



INSTALLATION GUIDELINES

BAMBOO SOLID HARDWOOD FLOORING

Maintenance Instructions and Limited Warranty Included

IMPORTANT NOTICE

Buyers and owners are responsible for thoroughly reading all materials provided by the retailer at time of purchase prior to the installation of flooring, including the installation guidelines, maintenance instructions, and the product warranty information. The following instructions apply only to Golden Elite's Bamboo Premium solid hardwood flooring, included within the Kashmir Collection. This product is installed through a nail down installation method. These instructions do not apply to Golden Elite's click-lock bamboo floors.

Golden Elite is not responsible for the installer's application of the product and requires the product to be inspected prior to installation. The installer should contact the supplier immediately for replacement if the product (whether an individual plank or more) appears doubtful in appearance, such as grade, color, finish, or quality. The supplier is responsible for replacing flooring materials in a timely fashion if the product is determined to be defective. However, Golden Elite is *not* responsible for flooring that has been previously installed or damaged on the surface (or tongue) of the plank by the installer.

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BEFORE INSTALLATION

Tips:

- Install flooring in good lighting.
- Save a box of flooring for use in future repairs.
- Do not install flooring under permanent or fixed cabinetry.
- Keep flooring seams stagger from row to row minimum 6" during installation.
- Use breathable materials like paper when covering a newly installed floor.
- Inspect flooring during installation, maintain appropriate perimeter expansion.
- The customer is advised to be home during the installation for consultation/direction.
- Customer and installer should discuss installation and layout to maximize satisfaction.
- Floor should be installed from several cartons at the same time to ensure good color, shade and appearance.
- For future questions regarding your product it is helpful to save the item number found on the packaging box ends.
- To prevent board warping, twisting or bowing do not cut the plastic support packaged bindings or remove product from the packaging until ready to install.
- Most installation failures result from jobsite moisture. Do not deliver flooring to the jobsite until problems are corrected.
- Bamboo flooring can only be installed at below-grade level through a glue down installation method. To install bamboo flooring at or above-grade level, use a nail down installation. To install flooring through a glue down installation method, please contact your local distributor of Golden Elite for further assistance and instruction.
- **The installation of some Golden Elite bamboo flooring is not guaranteed for radiant heated floors. For installation on radiant heated floors, contact Golden Elite to obtain written authorization from the manufacturer by calling 1-888-642-8844.**
- An Expansion gap or space must be left around the perimeter and at all vertical obstructions. This space is normally the same as the thickness of the new flooring. For example; 1/2" flooring requires 1/2" expansion.
- *Document Each Test:* To ensure that the flooring product is being installed according to the outlined guidelines, Golden Elite requires for the buyer or installer to document each step of the preparation process prior to installing the flooring. This involves taking a photograph of the test reader that displays the humidity level, the temperature of the jobsite, the subfloor, etc., along with the date and time that the photograph was taken. This can be completed quickly using a basic camera on your cell phone and helps protect the buyer or installer in the case that a claim needs to be filed.

Step 1 ❖ PRE-INSTALLATION REQUIREMENTS

Inspect Flooring Materials

Golden Elite is not responsible for the installer's application of the product and requires the product to be inspected prior to installation. The installer should contact the supplier immediately for replacement if the product (whether an individual plank or more) appears doubtful in appearance, such as grade, color, finish, or quality. The supplier is responsible for replacing flooring materials in a timely fashion if the product is determined to be defective. However, Golden Elite is *not* responsible for flooring that has been previously installed or damaged on the surface (or tongue) of the plank by the installer.

Pre-Installation Requirements

Please note that Golden Elite is not responsible for the conditions of the jobsite and/or subfloor on which the flooring is installed. The installer must ensure that the jobsite and subfloor meet the requirements outlined within the instructions below prior to the installation of the flooring material.

