03 · European oak

RHINE HERRINGBONE

Installation guide for Rhine Castel Nuovo herringbone.



COVERS
Castel Nuovo herringbone

METHOD
Adhesive-fixed

EDITION
01 · 2026

TOPDECK

BEFORE YOU BEGIN

Herringbone is not a plank job

Herringbone is a precision, full-spread adhesive-fixed installation. Read the entire guide, confirm the site and selected fixing system, and use a professional timber-floor installer.

1. **Adhesive-fixed only.** Do not float this floor. Full-spread bond to concrete or an approved structural sheet substrate using a complete compatible system. Nail-down and staple-down work are outside this guide.
2. **Professional installation.** Herringbone is not a DIY product. Failure caused by unsuitable site conditions, incompatible products or work outside this guide may not be covered by the Topdeck product warranty.
3. **Inspect and dry-lay.** Confirm the product, colour, quantity, batch and any A/B left-right board format. In good light, do not install visible damage or defects. Blend boards from several cartons and agree the layout with the owner.
4. **Order for the pattern.** Allow at least 20% cutting waste for a standard herringbone layout. Diagonal layouts, borders, irregular rooms and selective grading may require more.
5. **Make the site ready.** The building must be enclosed, weathertight and secure; wet trades substantially complete; permanent climate control operating; and the flooring protected by installing it late in the construction sequence.
6. **Hold the climate.** Maintain 18-25°C and 40-60% relative humidity for at least five days before installation, throughout the work and for the life of the floor. Follow the underfloor-heating controls on pages 5 and 7.
7. **Condition the stock.** Store unopened cartons flat, fully supported and clear of concrete in the installation area for at least 24 hours. Do not condition flooring in a damp or otherwise non-compliant room.
8. **Document the system.** Record product and batch, room climate, substrate tests, preparation, moisture-control system, primer, leveller, adhesive, trowel, photographs and owner sign-off; leave the record with the owner.

THE SUBFLOOR

The pattern shows every fault beneath it

A bonded pattern transfers the substrate to the finished surface. The substrate must be sound, dry, clean and flat - verified and recorded, not assumed.

SUITABLE SUBSTRATES	Concrete, flooring-grade plywood or another structural sheet specifically approved for this flooring and the complete fixing system. The substrate must be rigid, securely fixed and suitable for direct bonding.
FLATNESS & LEVEL	Concrete: maximum 3mm gap under a 3m straightedge. Sheet substrates: maximum 3mm under 1.5m. Grind high areas and use a compatible leveller for low areas. Levelness is separate; where variation exceeds 4mm over 2m, obtain documented agreement before laying.
CONCRETE MOISTURE	Test and record representative locations. ATFA guidance identifies a dry slab as up to 2.0% on an impedance meter and up to 75% in-slab RH. Investigate higher or abnormal readings. Adhesive-fixed slabs require an approved applied moisture-vapour-retarding system.
TIMBER / SHEET MOISTURE	Substrates must be dry and at equilibrium with expected service conditions; timber moisture content must not exceed 12%. Investigate leaks or inconsistent readings before proceeding.
SURFACE &JOINTS	Remove dust, laitance, curing compounds, sealers, oil, loose coatings and incompatible adhesive. Mechanically prepare as the system requires. Use direct-bond-rated patching and levelling products. Honour structural and control joints; do not bridge them unless the specified system expressly permits it.
SUBFLOOR SPACES	Keep the ground beneath enclosed subfloor spaces dry and provide permanent ventilation complying with the NCC. Resolve drainage, leaks and damp conditions before installation.

> **DUST, ADHESIVE & EXISTING MATERIALS**
>
> Use on-tool extraction, a correctly fitted P2 respirator and eye protection when cutting or grinding. Read every product SDS and use the specified PPE and ventilation. Do not sand or mechanically disturb suspect asbestos-containing flooring, backing or adhesive; arrange competent assessment first.

TOOLS

3m and 1.5m straightedges · laser/chalk line · square · tape · 8-15mm spacers · mitre/track saw with extraction · HEPA vacuum · suitable substrate and timber moisture meters · adhesive-specified notched trowel and spread-rate check · tape/weights as approved · cleaning wipes specified by the adhesive supplier.

SETTING OUT

The centre line rules the room

> A true datum - not an out-of-square wall - controls the pattern. Prove the board geometry and every reference line before adhesive is spread.

