

# Solid Wooden Floors Property Owners' Guide

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floors.

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## Our Terminology Explained

### T & G Plank

T & G stands for tongue and groove and refers to the type of joint used in flooring. Planks are long floorboards of differing lengths that are direct fixed to your subfloor.



### Herringbone

Herringbone is a flooring pattern where pieces of wood are cut to an equal size and installed in a zigzag pattern. The ends are square cut.



### Chevron

Chevron is a flooring pattern where pieces of wood are cut to an equal size and installed in a zigzag pattern. Chevron differs to herringbone in that the ends are cut on an angle creating a distinctly different pattern.



### Finger Parquet

Small pieces of wood are arranged in blocks—consisting of 3, 4 or 5 fingers—to create a 'tile'. These are installed at right angles to each other.



### Underlay

Acoustic underlay will reduce noise transfer between floors.

### Subfloor

This is the structure your wooden floor sits on. It can be concrete, wood, a manufactured product such as plywood or joists.

### Grinding of Concrete Subfloor

It is necessary to grind all concrete subfloors to remove contaminants—such as chemicals, paint, glue and silicon—which have a detrimental effect on timber and on the adhesive quality of the glue used to fix the wooden flooring to the subfloor.



**Vapour Barrier System**

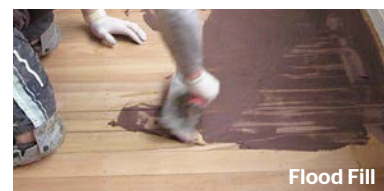
Due to the porous nature of concrete it is necessary to apply a sealant to keep the amount of moisture coming into contact with the wooden flooring to a minimum. Moisture can cause the timber to swell and effect the adhesive quality of the glue.



Vapour Barrier

**Flood Fill**

This is a process where we trowel fill the entire floor with a filler, in order to fill up any cracks and knots in the wood. We use a matching filler. It is left to dry and then buffed prior to the polyurethane being applied. Flood fill gives the floor a more uniform appearance. However, please be aware that it may crack and work its way out over time, particularly if the floor is installed on joists or battens.



Flood Fill

**Stain**

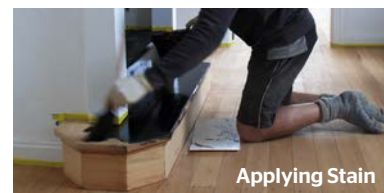
We have a range of stain colours that can individualise your floor. Stains are thin, highly absorbent liquids that have to be applied at speed in order to create uniformity.

It is best that stain is applied before the skirting boards, doors and joinery are installed, or with them removed in the case of existing homes. We appreciate that this is not always possible. If it is not, we will apply tape to your floor level fittings (skirting boards, door frames and joinery) in order to stop stain splashing on to them. However, this does not stop these items from being able to absorb the stain from below, and therefore all floor level fittings will need to be painted afterwards. Please ensure your project manager is aware of this from the start and that they factor in the painting of these items after we have completed our work. The tape is removed prior to the polyurethane being applied, as this will cover the lower part of the tape causing it to remain stuck.

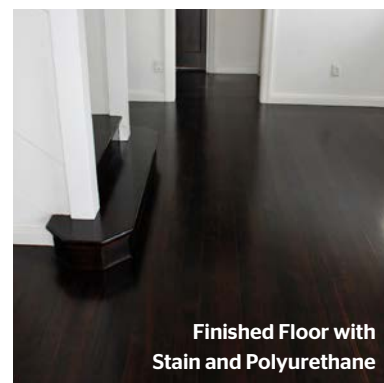
Some wood species show more grain variations than others and when stained these variations can become more obvious.

We stain the timber, rather than adding a tint to the polyurethane, as we feel this gives a superior result. Over time the polyurethane in high use areas becomes thinner than in other areas, such as around the edge of the room. Tinting the polyurethane will result in a patchy looking floor in the future.

All stains are susceptible to ultra violet light, particularly in sun exposed areas of a floor. Dark stains and timbers in front of large windows without UV protection may fade. This can happen over a period of time, or immediately after the floor has been stained. It can result in a distinct difference to the initial colour. Refer to **Fading**, page 10.