Once the product has been inspected and determined to be satisfactory, the installer must make several important notes prior to installing the bamboo flooring. The flooring product will be one of the last items installed in any project. Follow these guidelines:

- 1. Grade Level:** To install bamboo flooring at or above-grade level, use a nail down installation method. Bamboo flooring that is installed at below-grade level can only be installed through a glue down installation. To install flooring through a glue down installation method, please contact your local distributor of Golden Elite for further assistance and instruction.
- 2. Water Inspection:** Water and wood do not mix well, so all work involving water or moisture should be completed before flooring installation. If flooring is installed onto a wet subfloor, it may result in cupping, rising, or gapping. Bamboo flooring should be installed in jobsites with relative humidity (RH) and temperature controls capable of maintaining the delivered moisture content of 7-9%.
- 3. Humidity Level Inspection:** The room temperature and humidity of the area should be analyzed prior to installation, with an optimum room temperature of 70° F and a humidity range of 40-50% is recommended during installation. Humidity levels below 40% will most likely cause movement in the flooring, including gapping between pieces and possible cupping and checking in the face. The room temperature and humidity level should be consistent with normal, year-round living conditions for a minimum of seven days prior to the flooring installation.

Step 2 ❖ PREPARE THE SUBFLOOR

Subfloor Requirement

All subfloors must be dry and remain dry year-round and well secured. Installers must ensure that the subfloor is cleaned and free of all debris prior to the installation of the bamboo flooring. Golden Elite is not responsible for jobsite related moisture issues.

Subfloor Moisture Content:

- The moisture content of wood subfloors must not exceed 11%. If installing on a cement floor (below grade), the humidity level cannot exceed 3-4%, if higher then a humidifier must be brought in to remove the extra humidity.
- Concrete must be tested for moisture content using the Anhydrous Calcium Chloride test method, a non-invasive moisture meter, or a pin/probe moisture meter.

Subfloor Level:

Subfloors need to be flat and level within a 3/16" per 10-foot radius. Nail or screw every 6" along joists to avoid squeaking. If the subfloor is not leveled, sand down high spots and fill low spots with a leveling patch.

Concrete subfloors must be fully cured, at least 90 days old, and should have minimum 6-mil

polyfilm between concrete and ground. The humidity level of the cement subfloor should be between 3-4% or else a humidifier needs to be brought in to maintain the proper level of humidity. If necessary grind high spots down and level low spots with a leveling compound. All concrete should be tested for moisture prior to installation using the Anhydrous Calcium Chloride test method, a noninvasive moisture meter, or a pin/probe meter. When using a Calcium Chloride Test, the result must not exceed 3 lbs. per 1000 sq. ft. in a 24-hour period. Ceramic Tile, resilient tile and sheet vinyl must be well-bonded to subfloor, in good condition, clean and level. Do not sand existing vinyl floors, as they may contain asbestos.

A moisture test must be performed to ensure that the slab is dry. Remember, a concrete slab on/below grade that measures dry today may become moist in the future due to rising groundwater. Installing a moisture barrier now may be viewed as an insurance policy against concrete becoming wet in the future.

IMPORTANT: Due to the speed of sudden temperature changes, which has the potential to negatively affect bamboo flooring construction, it is not recommended to install over any **electrical radiant heating system**. Installation over electrical radiant heating systems will not be covered by the manufacturer's warranty. Buyer must obtain written authorization from the manufacturer in order to install flooring over radiant, call 1-888-642-8844.

Owner and installer are solely and jointly responsible for pre-installation subfloor moisture level check and must ensure that all conditions and/or specifications listed in this guide have been thoroughly met prior to installation the floor.

Step 3 ❖ ACCLIMATE THE WOOD

IMPORTANT: Do not open boxes until ready to begin installation.

Flooring needs to acclimate to the room temperature in which it will be installed in order for the product to properly set. To acclimate the product, store the flooring within its original packaging (unopened) for a minimum of 72 hours in the installation area to help it adjust to the temperature of the room. The flooring boxes cannot be stored directly on concrete.

Step 4 ❖ PURCHASE THE RIGHT TOOLS

Golden Elite bamboo flooring can be installed by nailed down or glue down installation. If buyer or owner decides to install the flooring using a glue down installation, please contact your local distributor of Golden Elite for further assistance and instruction. Installing bamboo floors by means of the floating method will void your warranty.

