

Casabella® LAMINATE FLOOR CARE AND MAINTENANCE

- ◆ **PLEASE REMEMBER**, like any floor covering, our factory finished floors will show signs of wear over time, depending on the size and lifestyle of your family. By observing a few precautions along with setting up a regular cleaning and maintenance program, you can expect years of beauty from your floor.
- ◆ **REGULAR CARE AND MAINTENANCE:** Regular cleaning and sweeping of sand and dirt is required to maintain your new Casabella Laminate flooring surface. Sweep or vacuum regularly since built-up grit will damage the surface of the wood. The vacuum head must be a brush or felt type. Be certain the wheels of the vacuum are clean and do not damage the finish. Do not use a vacuum with a beater bar head.
- ◆ **SPILLS:** Remove all spills immediately. Use a dry or damp cloth to wipe the surface clean and dry. CAUTION: FLOOR SURFACE IS VERY SLIPPERY WHEN WET. ALLOW FLOOR TO DRY BEFORE WALKING ON SURFACE.
- ◆ **CLEANING:** Use **CASABELLA® LAMINATE** approved products to maintain your floor. Bona Laminate Cleaner can be used. Consult an approved dealer for instructions. **ALWAYS SWEEP OR VACUUM THE FLOORS PRIOR TO USING WOOD FLOOR CLEANERS. DO NOT ALLOW EXCESS CLEANER TO REMAIN ON THE FLOORS SURFACE AS THIS MAY PERMANENTLY DAMAGE THE WOOD.**
- ◆ **DO NOT USE HARSH CLEANERS OR ABRASIVE CLEANING PRODUCTS TO CLEAN CASABELLA® FLOORING. NEVER WET-MOP, DAMP-MOP, OR CLEAN YOUR FLOOR WITH WATER OR OTHER PRODUCTS. THIS CAN SEVERELY DAMAGE THE FLOORING AND WILL VOID THE WARRANTIES. DO NOT USE FLOOR CLEANING MACHINES OR STEAM CLEANERS.**
- ◆ **DO NOT USE 2 IN 1 CLEANERS – THE USE OF THESE PRODUCTS WILL VOID THE FINISH WARRANTY AND MAY PRODUCE UNSATISFACTORY RESULTS WHEN NOT APPLIED PROPERLY. DO NOT USE OIL, SOAPS, LIQUID OR PASTE WAX PRODUCTS OR OTHER HOUSEHOLD CLEANERS THAT CONTAIN CITRUS OILS, LEMON OIL, TUNG OIL, SILICON, OR AMMONIA SINCE OUR WARRANTIES DO NOT COVER DAMAGE CAUSED BY NON-RECOMMENDED PRODUCTS. USE OF THESE AND OTHER SUCH PRODUCTS WILL HARM THE LONG-TERM PERFORMANCE OF YOUR FLOOR AND WILL VOID YOUR WARRANTY.**
- ◆ **FURNITURE:**
 1. NEVER SLIDE FURNITURE OR OTHER HEAVY ITEMS ACROSS FLOOR.
Always protect the floor surface when moving items across the floor. Use a dolly and protective sheets of plywood when moving heavy objects, furniture, or appliances.
 2. NEVER PLACE HEAVY OBJECTS ON THE FLOOR WITHOUT “FLOOR PROTECTORS”.
 3. NEVER PLACE HEAVY FURNITURE ON FLOOR FOR EXTENDED PERIODS OF TIME WITHOUT FLOOR PROTECTORS. AVOID HARD ROLLING CASTERS. USE FLOOR PROTECTOR PADS FOR ROLLING CHAIRS. Make certain furniture casters are clean and operate properly (a minimum 1” wide vinyl surface where it comes in contact with laminate is recommended). Clean wheels periodically to remove dirt and debris.
- ◆ **HOT ITEMS:** NEVER place “HOT ITEMS” on the floor surface.
- ◆ **PETS:** Clean up pet waste immediately as it is harmful to your **CASABELLA® LAMINATE**. Keep pets’ nails trimmed, and paws clean and free of dirt, gravel, grease, oil, and stains.

