



FLOOR-2-GO



How Does Humidity Affect Laminate Flooring?

How to ensure that your floor is problem-free when high humidity is present

Laminate flooring is one of the easiest types of flooring to maintain and is often much longer lasting when compared to carpets or vinyl. However, one of the biggest drawbacks is how they react to moisture. A big increase in humidity is something that can affect laminate floors badly. Depending on your floor type, manufacturers will recommend that humidity is kept between 40-70% RH. A humid summer can result in your floor being outside manufacturers guidelines, affecting your warranty.

What can happen to flooring when humidity is too high?

High humidity affects your floor because each board expands as it absorbs increased moisture from the air. This results in your installed floor growing in size. If it cannot expand any more, it can cause laminate flooring to be pushed upwards, creating a bounce. This is called peaking or buckling.

However, all is not lost. There are many steps that can be taken to ensure a hot humid summer won't cause a flooring disaster in your home. Here are our top tips:

If Your Floor is not Fitted Yet:

- **Acclimatise Your Flooring**

This will ensure that your floor adjusts to the current humidity in your home. Read our guide to [acclimatising laminate flooring](#) for lots more information.

- **Leave Expansion Everywhere**

Correct expansion gaps are 10-12mm. Don't just leave them at the walls. Ensure they are between rooms, around radiator pipes and at door frames. Your laminate floor should not touch anything around the perimeter. Just one obstacle can cause your floor to rise up if it cannot expand. In higher humidity, the risk of this can be increased.

- **Large Areas**

The bigger an area, the more it will expand. Most manufacturers don't recommend installing floors past 7m in one direction. This includes between rooms. If you are planning a large install, talk to your floor fitter about hidden expansion gaps, floating saddles, and increased expansion. It can help to ensure that the increased movement in a large installation is no problem.

After Installation:

If your laminate floor has already been installed, hopefully all the advice above has been met. Of course, there are still lots of helpful things that you can do that will help your flooring in high humidity.

- **Use a Dehumidifier**

When a dehumidifier is left on an automatic setting, it will remove excess moisture from the air. This will greatly reduce the amount of moisture your flooring will absorb, and most automatic settings will maintain humidity at around 50% RH.

- **Ensure Extractor Fans Are Working**

Steam can add a lot of extra unwanted moisture to your home. Ensure that the extractor fans are working in your home. This includes appliances such as dryers, oven hob extractors, and bathroom extractor fans.

- **Don't Dry Clothes Inside**

When you dry clothing in your home, the moisture is released into the air. This can then be absorbed by the wood and increase expansion.

- **Check Your Ventilation**

Homes have many types of ventilation. Find out which type yours has and ensure it is working. Most commonly you will find trickle vents in the windows. Ensure they are opened and not blocked. Another common type is ventilation in brick or blockwork. It is important to check that these are not blocked. If you cannot find any type of ventilation, keeping windows open as much as possible is a great way to lower humidity in your home.

- **Turn on the Heating**

You may not want to do this during the summer, but you should ensure that all rooms are receiving at least a little heat when the temperature drops. This will help to dry out more humid air.

If you have any questions, please feel free to contact us.