Installers are required to obtain the following list of products to complete the flooring installation:

- Tape measure
- Tapping block (trimmed piece of flooring)
- Pencil
- Pry bar or pull bar
- Chalk line Wood or plastic spacers (1/2")

- Crosscut power saw
- 3M® Blue Tape
- 16-gauge air cleat nailer compatible with profile of the flooring material
- 1 1/4" – 1 1/2" L-shaped cleat nails
- Underlayment (wax paper or kodak paper)
- Air compressor
- Acceptable subfloor types
- CDX Underlayment Grade Plywood (at least 1/2" thick)
- OSB (at least 3/4" thick)
- Machine to measure the temperature of the cement, subfloor, and flooring
- Camera

Golden Elite recommends using *only* 16-gauge cleat nailer and cleat nails 1-1/4" to 1-1/2" depending on whether the subfloor is plywood or OSB. The PSI settings can range from 60-70, so it is important to test nail a plank or planks to determine the correct PSI required to install the floor without incurring damage. Check with the power nailer manufacturer for specific PSI recommendations for installing bamboo flooring.

Step 5 ❖ RACK THE FLOORING

Spread the boards from several bundles across the room. Mix bundles, and mix shades, colors, and lengths, using the natural variety in the wood to create a random pattern. Lay out the boards in the order you'll install them. Pros call this "racking the boards." Flooring bundles tend to be uniform in color, and if you don't rack them, you'll create noticeable light and dark areas in the floor. Make sure you finish the process by arranging the joints so they are sufficiently offset across the floor.

Step 6 ❖ LAY OUT THE FIRST ROW

It is the installers' responsibility to determine the expectations of what the finished floor will look like prior to the installation. It is important to note that bamboo flooring, like all hardwoods, expands and contracts as its moisture content changes that is effected by the temperature and humidity level of the jobsite in which it is installed. These changes can result in gaps that appear and disappear seasonally.

Prepare the Flooring: To select the varying grains and colors of the bamboo flooring, begin by opening a few boxes and dry lay the product onto the floor before permanently laying it onto the foundation. Also, this will help the installer separate the very dark and very light pieces for use in hidden areas.

Begin Measurement: Hardwood flooring expands with any increase in the moisture content level of the room so it is critical to leave at least a 1/2" expansion space between the flooring and all the walls and/or permanent vertical obstructions within the jobsite. The expansion space will be covered once base moldings are applied throughout the room. Note that no area of connecting flooring can span greater than 40 feet in width or 120 feet in length, so you may want to consider T-molding or other transition pieces for larger spans.

The installer needs to begin the installation next to a straight working line, which usually is next to an outside wall. Snap a chalk line to establish a straight line that measures an equal distance – the width of a plank plus about 1/2" for expansion space – from the wall at both ends. If the wall doesn't seem to be straight, the installer may want to consider scribe cutting the first row of planks to match the wall.

Remember to always begin each row from the same side of the room. When laying bamboo flooring, make sure to stagger end joints from row to row by at least 8" and when you're cutting the last plank in a row to fit, you can use the cut-off end to begin the next row. Disregard the cut-off end if it is 8" in length or less, and instead cut a new plank at a random length and use it to start the next row.

A short piece of flooring, known as a tapping block, should be used to draw the planks together. Simply tapping flooring itself will result in edge damage so installer must flip the tapping block upside down and use the groove edge to tap the tongue edge of the plank being installed. End joints must be tightly fitted together before tapping long edges. A pry bar can be used to pry close the side and end joints when near a wall. To avoid damaging the edges of the flooring, the installer should use a 3M® Blue Tape to hold any pieces which might have side bow and need to be held straight and tight until the adhesive sets up.

Step 7 ❖ INSTALLING FIRST FEW ROWS

Practice Prior to Installing: To make sure the installer is properly using a nailer, Golden Elite recommends testing your air nailer (or nailer of your choice) on a sample to make sure that nailing doesn't cause dimpling (localized raised edges) in the finished floor or damages to the tongue. Dimpling is hard to see when directly above the floor, so make sure to look at the face of the installed flooring at a low angle and from a distance. Stop immediately if dimpling does occur during this test and adjust the nailer shoe and placement of the angle of cleat entry in order to avoid it. Golden Elite is not responsible for dimpling or damages to the tongue or any part of the plank.

First and Second Starting Rows: Begin by laying the first plank with grooved edge toward the wall inside of the chalk line that was previously created. Continue installing the entire first row in this same manner, always using spacers to maintain expansion space of at least a 1/2" between the flooring and all of the walls / vertical objects. Face nail the first row by filling nail holes with wood putty that matches the floor since it is difficult to get the nail gun in place next to the wall.

