

## What to Expect

So you've chosen to install or refinish a wood floor in your home — congratulations! You're adding a beautiful, durable design element that will add real value to your home, and last for many generations to come.

You may be wondering what will happen next, and may have some concerns about the disruption to your home while the work on your floors is being conducted. Knowing what to expect before, during, and after the work takes place will help prepare you and your family for what your contractor will be doing, and will need for you to do, to deliver a high-quality job.

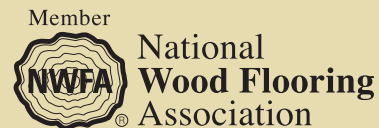
## After Installation

Once you have been given the go-ahead to move back into your room, you should put felt pads on the bottoms of any furniture that will come into direct contact with your floor. This will help minimize scratches and dents on your new floors. To further prevent scratches, place scatter rugs at all entrances, avoiding those with rubber backs, which can discolor your floor. Finally, avoid walking on your wood floors with cleats or high heels in disrepair, which can scratch the finish, or even dent your floor.

As your wood ages, you should expect some color change to occur. Because wood is a natural product, it is prone to changes in appearance, though in most cases, the change is quite subtle. Direct sunlight, furniture and rugs can cause color changes as well, so try to move your furnishings and rugs from time to time to help minimize color variations.

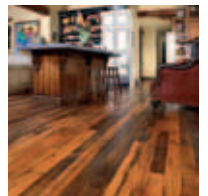
You also should be prepared for spaces to appear and disappear between floor boards during seasons of high and low humidity. Being a product of nature, wood breaths and reacts to changes in humidity and temperature, which can cause temporary spaces in your floor. Generally, anything less than the width of a dime is considered normal, and in most cases, these spaces will correct themselves when conditions are more favorable. You can help minimize this situation by maintaining a constant humidity in your home, within 20 percent.

Finally, to keep your wood floors looking their best, you will need to properly care for and maintain them. Ask your contractor to recommend a cleaning product designed specifically for your type of floor, and use it regularly to keep your floors looking beautiful for years to come.



**National Wood Flooring Association**  
111 Chesterfield Industrial Blvd.  
Chesterfield, MO 63005

## Real Wood Floors



## What to Expect



## Getting Ready

Before any work begins on your floors, the first step will be to remove all furnishings from the room. Many flooring professionals are not insured against damages caused by moving furniture, appliances, etc. For this reason, you probably will want to hire professional movers to remove any furniture from the room, and replace it after the job is completed. You also should remove any paintings or other decorative items from the walls, so that they are not accidentally knocked down while the wood and flooring equipment is being moved in and out of the room.

If there are any appliances in the room, such as stoves, dishwashers or refrigerators, you should contact professionals from the gas company or water company to disconnect any gas or water lines, and reconnect them once the work is completed. This will minimize the potential for risk to you, your family, and your wood flooring professional.

Once everything is removed from the room, you should take the time to give your floors a thorough cleaning if your existing wood floors are being refinished. Remove any debris from the room, and clean the floors if necessary. This could include sweeping, or cleaning with a recommended wood flooring cleaner. You want to be sure that your contractor does not waste time, and charge you more, for cleaning and routine maintenance that you can do yourself.



## Acclimating the Wood

Now that your room is ready, the wood will be delivered to your home to acclimate if new floors are being installed. Acclimation is an important step in the installation process, and is absolutely critical for a high-quality job. The time required for this step will vary from two days to two weeks based on the wood species being installed, the living conditions of the home, temperature and humidity. For example, if the wood is being installed in a home that is already occupied, the wood will need several days to acclimate to the normal living conditions of the home. If the home is not occupied, and is still in the construction phase, acclimation may take a few days longer as heating/cooling systems are turned on to bring the home to normal living conditions. In new construction, all windows and doors must be in place, and all other trades such as painting, grouting, etc., must be completed before wood floors can be installed.

Be sure you understand up front each aspect of the installation process, from how long it will take, to which direction the flooring will be installed, to how the floor boards may vary in appearance. Keep in mind that wood is a natural product, produced in a factory called a forest, and no two floor boards will be identical. Variations in appearance are completely normal, and will add to the beauty and charm of real wood floors.



## Installing and Finishing

If your floors are being sanded, finished or refinished on site, you need to be prepared for some noise and disruption. There may be some dust to deal with, so ask if your contractor uses a dust containment system to minimize debris. Keep in mind, however, that even with a dust containment system, you should cover any items that you want to keep dust-free. Of course, newly installed factory finished floors will not need sanding, but the installation process will create some dust and debris.

When your floors are ready to have finish applied, be sure you know what type of finish is being used, and that you like the finish sheen. If you don't like shiny finishes, you may want a flat matte finish, so be sure you and your contractor have selected the finish you expect. No matter what the type or sheen, however, things will move very quickly once the finish process begins. Because this is a critical phase, when the finish is being applied to your floors, you will have no access to the room until the finish is completely dried and has had time to cure. The time required will vary depending on the type of finish being used, humidity levels, and temperature. Regardless, pets should be contained, and all family members should be kept out of the room for the duration. Your contractor will let you know exactly when you can walk on your floors, and when furniture can be put back into place.