Applying Stain



Finished Floor with  
Stain and Polyurethane

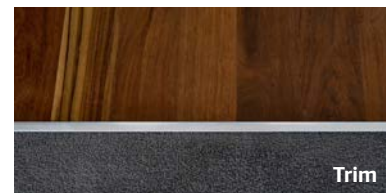
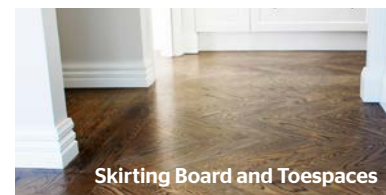
**Skirting Boards,  
Toespaces, Trims  
and Gap Sealant**

Wood is a natural product which expands and contracts in reaction to the amount of moisture in its environment. A certain amount of movement is to be expected. We will leave an expansion gap around the edge of your floor to accommodate this. This gap is covered by skirting boards, toespaces, trims or gap sealant.

Trims are generally used between one flooring type and another, for example between wood and carpet or tiles.

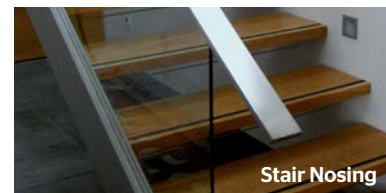
Gap sealant can be used where skirting boards are not installed, for example at sliding doors.

Trims and gap sealant are generally installed by the builder some time after we leave. However, we can come back and install these for you, which is why we have listed them separately on your quote. Skirting boards and toespaces are to be supplied and installed by yourself or by your tradespeople.



**Stair Nosing**

This is used to cover the front edge of the stair step—it makes the lip stronger. We recommend a solid wood, slip resistant nosing, which can match (or be stained to match) your flooring choice. The insert is generally black but an alternative colour can be chosen. Metal stair nosing can also be used. Slip resistant strips are usually required by the New Zealand Building Code.



Please see our website [swinard.co.nz](http://swinard.co.nz) for further information regarding your wood and floor finishing choices.

## Accepting your Quote

Your quote is valid for 30 days.

Please sign your quote and initial each page of our Terms and Conditions document—sent as an attachment to your quote—and return both documents to us. We will then schedule your job.

We require considerable notice to schedule work as we can be booked weeks ahead. It is best to contact us as soon as your decision is made.

On acceptance of your quote you will be invoiced for your timber—in order to secure it at the price quoted. Once this invoice is paid, we will order it for you. Your wood can be stored on the work site, if conditions are suitable, or in our workshop. Timber owned by our clients, is covered by our insurance policy while in our workshop. We only deliver and install wood that has been paid for.

## Variations to Accepted Quotes

Variations to your accepted quote need to be formally recorded and signed before they can be carried out.

## Declining your Quote

You are not obliged to notify us, however your feedback is always welcome.

## Flooring Samples Disclaimer

Photographs of our flooring and samples lent to you by Swinard Wooden Floors are provided as a guide only. Please remember that photographic colour may vary from the actual wood due to translation and reproduction limitations. As a floor is made up of many pieces of timber there will be more variations in grain and colour than can be shown in either a photograph or sample; wood is a natural product and no two pieces are the same. Character variations are to be expected.

While we do our best to match stained samples, please be aware that stains are done by hand and that the timber they are applied to will not exactly match the sample's. Timber variation will affect the end result and subtle differences will occur. Stained samples should be considered a guide only.

## Installation and Site Requirements

**We will endeavour to make your wooden floor installation as convenient as possible.**

**We ask you to ensure that the owner and/or project manager are aware of and follow our installation and site requirements.**

We expect our clients to have their site prepared prior to our arrival. Site conditions are extremely important to ensure a high standard of work. These include temperature, humidity, subfloor condition, dampness and dust. Swinard Wooden Floors reserves the right to delay commencement of a job or completion of a floor if conditions are unsuitable.

Please advise us of any specific requirements or expectations that you may have. These may include the time frame, hours of work or security.

### All Wooden Floors

- We require two separate plug points to work from.
- Areas where flooring is being installed need to be clean, as well as clear of all materials and other trades people until the job is fully completed. Any exceptions to this must be made by prior arrangement.
- Any silicone or silicone based product which comes into contact with the floor will cause an adverse reaction with the floor coating. Silicone is used by—and therefore can be found on the footwear of—some tradespeople; for example plumbers, glaziers and kitchen installers.
- Please be aware that there will be dust during the sanding process. **We use top of the range sanding equipment with dust bags attached, however dust can still be an issue and you may wish to organise a cleaner after the floor has cured.** We suggest closing off areas to prevent dust drifting.
- If you are painting walls and skirting boards, we recommend applying the first two coats prior to floor installation followed by the final coat after your floor is finished. It is important that we sand the floor right up to the walls and this may mark them. **Skirting boards/walls/finished surfaces will require touching up or a top coat of paint afterwards.** We cannot be held accountable for any accidental damage or marks to finished surfaces. Please ensure that your project manager is aware of this right from the start—we would not want you to have to bear unnecessary additional costs.