If you are concerned about leaving unsightly nail holes on the floor that will need to be filled with putty, you may want to consider setting these rows in mastic and glue them down rather than face nailing them. Once the starting row has been glued down, set the weight on top of the rows to allow them to set before commencing nailing the additional rows so that the adjacent rows don't subsequently move. Review the starting rows once completed to make sure they are straight and stable.

Step 8 ❖ CUT CORNERS

Where the flooring meets a jog in the wall or a similar obstacle, cut corners to fit. Snug the piece of flooring against the obstacle and lay out the cut by marking where the edge of the obstacle meets the board. Allow for a 1/2" (12.7 mm) expansion gap at the end of the board and a 3/4" (18.5 mm) gap along the edges; make the cut with a jigsaw.

Step 9 ❖ INSTALLING REMAINING ROWS

The remaining flooring should be laid by using the nailer or stapler to blind-nail top inside edge of the tongue at a 45-degree angle. Stagger end joints from row to row at least 8" apart and use a tapping block to fit boards together, while nailing each board every 6"-8" and within 2" of each end. There may be areas in the room where the nailer can't fit. These areas, like doorways or tight areas, will require the installer to face-nail or possibly glue down and weight them while the mastic sets. Just like you face-nailed or glued down the starting rows, you will have to repeat this process for the last two rows.

Step 10 ❖ CUT THE LAST ROW TO FIT

You will probably have to cut the final row to fit. Measure the space and subtract 3/4" (18.5 mm) for the expansion gap. Cut the boards with a table saw. Put the boards in place. Pry against a piece of scrap on the wall to seat the boards and close any gaps between them. Face-nail to hold the boards in place. If the final row is less than 1" (2.54 cm) in width, it can be glued to the adjacent plank.

Step 11 ❖ INSTALL THE TRIM & INSPECT THE FLOOR

Install the baseboard and shoe moulding to cover the expansion gap. Keep the lower edge of the baseboard even with the top of the floor, and nail the baseboard into the wall. Once the baseboard is in, set the quarter-round shoe moulding on a piece of paper to keep it just a hair above the floor. Nail it to the baseboard, not to the floor or subfloor. Nail threshold or transition strips in place where the edge of the floor is exposed.

Inspect the floor and fill in all minor gaps and defects with the appropriate blended filler. Install or re-install any transition pieces, reducer strips, T-mouldings, thresholds and/or bases.

AFTER INSTALLATION

- It is safe to walk on bamboo flooring immediately after it has been installed.
 - Set a few boards aside in case of future repairs.
 - When installation is completed, vacuum floor thoroughly to clean. Refer to the maintenance instructions for detailed directions regarding the proper care of your hardwood floor. If you have any additional questions, please contact your local distributor of Golden Elite.
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MAINTENANCE INSTRUCTIONS

Bamboo flooring is a very durable and low-maintenance flooring option that's lifespan is reflective of the quality of care it receives from its owners. Though bamboo floors are amongst one of the easiest to clean, they do require constant maintenance and care to preserve their beauty.

Cleaning Procedures

Dust, sand, and other small debris pose the greatest threat to bamboo floors, so it is important that owners clean their floors often. A simple sweep done daily can help preserve the look and quality of your bamboo floor.

Dry Cloths: For an immediate spill or leak, use a dry cloth or dry paper towel to avoid stains from forming. Use a moistened soft cloth to clean sticky substances.

Sweeping: Can be done as often as the owner prefers. Sweep to remove dust and debris that can cause stains or scratching to occur if left for a long period of time. Sweeping or wiping can be completed using a soft bristle broom.

Mop: Mopping can be done with a lint free, electrostatic floor mop when its necessary to remove stubborn dirt. Stains can be removed by using a well rung out damp mop or rag that gently wipes away the stain. Or you can use a gentle cleaner that is permitted for use on bamboo floors, such as a pH neutral cleaner. Ask your retailer about suitable options to use on your bamboo floor.

Vacuuming: Regularly vacuum with a soft bristle head or an electrostatic attachment.

Protect Your Flooring

Place dirt trapping rugs or doormats outside of entryways to prevent debris from outside traveling onto your floor. Also, place felt pads under furniture to reduce the risk of it scratching your floor whenever it is moved or gouged due to weight.

