

FINOAK Atelier engineered hardwood installation instructions

Floating and full-surface glue-down installation

IMPORTANT

Professional installation is strongly recommended. Read the complete guide, inspect every board and confirm the site, screed, adhesive and heating system before work begins. Installed boards are considered accepted.

Product overview

FINOAK Atelier is a premium three-layer engineered European oak floor with a stable poplar core and Välinge 5G click system. Straight planks may be floated over an approved underlay or bonded fully to a prepared subfloor. Herringbone and project-specific formats must follow the applicable product and layout instructions.

CONSTRUCTION	Three-layer engineered oak with poplar core	LOCKING SYSTEM	Välinge 5G click
FORMATS	Straight plank: 260 mm and 190 mm widths	HERRINGBONE	600 × 125 mm format
INSTALLATION	Floating or full-surface glue-down, as applicable	WARRANTY	25-year residential, subject to current terms
ACCLIMATISATION	Minimum 48 hours in unopened packs	SITE HUMIDITY	30-60% relative humidity
SUBFLOOR FLATNESS	Maximum 2 mm deviation over 1 m	UFH SURFACE LIMIT	Maximum 29°C

Choose the installation method

FLOATING	Boards connect above an approved underlay	BEST FOR	Fast renovation, easier future access and lower installation cost
GLUE-DOWN	Boards bonded with compatible flexible elastomeric adhesive	BEST FOR	Solid feel, improved acoustics, large open areas and premium performance
TRANSITIONS	Often required with floating installations	GLUE-DOWN REPAIRS	More specialised because boards are bonded

Natural timber

Oak is a natural material. Colour, grain, knots, mineral marks and structure vary between boards and samples. Mix boards from several packs to create a balanced floor. These features are not manufacturing defects.

Key site requirements

- The building must be enclosed, weather-tight and operating at normal in-use temperature and humidity.
- Store unopened packs flat, dry and protected from direct sunlight; do not expose packs to unrestricted climate conditions.
- Confirm the chosen finish, grade and visual blend with the owner before installation.
- Never install visibly damaged boards or material where the site conditions fall outside the requirements.

Subfloor preparation

All substrates

- Clean, permanently dry, level, stable and free of dust, paint, oil, wax, curing compounds and weak surface layers.
- Maximum deviation: 2 mm over a 1 m straightedge. Correct high and low areas using a compatible preparation system.
- Test and document moisture before installation. Follow the stricter requirement where the screed, adhesive or local standard differs.
- Do not bridge active movement joints. Carry structural joints through the finished floor with an appropriate profile.

Mineral screeds - moisture limits from the supplied 5G instructions

CEMENT SCREED	Maximum 2.0% CM	WITH UFH	Maximum 1.8% CM
ANHYDRITE SCREED	Maximum 0.5% CM	WITH UFH	Maximum 0.3% CM
OTHER SUBSTRATES	Obtain written technical approval	TESTING	Record results and test locations before laying

Floating preparation

- Over mineral substrates, install a minimum 200-micron polyethylene vapour-control membrane, turned up at edges and sealed continuously at laps and penetrations.
- Use only a firm, dimensionally stable underlay approved for engineered click flooring and compatible with underfloor heating where applicable.
- Existing hard finishes must be secure, flat and dry. Remove carpet and other soft or unstable coverings.

Glue-down preparation

- Use a complete, compatible screed-preparation, primer and adhesive system. Follow the system manufacturer's instructions and open times.
- Use a high-quality flexible elastomeric wood-floor adhesive suitable for the substrate, board construction and underfloor heating.
- Prime or moisture-control the screed where required. Do not assume adhesive alone is a vapour barrier unless expressly certified for that purpose.

Tools and materials

SETTING OUT	Tape measure, pencil, chalk line, square	CUTTING	Fine-tooth saw or track saw
ASSEMBLY	Tapping block, pull bar and non-marking mallet	SPACING	Expansion wedges / spacers
FLOATING	Approved underlay and 200-micron membrane	GLUE-DOWN	Adhesive, correct notched trowel and cleaning cloths

Planning the floor

- Plan the direction, centre lines, borders, thresholds and transition details before opening packs.
- Measure the room and balance the first and last rows; avoid narrow perimeter pieces.
- Dry-lay representative boards and agree the natural variation with the end user.
- For herringbone, establish precise centre and reference lines. Use the correct left/right board sequence and follow the format-specific plan.

Floating installation - straight plank

Perimeter movement

Provide a continuous expansion gap around walls, columns, pipes, frames, fixed cabinetry and every permanent obstruction. Use the gap specified in the current FINOAK warranty and project documentation; never fill it with adhesive or silicone.

Installation sequence

1. Lay and seal the vapour membrane where required, then install the approved underlay without overlaps.
2. Begin from a straight reference line. Orient the boards according to the Vålinge 5G profile supplied with the product.
3. Connect the long side at the required angle, lower the board and engage the 5G end joint. Confirm the locking element has closed fully.
4. Stagger end joints and avoid repetitive patterns. Keep the first three rows straight and square.
5. Use a suitable tapping block or pull bar only where required; never strike the oak edge or click profile directly.
6. Cut the final row to the wall profile while maintaining the full expansion gap. Remove all wedges after installation.

FLOATING RULE

The floor must move as one free surface. Do not screw, nail, glue or trap boards beneath cabinetry, islands, partitions, skirting, door frames or fixed profiles. Divide areas and doorways where required by the current warranty and site geometry.

Full-surface glue-down - straight plank

Adhesive selection

Use a compatible flexible elastomeric adhesive. This type of adhesive remains resilient after curing, allowing natural timber movement while maintaining bond strength and improving acoustic and underfoot performance.