### New Properties

- We require the building to be fully closed in and all 'wet' trades to have finished. All concrete slabs must be cured and we will apply a moisture sealant to them. We prefer to install the floors after all building work is completed but before the final coat of paint is applied to the walls.
- **Levelling of floors must be done by a qualified floor preparation specialist, in conjunction with ourselves.** Any levelling work required must be done after the floor has been ground and sealed with a moisture barrier. Levelling compound, applied underneath the moisture barrier, may be weakened by the presence of trapped moisture in the concrete slab. A primer is applied before levelling to ensure a strong bond between the moisture barrier and the levelling compound.
- The wooden floors must be completely cured before the carpet is laid. New carpet fibres become airborne and could mar your floor's finish. We cannot be held responsible for any damage to carpets.
- Heating or air-conditioning systems, that are set into the subfloor, should be checked as operational. However, heating systems must be turned off 48 hours prior to installation and must remain completely turned off for a minimum of 7 days after the job is completed. See **Heating**, page 9.
- Skirting boards and toespaces must be left off until the floor is completed. Installation of these is to be carried out by the builder or joiner, unless specifically arranged with Swinard Wooden Floors.

## Existing Properties

While every effort will be made to minimise disruption during installation, there will be some inconvenience. This may mean the kitchen, laundry or WC are out of service for a few days. In some instances, it may be wise to vacate the premises during part of the installation and we will discuss this with you.

### How to prepare for your wooden floor installation:

- If you have a central carpet square, this will need to be removed and re-fitted by a carpet installer. Any new carpet should be installed after your wooden floor has completely cured, as new carpet fibres become airborne and could mar your finish. We cannot be held responsible for any damage to carpets.
- Removal of skirting boards is often necessary before installation and can be refitted or replaced once the floor is completed. Alternatively, a beading can be fitted against the skirting boards. This can either be finished to the colour of the skirting boards or matched to the wood of the floor. The cost of replacement skirting boards and/or beading is not included in your quote. Unless previously discussed and quoted, we presume this work will be carried out by others.
- Close off areas adjacent to the floor laying site to prevent dust drifting.
- Remove pets, plants, food and any precious items from the site and surrounding areas, including the food that is in your fridge.
- Remove everything from the floor installation site to prevent damage and reduce the need for cleaning—including electrical items and window treatments. The work site should be completely cleared.
- The cost of us preparing the work site for you, including moving furniture, has not been included in your quote. We charge an hourly rate for labour, plus the cost of any materials required. We will need to know in advance if you wish us to move items for you, as time will need to be allocated. While all care will be taken with your belongings, Swinard Wooden Floors cannot be held liable for any damage, breakage or loss incurred.
- Subfloor preparation is usually required and is site specific. It could include sweeping and cleaning only, sanding/grinding and the application of a moisture barrier or subfloor levelling. Provision for your specific requirements will be included in your quote. Any unforeseen work under existing floor coverings—such as dry rot, an uneven surface or faulty concrete—are not included in your quote.
- Heating systems must be turned off 48 hours prior to installation and must remain completely turned off for a minimum of 7 days after the job is completed. See **Heating**, page 9, or visit our website [swinard.co.nz](http://swinard.co.nz) for operation thereafter.
- Turn off all gas pilot lights, including those in hot water cylinders.
- Should a toilet pan need to be removed, if possible, this will be carried out by Swinard Wooden Floors. Its reinstatement will need to be done by a plumber.

## **Curing Times for Floor Coatings**

No one may walk on the floor between applications, even if you think it is dry, as this can cause marks and footprints which may only become visible months later.

Do not spray insecticides, air fresheners or aerosol sprays in the area.

Once the floor has been finished, its care becomes your responsibility.

### **Waterborne Polyurethane Coating**

Ensure all windows and doors remain closed and that the areas are not disturbed for a minimum of 12 hours once the final coat has been applied; no one can walk on the floor for 24 hours. After 24 hours it may be walked on with care—soft soled shoes/socks, not heavy trade boots. Polyurethane is touch dry after 24 hours but takes a full 7 days to completely cure. The floor must not be covered or get wet for a minimum of 4 days, to allow this curing process to take place. We suggest you do not move back into the area for 4 days and that extreme care should be taken for 7 days.

