable construction and material industry standards. Stewartfloor® declines any and all responsibility for job failure resulting from sub-floor or job-site conditions.

Wood filler, wood flour or a putty stick is acceptable to be used to correct minor flooring defects during job installation and is considered a normal industry standard.

Stewartfloor® is not involved in the contracting of flooring installers. Homeowners should choose their installer very carefully and ask for references. The least expensive does not always provide for an acceptable installation. The installation contract is made between the owner and the installer, NOT Stewartfloor®, and in no way will Stewartfloor® be responsible for the failure of the installer to satisfy the owners expectations.

### Basic Tools

Rubber mallet	Table saw or band saw
4d-6d flooring nails	Hammer
Nail set	Tape measure
Jamb saw or hand saw	Leading brand of hardwood
Chalk line	Flooring cleaner
Pencil	Broom
15 lbs. asphalt felt	Moisture meter with proper species calibration

Stewartfloor® recommends Powernail® Powernailers for 18 gage cleats which are ideally suited to 3/4" solid imported hardwood or other machines designed or adapted specifically to 3/4" imported solid wood flooring. Please check with the manufacturer of your tool for technical assistance & to achieve optimal results.

**NOTE: 3/4" SOLID IMPORTED FLOORING IS FOR NAIL-DOWN or STAPLE-DOWN (With 2" Fasteners Maximum) INSTALLATION ONLY. POWERNAIL® recommends 1-3/4" POWERCLEATS® IN 18 GAGE. THE UNIQUE "L" DESIGN HELPS TO ELIMINATE SPLIT TONGUES IN FLOOR BOARDS WHEN DRIVING INTO HARD FLOORING MATERIALS.**

## #1: Pre-Installation

### Site Inspection

Prior to installing Stewartfloor® hardwood floors, the building must be structurally complete and enclosed, including installation of exterior doors and windows. Concrete, masonry, drywall and paint must also be complete, allowing necessary drying time to not raise the moisture content in the building.

HVAC systems must be fully operational at least 14 days before flooring is to be installed. A consistent room temperature of between 60–75 degrees Fahrenheit and relative humidity of 40–55%. This stabilizes the interior environment and is essential for acclimating hardwood flooring to the job-site.

Stewartfloor® solid hardwood flooring can only be installed on or above grade level. Bathrooms are NOT recommended.

Basements and Crawl spaces must be dry. Crawl spaces must be a minimum of 24" from the ground to underside of joists. A vapor barrier must be established in crawl spaces using 6mm polyethylene (poly) film with joints overlapped and secured.

During the final pre-installation inspection, sub-floors must be checked for moisture content using the appropriate metering device for wood.

## #2: Acclimation of Hardwood Flooring

Wood is a hygroscopic natural material. This means it tends to absorb moisture from the environment it is exposed to. It will expand and contract depending on the amount of relative humidity it is exposed to in its surrounding environment. Acclimation of moisture content to the job-site equilibrium point before installation is essential in stabilizing movement after the installation is completed.

Hardwood flooring must acclimate for as long as necessary to meet accepted installation requirements for moisture content.

## #3: SubFlooring & Subfloor Preparation

3/4" (19mm) CDX Grade Plywood or 3/4" (23/32") OSB PS2 Rated Underlayment with a minimum 40 lbs. density is recommended. The minimum would be 5/8" CDX Grade Plywood with a minimum 40 lbs. density.

Do not nail over particleboard or similar products, including gypcrete. **DO NOT INSTALL STEWARTFLOOR SOLID WOOD FLOORING OVER RADIANT HEAT FLOORING. THIS WILL VOID ALL WARRANTIES.**

- Sweep or vacuum subfloor thoroughly before beginning installation. Surface should be free of wax, debris and any solvents. Replace any water damaged or delaminated subflooring or underlayment.
- Level/flat within 3/16" over 10' and/or 1/8" over 6'. High areas or uneven joints are to be sanded flat. Low spots can be corrected by using shims or layers of builders felt.
- Subfloor must be properly secured with nails or screws every 6 inches along joists to reduce the possibility of squeaking after final installation.
- If high moisture content (MC) is found in the subfloor, determine the source and fix the problem before moving forward.
- If installing over a crawl space, lay a 6-mil black polyethylene film moisture barrier on the ground below the installation area.
- Cement work, ceramic tiling, plumbing, electrical, plastering and painting should all be completed before installing Stewartfloor solid wood flooring.
- Walls & ceiling should be completely dry.
- Remove all baseboards, base moldings, shoe moldings, doorway thresholds, etc.
- Wood subfloor: Place 15-lb. asphalt-saturated felt paper that meets ASTM Standard D4869 or use a building paper with an equivalent permeance over subfloor. Asphalt felt is not considered a moisture barrier.

Please Remember: Prefinished hardwood flooring requires attention and care during installation to prevent damage to the finished surface. Be careful when handling the flooring, tools, nails as well as walking on the floor during installation. Do NOT lay your tools on the flooring during installation.

#### #4: Installation

I. Snap the chalk line – Measure room and determine how the flooring will be laid out, an exterior wall is usually the straightest and best reference line to start the installation. Direction of flooring should be at right angles to the floor joists whenever possible. Establish a starting line by leaving a minimum of 1/2" to 3/4" from wall to floor for an expansion gap and 1/4" on the vertical ends for expansion. These expansion gaps will help to prevent buckling and/or cupping due to movement of the wood.

II. Place the first board along chalk line – Choose the straightest boards for your first row, because you will not be able to straighten them later. Lay the tongue side of the board on the chalk line.

III. Drill straight holes on the first row of flooring – Prepare the first row for nailing down by drilling a pilot hole 1/2" from the side, and then every 10". Pre-drilling nail holes will prevent splits from occurring. Stop 2" from the end. Drill a minimum of two holes per board.

IV. Secure first row – Use 6d or 8d flooring nails to top nail surface of flooring and countersink. Hardwood floor nailers are impossible to use when working close to a wall. The first couple of rows must be secured using a hand nailing procedure. Set the nail with a nail set and putty the holes with colored putty to match the wood.

V. Secure remaining rows – Take care in making sure to properly space nails every 8" – 10" along the length of the board with a minimum of 2 fasteners per piece 2" – 3" from each end. If it is 5" plank, properly space nails every 4" – 6" along the length of the board.

VI. Rack out flooring correctly to avoid aligning – Always make sure that ends are a minimum of 6" from the previous row's joints to avoid aligning the joints. Alternate with boards of varying lengths.

VII. Nail baseboard into the wall – Complete the last two or three rows as in step 4. Install the baseboards and quarter rounds/ base shoe, nailing them into the wall – NOT INTO THE FLOORING.

VIII. Proper maintenance and cleaning – Keep your floors free from dirt, water, food, grease, and other spills which can potentially damage your floor or its finish. Make sure to install floor protectors under heavy furniture or other objects sitting directly on top of your flooring. Maintaining your Stewartfloor prefinished hardwood flooring is easy. Simply sweep, vacuum, or use a dust mop. Clean as needed with a leading brand of cleaner and microfiber mop made specifically for prefinished hardwood floors. Stewartfloor's UV cured aluminum oxide finish provides excellent wear and stain resistance.

CONGRATULATIONS on your new Stewartfloor prefinished hardwood floor! If you have any further questions or need assistance regarding exotic hardwood flooring, please contact our technical department toll-free at 1-866-780-STEW (7839).