FLOORS4EVERUK

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TECHNICAL GUIDE TG06

Technical Summary: Wood Flooring Installation and BS 8201

Version 1 · November 2026 · For the flooring trade

> This is a summary of good practice for specifiers and contractors. It is not a copy of, or a substitute for, the British Standard. The full standard, **BS 8201:2011 Code of practice for installation of flooring of wood and wood-based panels**, is published by the British Standards Institution (BSI) and can be bought at knowledge.bsigroup.com. BS 8201:2011 is the current edition.

1. Subfloor flatness

Subfloors should be flat to SR1: no more than 3 mm under a 2 m straight edge. Grind high spots and fill low spots with a suitable levelling compound before installation.

2. Moisture

- **Concrete and screed:** test with a hygrometer as described in Annex A of BS 8201. Readings should be below 65% RH before wood flooring is installed without a moisture barrier.
- **65–75% RH:** use a surface damp-proof membrane or vapour barrier approved by the adhesive or underlay manufacturer.
- **Timber subfloors:** sound and dry, with a moisture content below 14%.

3. Site conditions and acclimatisation

- The building should be weathertight, with wet trades finished and dry.
- Room conditions: 15–25°C and 45–65% RH, maintained before, during and after installation.
- Acclimatise the flooring in its packs in the room until it reaches a stable moisture balance (Floors4Ever recommends at least 72 hours).

4. Installation methods

- **Fully bonded:** flexible wood flooring adhesive on a clean, sound, dust-free subfloor. Preferred for parquet, herringbone, wide boards and underfloor heating.
- **Secret nailed:** through the tongue at 45° into a sound timber subfloor or battens. Floors4Ever recommends fixings every 200–300 mm and no closer than 50 mm to board ends.
- **Floating:** engineered boards joined to each other over a suitable underlay and vapour barrier, free to move. Not recommended for solid wood.

5. Expansion

Leave a continuous expansion gap around the perimeter and at all fixed objects. Floors4Ever recommends at least 10 mm, or 1.5 mm per metre of floor width across the boards, whichever is greater, with intermediate expansion breaks in large areas.

6. Underfloor heating

- The floor surface temperature should never exceed 27°C.

- Commission and run the system before installation (Floors4Ever recommends at least 14 days), then reduce it before installing.
- Bring the temperature back gradually after installation (Floors4Ever recommends no more than 2°C per day).

Full Floors4Ever guidance is in technical guides TG01 to TG05.
