

# Flooring



WHIPPLETREE

*Technical specifications plus acclimatisation, laying preparations and after-care instructions*



Whippletree flooring is a natural product that, from one season to the next, will display a marginal amount of expansion and shrinkage as the ambient humidity levels rise and fall. This expansion tends to be greater with underfloor heating (UFH) as the heat source is immediately below the timber. Please note: If you are not prepared for this seasonal movement, you should not be considering fitting a solid timber floor.

All Whippletree flooring has been carefully dried down to its optimum moisture content (between 10 and 11%) – one that is suited to today's warm and dry living conditions. Note that we can dry to other MC specifications you may specially require. Whichever moisture content you have requested, it is still necessary to acclimatise this new floor to the environment in which it is to be installed.

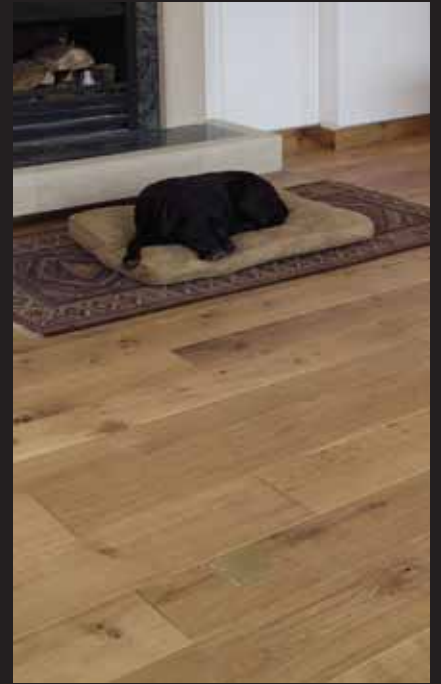
**The instructions should be followed in every respect.** Please note, depending on whether this flooring is to be installed in *conventionally heated* or an *underfloor heated* property, that these instructions vary.

# Specification sheet

## STANDARD TONGUE & GROOVE

Available in Prime Oak FFASap\*, Character Oak FFASap, Elm and Ash

- Widths:** 110mm, 135mm, 160mm, 185mm and 210mm (Note wider available as special orders)
- Thickness:** 19mm face sanded
- Lengths:** Random, from 1.8m to 4.3m (occasionally up to 4.8m)  
Short packs – 0.5m up to 1.7m. Subject to availability, 20% price reduction
- Profile:** Tongue & groove
- Ends:** Square-cut
- Micro chamfer:** Optional (recommended for UFH)
- Grade details:** *Prime Oak* – straight clear grain, but will include some small or pin knots  
*Character Oak* – wild grain, fillable knots, small splits and pippy clusters  
*Streaky (Brown) Oak* – wild grain, fillable knots, small splits, pippy clusters and dark brown streaks  
*Elm* – wild grain, fillable knots and pippy clusters  
*Ash* – straight grain, some colour variation, plus a few fillable knots



## HAND FINISHED (FOOTWORN)

Available in Oak, Elm and Ash

- Widths:** 185mm, 240mm, 290mm and 340mm
- Thickness:** Nominal 22mm
- Lengths:** Random, from 1.8m to 4.3m (occasionally up to 4.8m)  
Short packs – 0.5m up to 1.7m. Subject to availability, 20% price reduction
- Profile:** Traditional half lap
- Ends:** Shaped (when laying remember to allow for re-shaping one end of any cross-cut board)
- Grade details:** *Character* – will include knots, heart shakes and small splits. All defects are repaired and filled for an original effect. Due to the hand-finishing process the surface of the boards will be naturally contoured and show some markings from the saw, as well as some 'stick marks' (darker bands running across the board).

Wider boards may have a slight 'cup' effect due to the width – this will generally pull flat when the board is fixed. The wide board floors produce a 'time worn', slightly uneven surface that is commonly associated with old properties.

\* Free from all sapwood – FFASap



# Acclimatisation and laying preparations

## CONVENTIONALLY HEATED PROPERTIES

### 1. Pre-delivery

Before delivery or collection is arranged, it is necessary to ensure that the building in which the flooring is to be laid is:

- totally dry (maximum humidity level 50RH @ 20°C)
- all wet trades are complete
- the heating system is running normally.

