



### Prefinished Vs. Site Finished

Clients often ask us whether prefinished or unfinished flooring is better. I would typically only recommend site finished flooring if you are trying to match an existing site finished floor and are refinishing the entire area. We do not recommend it for boards over 2-1/4" wide.

There is a misconception that site finished flooring is completely sealed and will not move. The fact is, wood will shrink and expand with changes in humidity, and gaps in a site finished floor are far more noticeable than prefinished. When site finished flooring shrinks in the winter, the gaps that develop will crack the finish, which is especially the case in wider boards. Also, since the boards in a site finished floor are stuck together by the finish the gaps will develop at the weakest point in the finish which may be every 3-4 boards. This is called "side bonding" and doesn't occur in prefinished floors.



In a prefinished floor the boards are free to shrink individually so you have small gaps between each board, rather than large gaps randomly throughout your floor.



Many clients tell us the reason they don't like prefinished flooring is because they don't like the bevels on the edges of the boards. Our bevels are quite small compared to other large manufacturers. The bevels on the edges of prefinished boards do serve a purpose. When the boards shrink, the bevels make the gaps less noticeable. Since the site finished boards have completely square edges, even the smallest gaps will be exposed and magnified.

**Prefinished is a much better choice for a number of reasons.**

**More Durable-** Our finish has a 10-coat finish with a 40-year warranty. You will not find anyone to offer a finish warranty on a site finished floor and you will need to re-coat it regularly.

**Less Time-** Prefinished flooring only requires installation. Site finished requires installation, sanding, staining, and finishing. 2-3 coats of finish must be applied with sanding between coats.

**No Mess-** After having your flooring site finished you will be cleaning fine sawdust off your walls, window sills, and furniture for weeks.

**Better Finish-** Prefinished flooring is finished in a controlled environment. We are able to put 10 coats of finish with titanium oxide in every coat. The quality of a site finish depends on the environment. Dust, hair, and bugs will often settle in the finish. On site, you are only able to put 2-3 coats of fairly basic polyurethane making the finish much less durable.

Check out our YouTube Video on this topic: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Y0MkOwfavxw>