The most asked questions and answers for RTI Multi-Ply Engineered Flooring

1. What is an engineered floor?

Engineered wood flooring is composed of two or more layers of wood in the form of a plank. The top layer (lamella) is the wood that is visible when the flooring is installed and is adhered to the core (or substrate) which provides the stability.

2. What is the difference between an engineered floor and a laminate or veneer floor?

Laminate, vinyl and veneer floors are often confused with engineered wood floors—laminate uses an image of wood on its surface, while vinyl flooring is plastic formed to look like wood. Veneer floors use a thin layer of wood with a core that could be one of a number of different composite wood products (most commonly, high density fibreboard (HDF)).

3. Is engineered flooring a floating floor?

No engineered flooring is not “floating floor”. In fact, "floating" is an installation method. Multi-Plank manufactures engineered hardwood floors that can be floated, glued or nailed down.

4. How are engineered floor board made?

RTI’s Multi-Ply 15mm has 9 cross sectioned layers of Hardwood ply with a 3mm (+ or – 0.5mm) Timber wear layer. Multi-Ply 19mm has 12 cross sectioned layers of Hardwood ply with a 3mm (+ or – 0.5mm) Timber wear layer. The top Hardwood Timber lamella is then glued and pressed onto the top surface of the Plywood.

5. Are all engineered floor boards the same?

No, some Engineered boards can be manufactured using a pine ply core or consist of a block wood core instead of the incredibly stable Russian Birch ply base used by RTI. Some can have a very thin wear layer, making them only suitable for recoating. With RTI’s Multi-Ply Engineered Flooring the wear layer is 3mm, giving you a floor that could last many years, and can be re-sanded several times.

6. What is the advantage of Raw Engineered Flooring over Pre -finished Flooring?

By laying a Raw Engineered Flooring, you have the choice of finishes you can use, from Water based and solvent based polyurethane to oils, in a range of different gloss levels. Also, with the floor being sanded you will have a seamless flat floor, without bevelled edges and lipping.

7. What are the advantages of Pre-finished engineered flooring?

By laying a prefinished engineered floor you reduce the need to sand and coat on site thus speeding up the project. No sanding and coating on site also tends to produce a cleaner site due to the fact that no sanding machines are used, and the coating is generally free of contaminates that can occur on a site finished floor as it is done in a controlled environment in the factory.

8. What is the advantage of Engineered Flooring over Solid T & G Flooring?

RTI's Multi-Ply Engineered Flooring only requires a 1/4 of the timber that Solid T & G requires, therefore conserving our world's forests. Engineered can also be installed very quickly with many Flooring installers report that they are 20-40% more productive using RTI's Multi-Ply engineered flooring over traditional solid T & G flooring. Engineered Flooring, when finished, will give the same appearance as a Solid floor. Due to the cross laminations in the engineered flooring the product stability is much better.

9. What species and sizes are available in Multi-Ply Engineered Flooring?

RTI's Multi-Ply comes in Raw and Prefinished:- 15/3mm x 80-85mm, 100mm, 120mm, 130mm, 160mm & 200mm x 600mm-3000mm (Random Lengths) 19/3mm x 130mm & 160-180mm x 600mm – 3000mm (Random Lengths) 200mm and 250mm are sometimes also available.

Species Available include Tasmanian Oak, Baltic Pine, French Oak/American Oak, Douglas Fir (Oregon), Spotted Gum, Blackbutt, Sydney Blue Gum, Mixed Reds, Red Ironbark, Grey Ironbark, Tallowwood, Turpentine, Messmate, Silver Top Ash, Chestnut and red gum are also available.

10. Can engineered flooring be used over joists or battens?

RTI's Multi-Ply engineered 19mm range can be used over joist's or battens, with maximum of 400mm centres. Our 19mm is an end matched structural floor, if the underside of the flooring is to be exposed to the environment, a suitable sealer will need to be applied for protection. RTI's Multi-Ply 15mm Engineered flooring is not suitable for installation over joist's or battens.

11. What surfaces can I install Engineered Flooring on?

RTI's Multi-Ply engineered flooring is designed so that it may be installed as a "floating" system or as a stick down system, it can be installed on any clean, dry, level surface, that is free of voids (3mm over 3m).