### **Hardwax Oil Coating**

Hardwax oil takes 3 days to cure at an average room temperature of 18°C. It will take 6 days if the temperature is as low as 10°C.

### **Initial Protection for your new Floor**

If tradespeople are still on site we advise that after the curing period, as stated above, the floor is carefully swept clean of all dust and debris and covered with cardboard—flat side down—until all building work is completed. Do not affix this to the floor with tape, as it may damage the polyurethane or oil coating when removed. You can keep it in place by taping each section of cardboard to the next .

Be aware that you may need to have your doors trimmed after your floor has been installed.

The reinstallation of all toilet pans, appliances and furnishings is your responsibility.

We will leave a tidy work site on completion of your floor. Cleaning of the work site and premises is to be done by others.

Please see **Cleaning and Maintenance**, page 11, for floor care thereafter.

## The Nature of Wood

**Your wooden floor is part of your building and the performance of the floor is dependent on temperature and relative humidity within the building.**

### Movement

Wood is a natural material, it absorbs and releases moisture to and from the air. While most timber used in flooring is kiln dried to reduce the moisture content, the wood's ability to absorb moisture remains. This ability is lessened by applying a polyurethane or oil coating. To keep moisture from below to a minimum, all concrete subfloors are moisture sealed prior to your floor installation.

Throughout the year we experience a range of weather patterns; cold, damp conditions create high humidity levels causing the wood to swell, whereas heating and sunlight have the reverse effect. Therefore, a small degree of expansion and contraction is to be expected in any wooden floor and this can be visible. To allow the wood to expand and shrink, we leave expansion gaps between the floor and the wall, these gaps are covered by skirting boards or beadings and trims. Fine gaps may appear from season to season, especially in rooms which experience unusual or significant changes in humidity and temperature, from both heating and sunlight. To help minimise these effects, owners can stabilise the environment of the building through temperature and humidity control.

It is not recommended that a house is left unheated for long periods during winter, as the moisture content of the building will rise without the drying effect of the heating and venting associated with normal occupancy. After a period of being unoccupied, do not suddenly heat the house. This may dry out the surface of the flooring faster than the middle and bottom of the timber, leading to differential shrinkage. This can cause cracking of the polyurethane along the joints and cupping of the boards.

### Heating

All forms of heating, including freestanding heaters, radiators, heat pumps and under floor heating, affect the temperature of the floor. The floor should remain at a temperature below 24°C or 75°F, no matter what type of heating is used. **Heating temperatures must be adjusted gradually as any extreme temperature change can damage the floor.** For this reason, we recommended that any manual control units are enclosed and positioned so that only experienced people have access to them.

**Each time the heating is turned on, start at 15°C and increase the temperature by 1 to 2 degrees per day over a period of 7 days, until the required level is reached—below 24°C. It is recommended that you reduce the temperature in the same manner.**

The moisture content of the floor should still remain within the acceptable range of 9-13%. Should you be considering a water controlled system, it is important that the unit is controlled by the temperature of the floor, not the temperature of the water in the system. Experience has shown that misuse of temperature controls will prove too much for any wooden floor and will eventually lead to floor failure. Insulation in concrete slabs, dehumidifiers and heat transfer kits will also impact on the temperature and humidity level of your wooden floor.

## Sunlight and UV

All natural products are affected by light, particularly strong sunlight and UV rays which will have a detrimental effect on wooden floors. It will dry out the timber and splits may appear. It can also cause a distinct change in colour, particularly noticeable with darker woods which can become significantly lighter. This can happen over a period of time, but occasionally it can happen almost immediately after the floor has been installed. Colour change is most obvious when rugs are placed on the floor. It is advisable not to place rugs down initially, to enable any fading to happen evenly throughout the floor.

The chemical reaction which causes materials to fade is accelerated by high temperatures. We therefore strongly suggest that you attach UV filters and/or blinds to windows, not only to protect your wood flooring but also your furniture, fabrics and carpets. We also recommend that the temperature of the room is considered. Please be aware that we cannot be held responsible for fading.

## Timber Flooring in Wet Areas

A wet area is an area within a building with a water supply system. It always includes bathrooms, showers, laundries and WCs but surprisingly sometimes excludes kitchens and bars/food prep areas. Wet areas are problematic for all types of flooring and nothing is 100% waterproof, including most vinyl and tiles with grouting. There are many conflicting views with regards to timber flooring in wet areas. Whether you have a slow leak or a major flood it can be a costly repair. Ultimately it is often the insurance companies that bear the costs and it is worthwhile checking with your insurance company to find out exactly what type of flooring they cover in such an event. They are not all the same. That said, there have been many instances when flooded timber floors have dried out, given sufficient time, and require no remedial work at all. The most important remedy for any major spill, is to remove the liquid as soon as possible, without causing product shrinkage (see cleaning and maintenance).