- ◆ **REMOVE SHOES** with spiked or damaged heels before walking on floor.
- ◆ **MAINTAIN THE PROPER RELATIVE HUMIDITY** in your home between 35% - 55%. The use of a humidifier during heating seasons may help reduce shrinkage of the wood due to low humidity.

MAINTENANCE TIPS:

- ◆ Place outside doormats in all outside doorways to reduce dirt and moisture.
- ◆ Wipe up all moisture spills immediately.
- ◆ Clean the floor often.
- ◆ Do not use excessive water.
- ◆ Do not use unapproved cleaners, soaps, or detergents. **MANY OF THESE PRODUCTS WILL DESTROY THE FINISH ON YOUR FLOOR. BE VERY CAREFUL NOT TO USE CLOTHS CONTAMINATED WITH OTHER CLEANING PRODUCTS ON YOUR FLOORS. IT WILL VOID YOUR WARRANTY.**
- ◆ **BONA HARDWOOD FLOOR CLEANER AND TERRY CLOTH MOP KIT WILL REMOVE MOST SUBSTANCES FROM YOUR FLOOR.**

USE CASABELLA LAMINATE™ FLOORING APPROVED PRODUCTS FOR LONG LASTING PERFORMANCE AND BEAUTY. **FAILURE TO FOLLOW THE ABOVE CARE AND MAINTENANCE TIPS WILL VOID YOUR WARRANTY.**

JOB SITE INSPECTION & ACCLIMATION (Please read carefully!)

- ◆ It is the installer/ owners' responsibility to ensure that the jobsite conditions and jobsite subfloor are environmentally and structurally acceptable prior to the installation of any Laminate flooring. The manufacturer declines any responsibility for failures or deficiencies of flooring resulting from or related to sub-floor, sub-surface, or job-site environmental conditions. All substrates must be clean, flat, dry, and structurally sound.
- ◆ Subfloors must be clean and free of dirt, curing compounds, sealers, drywall mud, paint, wax, grease, urethane, or other materials that may affect the integrity of the flooring material or adhesives used to install the flooring.
- ◆ All subfloors and subfloor systems must be structurally sound and must be installed following their manufacturer's recommendations. Local building codes may only establish minimum requirements of the flooring system and may not provide adequate rigidity and support for proper installation and performance of a Laminate floor. Whenever possible install the planks perpendicular to the floor joists for maximum stability. Our warranties **DO NOT** cover any problems caused by inadequate substructures or improper installation of said substructures.
- ◆ Test wood sub floors and wood flooring for moisture content using a pin-type moisture meter. Take readings of the subfloor – minimum of 20 readings per 1000 sq. ft. and average the results. A “dry” subfloor that is ready to work on has a moisture content of 10% or less and the subfloor moisture content should be within 4% of the wood moisture content.
- ◆ The moisture content for concrete subfloors registered after a calcium chloride test should not be greater than 3 pounds per 1000 square feet of area. If it exceeds these limits, **DO NOT** install the flooring.
- ◆ Before moisture testing begins, the slab must be cured for a minimum of 30 days.
- ◆ Basements and crawl spaces must be dry. Use of a 6 mil black polyethylene is required to cover 100% of the crawl space earth. Crawl space clearance from ground to underside of joist to be no less than 18” and

perimeter vent spacing should be equal to 1.5% of the total square footage of the crawl space area to provide cross ventilation. Where necessary, local regulations prevail.