As a stick down system it must be free of curing compounds, paint, loose materials, oil, wax, grease and sealers. It may also be fixed over all plywood, chipboard, fibre cement sheeting and concrete to be installed in accordance with residential footings and slabs code AS2870-1996 and concrete is to be no greater than 5.5% moisture content or 65% relative humidity. If the moisture content exceeds these recommendations, a suitable moisture barrier system must be used.

12. Can Engineered Flooring be used over a heated concrete slab?

Whilst RTI doesn't warrant installations over heated subfloors due to many uncertainty's, it has been successfully installed on numerous occasions by persons experienced with such installation methods and if carefully installed, well monitored after installation, and with sensible running of the heating system then Yes.

It is recommended that the subfloor be heated to its normal operating level for 14 days to remove excess moisture, then turned off 2 days before installation, to ensure the heating has no adverse effect on the adhesive or timber, then gradually increase the Under-Floor Heating (UFH) to normal expected temperature. The heating should be increased in stages from a low level to the desired room temperature over a period of about 10 days, incrementing by no more than 2°C each day and then maintained for a further two weeks.

If the floor is to be sanded and coated recommendations vary with this with some coating manufacturers indicating that it should be carried out about 3 days after the heating was turned back on while others indicate that the heating should be turned off and the floor sanded two days after the floor has cooled.

The heating operating panel is to be fixed at a maximum of 27% Celsius for the lifetime of the floor, this will need to be strictly adhered to or all Warranties/Guarantees are void. Engineered flooring installed over slab heating can still be expected to shrink however the amount will depend on the in-service room temperature and relative humidity. With a heated concrete slab, the optimum relative humidity range is between 45% and 60% year-round with room temperatures of about 18°C to 24°C.

13. Should engineered flooring be acclimatised, before installation?

Yes and No.

It is imperative that the flooring installer, takes a moisture reading of the Engineered flooring to ascertain suitability for the given installation site. The flooring should not be any more than 1 to 2% different than the normal EMC (Equilibrium Moisture Content) level for that given area. If the EMC is expected to be 10% and the flooring is 10% then no acclimatization is required. However, if the EMC is expected to be 13% and the timber MC is 10% then it must be allowed to acclimatize.

This is most effectively done by being racked out or stacked in the room of intended installation with in-service conditions being applied. Opening cartons and leaving in the garage is not appropriate in-service acclimatization, neither is leaving the timber inside the cartons in the room it is to be installed.

In most circumstance little or NO acclimatization is required.

14. Is it available in different grades?

Yes, it is available in the 3 grades as described below.

AB Grade "LIGHT NATURAL FEATURE".

Is our highest grade it can contain a very subtle amount of natural occurring features. This grade of flooring once installed presents a very uniform natural look. As a natural product this grade of timber flooring will contain some degree of feature such as pin holes, gum vein, surface checking, knots, sapwood, natural occurring stains, black specks, burls and hobnails. The premium appearance of this grade is ideal for the most discerning eye.

ABC "MODERATE NATURAL FEATURE".

Is carefully selected to include the most natural and interesting features to enhance the natural appearance of your timber floor. This grade may contain, screw holes, nail holes, saw cuts, large knots, gum vein, pin holes, surface checking, splits, cracks, manmade features and other natural occurring features - many are filled during manufacturing to lessen the amount of work required onsite.

CD HIGH NATURAL FEATURE.

Will include the most rustic, natural and interesting features to enhance the natural appearance of your timber floor. This grade may contain, screw holes, nail holes, saw cuts, large knots, gum vein, pin holes, surface checking, splits, cracks, manmade features and other natural occurring features. This very Rustic grade presents a timber floor to you the way Mother nature intended with very little done to adjust this natural featured grade appearance. Each one of these character floors will tell its owner its own unique story of its past life.

15. What colour and species should I choose?

Products are not always sold as colours they are often sold as Species and inside each carton will be a variety of natural colours and sometimes a mixture of species. The colour variation present in these species is what makes each floor unique.

Timber is a natural product so expect colour variation in each carton and across the entire floor. With recycled timber you should expect colour variation amongst a species and a mixture of species at times due to it being reclaimed and often similar looking species will be mixed together.

Warranty

RTI's MULTI-PLY Engineered Timber Flooring, has a TWENTY-FIVE YEAR structural warranty on the integrity of their Flooring range. For conditions of warranty, please refer to our website www.recycledtimberinnovations.com.au