We apply a waterproofing membrane to all concrete subfloors, this helps stop damp coming up through the concrete and into contact with the timber. Similarly, with a plywood substrate in a wet area, we will apply a waterproof barrier. Both these protect the timber from below.

Timber flooring, whether prefinished or finished on site, will not have a continuous membrane above. Timber flooring moves seasonally, as it reacts to the humidity level within its environment and the coating will crack between the boards during this process. A gap sealant is applied to the expansion gap left around the edge of the flooring when skirting boards/toespaces are not being installed, it can also be placed under a skirting boards in bathrooms, WCs, laundries, etc. However, as with tile grouting, water can still work its way in and through capillary action, travel some distance.

The polyurethane we use is waterborne. This is a two-pot coating with a hardening agent in it. It is much more waterproof and hard-wearing than water-based polyurethane. We would not recommend either oiled floors or floating floors in wet areas.

In summary, we feel that a wooden floor in a wet area is as suitable as any other flooring type. Please discuss any concerns you have with regards to "wet areas" at the time of quoting.

## Bathrooms and Laundries

These environments can often have higher moisture levels. In these areas the timber should be well looked after and the following steps should be taken:

- Use venting kits to vent clothes dryers to the outside.
- Prevent water leaking from washing machines, shower doors and other plumbing fixtures.
- Do not leave puddles of water, damp towels, bath mats or clothes on the floors.
- Use extractor fans, heaters and/or heated towel rails.

Please see our website [swinard.co.nz](http://swinard.co.nz) for comprehensive information on caring for and maintaining your wooden floor, controlling and heating your environment, as well as wooden floor expectations.

## Cleaning and Maintenance

### Cleaning Products

Only use the recommended cleaning products for your particular flooring/coating type and follow the manufacturer's instructions. These will be emailed to you, when the work has been completed, along with your invoice. Should we be working through your builder, please ensure they pass them on to you.

**Always remove all spills and excess moisture immediately.**

As a rough guide the following apply for the two main floor coating types:

### Polyurethane Coated Floors

1. Vacuum—using soft setting—or sweep the floor to remove surface dust and grit.
2. Wipe your floor using a microfibre mop.

We recommend using a specialised cleaning mop that works with a floor cleaning fluid, particular to your coating type. Should you prefer to use an alternative mop—microfibre mops work best—please ensure that you keep the amount of water/specialised cleaning product used to a minimum and apply this with the use of a spray bottle.

**We recommend Bona Polyurethane cleaning products. These are available from Look Floors, 25 Shakespeare Road, Waltham, O3 366 2551.**

### Oil Coated Floors

Once your floor is completed you will be supplied with a cleaning kit that is to be used with your particular oil finish. Follow the instructions that come with it. Should you be unsure about its use, please contact our office, as it is important that oiled floors are cared for correctly.

Generally for oiled floors, the following is required:

1. Remove dirt with a soft broom or a vacuum cleaner—using the soft setting.
2. Then, using a microfibre mop and the appropriate cleaning product for your type of oil, clean the floor. The amount of liquid used for mopping must be kept to a minimum—the mop needs to be damp rather than wet—and applying the cleaning product through a spray bottle is recommended. Some of the cleaning products we recommend also nourish your timber.
3. Regular maintenance care, to top up the oil in your timber, is also necessary. This can be applied to the whole floor or specifically to high wear areas—such as through doorways and in front of kitchen sinks—when they begin to look dehydrated. When the floor is looking greyish or tired, clean the floor as above and allow it to dry, then apply oil as directed by the oil manufacturer. It will need to be the same type of oil as originally applied to your floor. It is difficult to estimate how frequently this will need to be done as it depends on the amount of floor use. We would recommend, in residential areas, that it be re-oiled once a year but more regularly in commercial situations where there is heavier foot traffic. Larger areas can be maintained mechanically.

## To Protect your Floor from Scratches

- We recommend you attach protective pads to the base of all furniture. A wide range of protective pads are available from hardware stores. We have found Bunnings to have the best selection.
- Care must be taken when moving furniture; remember to lift and not drag.
- We recommend you keep your pets nails/claws trimmed.
- Be aware that stiletto heels will leave dents in your floor.
- Be aware that sports shoes and work boots can retain sharp stones and grit.
- Use entry mats and rugs—not rubber backed—to trap grit and small stones.