### 2. Storing

Carefully unload, remove all packaging and stack the flooring (ensuring boards are kept clean and are not grazed) in the room in which it is to be installed. This should be done in such a way that the warm air is permitted to circulate around every board. *Hint: place thin strips of timber between each layer of board. Continue to run the heating as per normal for a further 7 to 10 days.*

### 3. Laying preparation

Once the floor is ready to lay coat the reverse of each board with a floor sealant. Do not let any sealant onto the face side. If the floor is to be glued down, you should already have checked the compatibility of the sealant with the adhesive.

### 4. Fixing

Crosscut, lay and fix all boards maintaining a minimum 10mm gap between the floor's edge and any other object. Once the flooring is fixed, it is time to sand and/or clean up its surface.

### 5. Sanding

All Whippetree flooring is supplied pre-sanded. Once fitting and fixing is complete, and all knots etc. have been filled, 'finish' sanding will be required so as to remove all excess filler, dirt and marks before the floor is sealed. While heavy floor sanders can be used note that, if you are not familiar with this type of sander or proficient in its use, it is very easy to deface the new floor.

Sand the floor to such a state that you and your customer are completely happy with its appearance. A 100 Grit, on an orbital sander, should be your final sand. *Note that any remaining marks could become more prominent when the floor is sealed.*

### 6. Sealing

Select the required finish and then seal, ensuring that sufficient sealant is applied in accordance with the manufacturer's instructions. Whippetree always recommends 'knibbing' (light sanding with a 180 Grit, or finer) the flooring between each coat of sealant and vacuuming away the sanding dust before the next coat is applied. Remember to ensure you achieve the desired finish before covering or moving furniture in.

### 7. Protection

Once the sealant has been allowed to harden off, cover the entire floor with protective card or hardboard to prevent damage occurring during the final finishing stages (fixing of skirting etc.).

## UNDERFLOOR HEATED (UFH) PROPERTIES

With respect to properties with this type of heating system, in addition to complying with notes 1 – 7 above, once the heating has been running normally it is important to check the dryness or humidity of the room (Whippetree can offer advice about running UFH in warm conditions as well as supply humidity readers to help you monitor this). This is particularly important where pipes have been wet screeded in. *Note that screed or concrete is likely to take a day per mm to fully dry out.*

Prior to fixing, the flooring must be 'loose laid' (i.e. spread out in a single layer over the whole floor area) for a minimum of three weeks.

The reason for this is, as the heat source is immediately beneath the boards, a small amount of shrinkage can take place. Such shrinkage must be allowed to occur prior to the flooring being fixed. Whippetree recommends a micro chamfer, as this disguises any future seasonal movement.

Always turn UFH off 24 hours prior to fixing the floor and then once the floor has been finished, slowly increase floor temperature 1° per day until running temperature is reached. *Never let the surface of the timber floor exceed 35°C.*



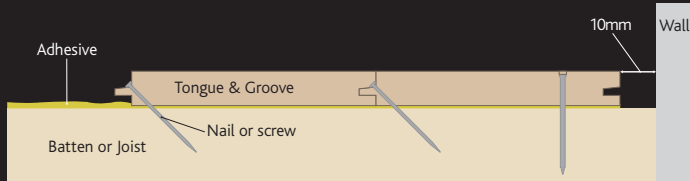
# Laying instructions

## STANDARD TONGUE & GROOVE (T&G)

### Fixing to battens or joists

#### 1. Secret-fix

For flooring up to 210mm wide, screw or nail at 45° through the top inside corner of the tongue. We recommend the use of a flexible flooring adhesive between the underside of the board and the top edge(s) of the joist or batten. **Note: do not glue T&G together.**

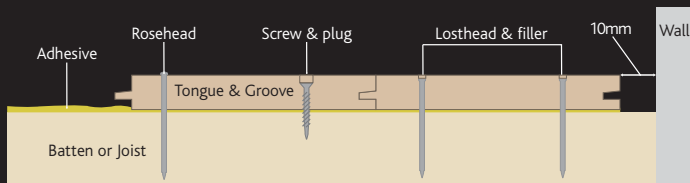


#### 2. Face-fix

For any width of flooring:

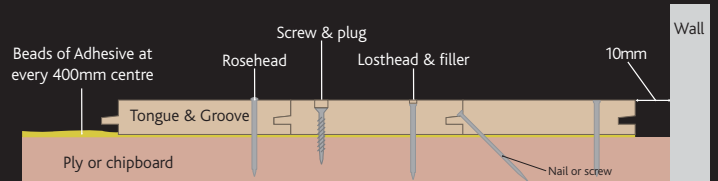
- Screw and plug
- Lost head nail and then fill nail hole
- Visual face nail with cut rosehead showing

We recommend that all nail holes are pre-drilled through the floorboard and that a flexible flooring adhesive is applied between the underside of the board and the top edge(s) of the joist or batten. **Note: do not glue T&G together.**



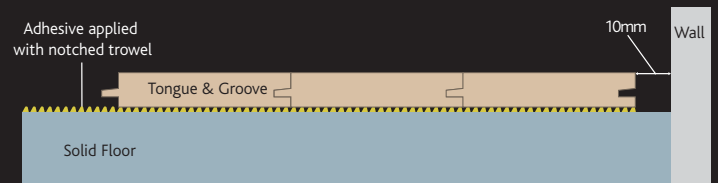
### Fixing to ply or chipboard decking

As left, both secret-fixing and face-fixing methods can be used. Again we recommend the use of a flexible flooring adhesive being applied between the decking and the underside of the board, at the fixing point.



### Full contact adhesion to ply, chipboard or hard floor

Floor clamping straps, or similar, will have to be used to keep the boards tight as the adhesive sets. Only glue down those areas of boards you can comfortably fit prior to the adhesive setting, then clamp and leave to cure. It is vital you keep the adhesive off the board's face. For, as this adhesive is rubberised, it is often difficult to sand off and will create marks when the sealant is applied.



## HAND-FINISHED/FOOTWORN

Due to the width and the slightly uneven nature of this style of flooring, it is advisable to consider laying it onto T&G ply. This means there is no need to re-shape the end of any crosscut board if fixing to joists or battens. To ensure these boards remain flat it is vital to face-fix them (see Face-fix above). *Please note that sometimes delivered boards will arrive with a slight 'cup' – this will flatten when the flooring is fixed.*

When fixing with rosehead nails it is advisable to lightly countersink the pilot holes to enable the head to be driven flush without the timber's fibres breaking out. Always coat with extra sealant as these floors are more difficult to sand and re-finish. *Note that hand-finished flooring can involve more time being devoted to its fixing than is ordinarily required for more standard T&G flooring.*

# After-care instructions

WHICHEVER TYPE OF FLOORING HAS BEEN FITTED, THE FOLLOWING POINTS OUGHT TO BE BORNE IN MIND:



## CLEANING

The main cause of wear and/or scratching to a wooden floor is a lack of cleaning. Consequently there is a build-up of dust and/or grit that, when trodden in, can lead to abrasive action and damage to the surface.

Where there are outside doors immediately adjacent, maintaining washable mats and regularly vacuuming the floor will help. Where washing is required, only use a well-wrung mop head or microfibre pad. Remember, water causes wood to swell, so floors should not be saturated during cleaning. *Note that the manufacturer of the sealant applied to the floor will supply a recommended cleaning or care product.*

## WEARING-IN

Solid wood floors 'wear in'. While it is disappointing when a new floor gets scratched, frankly it is unavoidable. However, as time goes by, it is these very marks of wear and tear that contribute to the floor's aging and increasingly interesting character.



## WHIPPLETREE

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Whippletree is East Anglia's premier quality English oak merchant. We also supply European oak and other quality hard and softwoods.

Our objective is to meet every timber need of the building and restoration trades.



## WHIPPLETREE FOR PRODUCT BREADTH

Whippletree is East Anglia's premier quality English oak merchant. We also supply European oak and other quality hard and softwoods:

- Ash
- Elm
- Hazel – wattles only
- Larch
- Oak - both English and European
- Chestnut – mainly laths
- Cladding
- Other hardwoods

Should you have any questions or concerns regarding this flooring product, or these guidelines, please telephone 01763 208966.

*Every step of the way, from 'stump to site',  
Whippletree delivers best value to its customers.*

English Timber Merchants