Installation sequence

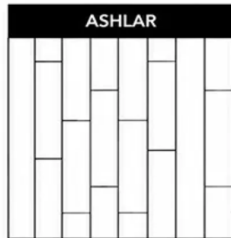
1. Confirm the substrate is sound, dry, flat, prepared and ready to receive adhesive.
2. Set out the working lines and only spread an area that can be covered within the adhesive open time.
3. Apply adhesive evenly with the specified notched trowel. Replace the trowel when notch wear changes the spread rate.
4. Place boards into the wet adhesive and engage joints without forcing adhesive into the click profile. Press or roll as required by the adhesive manufacturer.
5. Maintain clean expansion details at all fixed boundaries and honour movement joints.
6. Remove adhesive from the finished face immediately using the approved cleaner. Do not allow residue to cure.
7. Restrict traffic and loading until the adhesive has fully cured. Follow the system manufacturer's curing times.

Herringbone installation

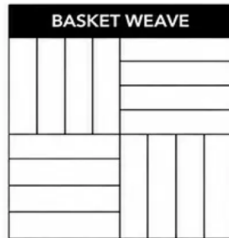
- Herringbone requires accurate setting out and professional installation. Identify left and right boards before laying.
- FINOAK Atelier 600 × 125 × 15/4 mm herringbone is a tongue-and-groove product intended for fully bonded glue-down installation.
- Build and check the first reference run carefully; small alignment errors multiply across the floor.
- Maintain the specified perimeter expansion and use border or transition details planned for the project.

Glue-down laying patterns

FINOAK Atelier unfinished herringbone blocks can be arranged in several fully bonded patterns. Confirm the chosen design, room centre lines, borders and cutting plan with the client before spreading adhesive. The diagrams below are setting-out concepts and are not a substitute for a dimensioned installer layout.



A classic straight lay with offset joints for a clean, timeless look.



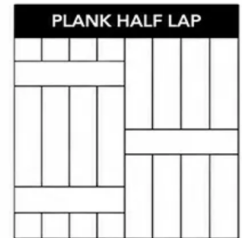
A traditional pattern that adds texture and visual interest.



A dynamic diagonal layout that creates movement and elegance.



A bold, modern take on herringbone with strong geometric appeal.



A versatile pattern with half-lap joints for a balanced finish.

ASHLAR	Straight lay with offset joints	BASKET WEAVE	Alternating blocks create a woven effect
HERRINGBONE 45°	Classic diagonal herringbone orientation	HERRINGBONE 90°	Square-set geometric herringbone
PLANK HALF LAP	Grouped blocks with half-lap joints	INSTALLATION	Fully bonded using a compatible elastomeric adhesive

Pattern-setting requirements

- Survey the complete room and establish accurate perpendicular datum lines. Do not set out from an unverified wall.
- Dry-lay a representative section to confirm scale, board selection, border widths and the position of focal lines.
- Maintain the pattern continuously and check alignment with a long straightedge after every few rows or modules.
- Apply only enough adhesive to remain within its open time. Keep tongue-and-groove joints and the unfinished oak face free from adhesive.
- Use temporary reference battens or weighted blocks where appropriate, without damaging the boards or restricting required movement details.
- Cut perimeter and border pieces accurately while maintaining the specified expansion gap at every fixed obstruction.

PROFESSIONAL INSTALLATION

Complex patterns increase setting-out, cutting and adhesive-control requirements. Installation by an experienced engineered-wood flooring contractor is strongly recommended.

Underfloor heating

FINOAK Atelier is suitable for compatible warm-water underfloor-heating systems when the floor, adhesive or underlay and heating controls are designed as one system.

- Complete the prescribed screed heat-up and cool-down protocol and retain the signed commissioning record.
- Achieve the normal room temperature approximately two days before installation and keep it stable while the adhesive cures.
- The finished floor surface must not exceed 29°C. Avoid rapid temperature changes and localised heat build-up.
- Full-surface glue-down is recommended for optimum heat transfer. If floating, use an underlay specifically approved for underfloor heating.
- Do not cover heated floors with highly insulating rugs, mattresses or furniture bases that can trap heat.

Finishing and protection

- Remove spacers. Fix skirting to the wall only and ensure it does not press down on a floating floor.
- Fix transitions and profiles to the subfloor without pinning or restricting the boards.
- Protect the finished floor with breathable, non-staining covering. Do not tape directly to the timber surface.
- Maintain stable indoor conditions and protect the floor from water, construction moisture, grit and direct solar heat.
- Fit felt pads and suitable broad protectors before placing furniture. Lift heavy items; never drag them.

Initial care

Pre-finished boards

- Remove dust with a soft broom or vacuum suitable for timber floors.
- Use only a lightly damp microfibre mop and a cleaner approved for the installed surface finish.
- Never flood, steam-clean, wax or use abrasive, ammonia-based or harsh chemical products.

Unfinished boards

- Unfinished Atelier must be professionally sanded and sealed immediately after installation using the selected complete coating or oil system.
- Follow the finish manufacturer's preparation, application, curing and maintenance instructions. Do not expose unfinished oak to water or traffic.

Document control and warranty

Installation and ongoing care must comply with the current FINOAK warranty, technical data, chosen finish system and compatible adhesive or underlay instructions. Keep proof of purchase, batch labels, moisture readings, heating records, adhesive details and site photographs.

CURRENT PRODUCT BASIS

Prepared for the FINOAK Atelier range using the supplied Välinge 5G instruction book and FINfloor's 2026 guidance on floating versus glue-down engineered hardwood installation. Always check www.finfloor.co.za for current product documents before work begins.