## What Not to Use

- Do not use abrasive, silicon or solvent-based products, soap-based detergents and other cleaners which will leave a dull film on your floor that is extremely difficult to remove.
- Do not use abrasive pads, steel wool or scouring powder.
- Do not use steam cleaners on your wooden floor.

## Floods

If the timber floor is inadvertently flooded, damage can be minimised by removing the surplus water as fast as possible and gradually adding extra atmospheric heating—definitely do not turn up the underfloor heating. Short term use of dehumidifiers and improved air circulation can also help to remove the moisture that may have got between the boards or underneath the boards. Do whatever is possible to remove the water quickly before the timber has time to absorb and hold too much moisture. A well installed floor can recover from flood damage, to a large degree, if prompt action is taken.

## Heating/Sunlight and UV

Refer to page 9 and 10.

## Health and Safety

**Swinard Wooden Floors is committed to providing a safe workplace for everyone involved.**

Our staff undergo regular Health and Safety training and the company has been awarded the gold status through Site Wise. This is the highest level.

All our staff are first aid trained through St. John. They are also aware of, and abide by, all health and safety regulations.

It is in everyone's best interests that our designated work area be kept clear. Please ensure that only employees from Swinard Wooden Floors touch, move and/or operate the equipment and materials we bring to site.

Where we are the main contractor—not a subcontractor of a builder—you and any visitors will be inducted on to the site and asked to comply with all health and safety requirements relevant to the site. Please follow our staff's instructions. Should you or any members of your family or workforce notice any potential hazards, please ensure that these are brought to our attention.

A Health and Safety compliance fee is included in your quote and a SSSP—Site Specific Safety Plan—will be drawn up for your job site.



## Our Guarantee

### Solid Timber and Unfinished Engineered Flooring

**This guarantee is provided by Swinard Wooden Floors Limited and applies for a period of 2 (two) years from the completion date. Completed, signed guarantees will be sent on request.**

This guarantee is not transferable. It applies to the Construction Company (if applicable), plus the first owner of the floor.

#### A. What our guarantee covers.

Subject to paragraphs C and D below, we guarantee:

1. Our workmanship, so that you will receive a quality solid timber floor finished to a high standard of workmanship, which will perform for at least 2 years from the completion date.
2. The installation system used, including the processes and fixing materials.

#### B. What we will do in the event of a claim under this guarantee.

Should the floor behave in any way significantly different to what is expected, (e.g. significant gaps or cupping appearing, timber lifting, polyurethane delaminating, etc.) then we will take all practical steps to determine why it is doing this. Should the problem relate, in any way, to fault on our part in the preparation of the timber, laying or sanding and coating, then we will take all steps possible to repair or replace the floor to your satisfaction.

#### C. What our guarantee does not cover.

Your new wooden floor is a "living" product, with shrinkage and expansion being a natural phenomenon – it should respond to normal everyday changes in moisture content. Some movement is to be expected, particularly with seasonal variations. This can be minimised by keeping the surrounding environment relatively stable.

Our guarantee does not cover damage or changes to the floor in the following situations:

1. General wear and tear, fire or flood.
2. Irregularities or movement in the subfloor, including earthquakes.
3. This guarantee does not apply where the concrete subfloor has not been ground and sealed by us (where necessary), or where timber products not recommended by us have been used.
4. If modifications or alterations have been made to the floor by others.
5. Damage due to lack of maintenance, improper cleaning and/or inadequate protection against dirt.
6. Damage due to intense point loading pressure (e.g. stiletto heels and unprotected furniture feet).
7. Abnormal use or damage from dragging furniture, burning, dropping of sharp objects or other such accidents, indelible staining such as ink, dye, tar, waxes etc. and scratches from animal claws.
8. Marks left by the use of rubber mats or rubber protectors; wear from abrasive matting.
9. Damage due to exposure to excessive sunlight, temperature, lack of adequate ventilation, water/moisture or humidity.

#### D. Your responsibilities

It is your responsibility to follow our cleaning, maintenance and heating instructions. Please also see our website [swinard.co.nz](http://swinard.co.nz) for subfloor preparation, controlling your environment, cleaning and heating instructions, as well as wooden floor expectations and how to avoid problems occurring. Your guarantee is only be valid when these directions have been followed. All claims under this guarantee must be made in writing. In no event will our total liability for a claim or claims in respect of this guarantee exceed our quotation price for the floor.