- ◆ The subfloor must be flat, meeting a minimum of 3/16" within 10' or 1/8" in 6'.
- ◆ Concrete subfloors - Grind high spots or use a Portland-cement-based leveling material (minimum compressive strength 3000 psi) to fill all low spots. Follow the leveling compound manufacturer's instruction. Leveling compounds must be allowed to thoroughly cure and dry prior to installation of wood flooring.
- ◆ All "wet" work – i.e. – paint, drywall, concrete, masonry, plumbing must be complete and dry well in advance of delivery of flooring.
- ◆ Gutters and downspouts should be in place and the exterior grade complete to allow for proper drainage of water away from the building's exterior perimeter.
- ◆ Flooring should not be exposed to extremes of humidity or moisture.
- ◆ Permanent HVAC should be on and operational a minimum of 5 days and maintained between 65 – 75 degrees (F) and a relative humidity of 35%- 55% prior to delivery, during, and after installation of the flooring.
- ◆ **IT IS THE INSTALLER/OWNER RESPONSIBILITY TO ENSURE THAT THE CONDITIONS ARE ACCEPTABLE PRIOR TO THE INSTALLATION OF THE FLOORS. THE MANUFACTURER SHALL NOT BE LIABLE FOR ANY AND ALL PROBLEMS/DAMAGES THAT ARE RELATED TO OR ATTRIBUTED TO IMPROPER JOBSITE CONDITIONS.**
- ◆ In new construction, CASABELLA® LAMINATE should be one of the last items installed. All work involving water or moisture, (plumbing, plaster/drywall ceilings or wall finishes, painting, etc.), should be finished and adequate time allowed for complete drying, prior to CASABELLA® LAMINATE being installed. Heating and air conditioning systems (HVAC) should be fully operational and capable of maintaining a consistent room temperature at 60-80° F, and a constant relative humidity range of 35%-65%, for at least **5 days (for existing construction) and 30 days (for new construction)**, prior to beginning the wood flooring installation.
- ◆ Where the above referenced site conditions have not been met for at least five days, normal 48-hour flooring acclimation in the previously stated climate controlled conditions is required.
- ◆ Flooring should not be delivered until the above environmental guidelines are met. Concrete and plaster should be fully cured and dry. **Check basements and under floor crawl spaces to be sure that they are dry and well ventilated to avoid damage caused by moisture.** Casabella Laminate™ requires a minimum of 6mil vapor barrier placed on 100% of the surface of the ground in crawl spaces not finished with cement.
- ◆ Wood Subfloors must be dry, (less than 10% moisture content), and within a 4% range of the moisture content of the CASABELLA® LAMINATE being installed.
- ◆ Handle with care. Do not stand on ends or sides. Store Casabella Laminate flooring flat with proper support on the ends and center sections in a dry place.
- ◆ Do not store directly upon on grade concrete or next to outside walls. Cartons should be placed as close to the center of the installation area as possible, away from exterior walls, windows, and doors. Keep out of direct sunlight and away from heat or air vents.
- ◆ **Do not open the CASABELLA® LAMINATE cartons until ready to begin the installation.**

Recommended Subfloor Surfaces Concrete Subfloor Guidelines

Concrete slabs should be of high compressive strength and constructed to prevent groundwater from permeating

the concrete. Engineered Laminate flooring can be installed on, above, or below-grade. In addition, it can be

installed over above-ground, suspended concrete floors. The suspended concrete must be a minimum of 1 1/2 inches thick and must be structurally sound. The exception to this is lightweight concrete (which usually contains high amounts of gypsum) having a density of 100 pounds or less per cubic foot. Test for lightweight concrete by using a nail to scratch the surface of the concrete. If the concrete crumbles or turns to powder, it is not sound, and you should NOT install the laminate flooring. Use the floating installation method (5 ply products 3" or wider) only for lightweight concrete subfloors.

Wood Subfloors Guidelines

Subfloor panels should conform to U.S. Voluntary Product Standard PS1-07, Construction and Industrial Plywood and/or US Voluntary PS 2-04 and/or Canadian performance standard CAN/CSA 0325.0-92 Construction Sheathing. Other CSA standards also apply.

Acceptable Panel Subfloors

Truss/joist spacing will determine the minimum acceptable thickness of the panel subflooring. On truss/joist spacing of 16" o/c or less the industry standard for single panel subflooring is minimum 5/8" 19/32", 15.1 mm CD Exposure 1 subfloor panels, 4x8 sheets. On truss/joist spacing of more than 16", up to 19.2" (488mm) o/c, the standard is nominal 3/4" (23/32", 18.3 mm) T&G CD Exposure 1 Plywood subfloor panels, (Exposure 1) or nominal 3/4" 23/32", (18.3mm) OSB Exposure 1 subfloor panels, 4'x8' sheets, glued and mechanically fastened. Truss/joist systems spaced over more than 19.2" (488mm) o/c up to a maximum of 24" (610mm) require minimum 7/8" T&G CD Exposure 1 Plywood subfloor panels, (Exposure 1), or minimum 7/8" OSB Exposure 1 subfloor panels, 4'x8' sheets glued and mechanically fastened – or two layers of subflooring or brace between the truss/joist in accordance with the truss/joist manufacturer's recommendations and with local building codes. Some truss/joist systems cannot be cross-braced and still maintain stability.