Refinishing Bamboo Flooring

Bamboo floors can be refinished a maximum of two times. To complete this work, Golden Elite recommends hiring a qualified flooring professional proficient in sanding and finishing bamboo floors.

AVOID the Following:

- Do not clean bamboo floors with common household detergents, polishes, steel wood pads, wax, harsh cleaners, corrosive chemicals or similar products.
- Avoid wearing stilettos or shoes with spikes. Avoid pets with long nails that can scratch the surface of the floor.
- Overexposure to sunlight. Even though most floors are UV light protected, too much sunlight can harm the material. Make sure to use your blinds or curtains to conceal sunlight or rotate your rugs occasionally.
- Over wetting a floor when cleaning which can change the moisture balance in the floor and cause it to expand. Use well rung out mops or cloths when using liquid to clean your floor.
- Cleaning with steam mops can release moisture into the joints of the wood. The steam from the mop can also cause damage to the coating of the floor.

25-YEAR LIMITED WARRANTY

Golden Elite bamboo floors are covered with a 25-year limited warranty from the date of purchase against flaking, peeling and cracking of the wood. This warranty only applies to the original purchaser and used strictly for residential purposes. This warrant is covered for 10 years in commercial applications.

Bamboo flooring must be installed in compliance with the installation and maintenance guidelines for this warranty to take effect. Golden Elite is not to be held responsible for damage to newly installed floors by other trades or by the consumer. The use of any other than recommended maintenance products or guidelines or improper cleaning methods or equipment may void the warranty.

The sole remedy provided within the warranty is the repair, refinish, or replacement of defective products, or refund for defective products. This warranty excludes any scratches or damages caused by lack of proper maintenance, misuse, excessive heat, or excessive dryness, negligence, spiked shoes, pets or insects, moisture (water), erosion, pebbles, sand, other abrasives, insufficient furniture protection, or mopping. A defect in the finish wear surface must be easily noticeable and cover at least 15% of the floor surface.

It is the responsibility of the installer and/or the buyer to inspect every board of bamboo flooring prior to installation. Any board nailed in place (installed) shall not be considered as acceptable.

This warranty is not transferable. Proof of purchase or a receipt is required when filing a claim. This warranty does not cover labor costs or any incidental expenses experienced as a result of a product defect.

Regular maintenance and care of bamboo flooring as specified by the manufacturer must be followed in order to validate the warranty. The manufacturer reserves the right to designate a representative to inspect the floor in question and remove samples for analysis. The responsibility of the manufacturer is limited, at their discretion, replacing defective products or refunding the portion of the floor in question as covered under the warranty.

Warranty Exclusions

The warranty does not cover damage or defects resulting from any of the following:

- Installation of flooring over visible defect, including improper alternations of original product.
- The subfloor is the responsibility of the installer. Failure of a pre-finished flooring product relating to the subfloor in any manner is not the responsibility of the manufacturer and is not covered by the warranty. *The subfloor must be smooth, level, clean, free on contamination, and dry -- within four per cent of the moisture content of the bamboo flooring.*
- Lack of maintenance, abnormal use or misuse, negligence, application of solvents, corrosives or other chemicals to the flooring.
- Improper storage, handling, or installation of product. *A minimum temperature of 70° F (21° C) should be maintained prior to, during, and 48 hours after the installation of the flooring.*
- Indentations, scratches, stains, or damage caused by negligence, application of solvents or other chemicals, water moisture, animals, high-heeled shoes, furniture without adequate protection, insects, or natural disasters.
- Accidental moisture problems, such as dishwasher, toilet, and bathtub overflows.
- Damage caused by sand, pebbles, or other abrasives.
- Improper alterations to the original flooring, including sanding or waxing.

- Discoloration or darkening from the sun. As well as excessive dryness or heat.
 - The use of tape on the surface of any product will void the warranty.
 - Color variations occur naturally due to age, species, and UV light. For this reason, the customer may encounter mild color variations from board to board, or when replacing damaged boards with a new product. Sunlight will cause fading/darkening depending on the species of the flooring, which is natural consequence of bamboo floors.
 - Wood expands and contract with seasonal changes in temperature and humidity. Slight gaps may appear between the planks even when properly installed, these gaps are not covered by the warranty. *It is the customer's responsibility to provide and maintain necessary humidity levels, should be 40 to 50 percent seasonally.*
 - Moldings are not covered.
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