For existing wood floors install new flooring at right angles to the existing flooring.

Do not glue, staple, or nail down flooring over particleboard, floating application is acceptable (products 3" or wider).

Do not install over existing glue down laminate floors.

WARNING! DO NOT SAND, DRY SWEEP, DRY SCRAPE, DRILL, SAW, BEADBLAST OR MECHANICALLY CHIP OR PULVERIZE EXISTING RESILIENT FLOORING, BACKING, LINING FELT, ASPHALTIC "CUTBACK" ADHESIVES OR OTHER ADHESIVES. These products may contain either asbestos fibers and/or crystalline silica. Avoid creating dust. Inhalation of such dust is a cancer and respiratory tract hazard. Smoking by individuals exposed to asbestos fibers greatly increases the risk of serious bodily harm. Unless positively certain that the product is a non-asbestos-containing material, you must presume it contains asbestos. Regulations may require that the material be tested to determine asbestos content and may govern the removal and disposal of material. See current edition of the Resilient Floor Covering Institute (RFCI) publication Recommended Work Practices for Removal of Resilient Floor Coverings for detailed information and instructions on removing all resilient covering structures. For current information go to www.rfci.com.

Ceramic tile and terrazzo: All wax and sealers must be removed with an appropriate cleaner/stripper. Ceramic tile and terrazzo should be abraded to allow for proper adhesion. Check for loose tiles by tapping and re-adhere. Fill grout lines with a cementitious latex fortified leveling compound.

Resilient tile, resilient sheet vinyl: Material must be full spread and secured to the subfloor. Do not install over perimeter glued floors. Do not install over more than one layer that exceeds 1/8" in thickness.

Acoustic Cork Underlayment: (Glue Down Only) – Install the cork underlayment according to the manufacturer's instructions. The cork underlayment must be fully adhered to the subfloor. The cork underlayment should be of pure granulated cork combined with a polyurethane binder with a minimum density of 11.4 lbs. per cubic foot and not to exceed 13 lbs. per cubic foot.

Pre-installation / Job Preparation

Inspect the Flooring – Inspect material for color, finish, milling, and grade. Remove pieces that may not be acceptable once installed.

PLEASE NOTE: We do not accept responsibility for any costs incurred when plank(s) with visible defects have been permanently installed.

Undercut Door Casings - Undercut all door casings 1/16" higher than the thickness of the flooring being installed. To do this, use a scrap piece of flooring as a guide. Lay it on the substrate and cut the casing with a handsaw or use a power jamb saw set at the correct height.

Blending of Cartons- To achieve a uniform appearance across the entire floor, we highly recommend that you open and work from several cartons at a time and dry-lay the flooring, mixing the planks from several cartons. This will allow you to blend the planks for maximum aesthetic appearance. Make certain the room is well lit to ensure color is consistent and that any visual defects can be seen and removed.

Match Transition Moldings: For best appearance blend all transitions and moldings to planks that have similar color and graining. Set them aside for use as needed.

Layout of Flooring: "Racking the Floor" is essential to achieve a random appearance. Start by cutting four or five planks in random lengths, differing by at least six inches. As you continue working across the floor try to maintain a nine-inch minimum between end joints. Randomly install different lengths to avoid a patterned appearance. Never waste materials; the end cuts from starter rows should be used at the opposite side of the room to complete rows or used to start the next row.

Expansion space: Expansion space around the perimeter is required and should be equal to the thickness of the flooring material. For floating installation, the minimum is 1/2" regardless of the thickness of the material. For commercial installations use a minimum of 1/2" expansion.