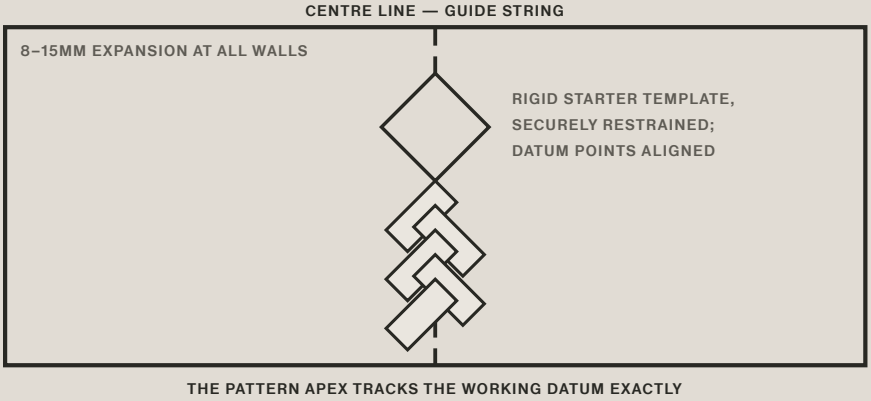


FIG. 01 - SCHEMATIC ONLY. CONFIRM ACTUAL BOARD GEOMETRY, BORDERS AND ROOM SET-OUT BEFORE BONDING.

1. **Agree the layout.** Confirm pattern direction, single/double/triple repeat, borders, thresholds and expected perimeter cuts with the owner before adhesive is opened.
2. **Check the board format.** Verify batch and grade and, where supplied, separate the A/B left-right boards. Dry-assemble at least one full repeat to establish the actual dimensions and orientation.
3. **Establish the datum.** Survey the room, check diagonals and create a true centre line or accurately offset parallel working line with a laser, string or chalk. Do not use walls as the sole reference.
4. **Restrain the starter.** Use a square rigid template or cleat at least one board long. Secure or weight it without damaging services, waterproofing or the moisture-control system; locate services before drilling.
5. **Prove the set-out.** Dry-lay the starter rows, check the apex, 90° angles, repeat width and balanced cuts, then mark control points across the room so any drift is found immediately.

LAYING THE PATTERN

Precision first, speed later

Control the adhesive area, transfer and working time while keeping the first rows exact. The current technical data sheets for the complete fixing system control the work.

1. **Use one compatible system.** The moisture barrier, primer, leveller, bonded acoustic layer and elastic timber adhesive must be mutually compatible and approved for the substrate and flooring. Follow current data sheets; use primer only where that system requires it.
2. **Control the spread.** Use the specified notched trowel and replace it when worn. Spread only the area that can be covered within the stated open and working time; never re-wet or bond into skinned adhesive.
3. **Set the starter rows.** Place each board into wet adhesive ahead of the previous piece, then slide and rotate it into position without forcing the joint. Keep the apex on the datum, joints tight and faces flush. Use tape or weights only as the system permits.
4. **Verify transfer and geometry.** Lift boards periodically and confirm full, even adhesive contact to the level required by the adhesive supplier. Correct inadequate transfer before skin forms. Recheck datum marks, angle, flatness and joint closure continuously.
5. **Keep movement space.** Maintain 8-15mm, or any larger written project requirement, at walls, columns, pipes and fixed items. Continue structural and control joints through the floor with the specified movement-joint treatment; do not bridge them without written system approval.
6. **Clean immediately.** Keep adhesive out of joints and remove wet residue with the supplier-approved cleaner, first tested on a spare board. Do not smear cured adhesive or use aggressive solvent or excess water on the finish.

> **CURING & UNDERFLOOR HEATING**
>
> The adhesive data sheet controls traffic, loads, protection and wet cleaning - do not rely on a generic 10-12/24-hour rule. Keep the climate stable and the floor uncovered until permitted. Where the floor and fixing system are approved over underfloor heating, commission and thermally cycle the system before installation, stabilise the substrate at room temperature before bonding, hold a constant temperature for at least 48 hours after installation, then increase by about 2°C per day. Do not exceed a 27°C finished timber surface, or any lower written system limit.

COMPLETING THE INSTALLATION

Finish the edges, keep the spares

1. **Inspect before cure.** While correction is still possible, confirm the pattern, alignment, joint closure, surface level and perimeter/movement clearances. Remove residue as specified and photograph the completed field.
2. **Finish the edges.** After the adhesive permits, remove spacers and temporary restraints. Install specified transition and movement-joint profiles. Fix skirting and scotia to the wall only and do not fill or restrain required movement space.
3. **Clean and protect.** Vacuum with a hard-floor tool. Do not wet-clean until the adhesive allows it. For ongoing trades, use clean, dry, breathable and non-staining hard protection; never tape to the finish or trap moisture beneath plastic sheeting.
4. **Return loads carefully.** Keep traffic, wheeled loads and furniture off until the adhesive data sheet permits. Lift furniture into place and fit clean felt pads or suitable non-staining protectors before it touches the floor.
5. **Handover the record.** Give the owner the site and product records, system data sheets, photographs, Care & Maintenance guide and all cure-time restrictions. Explain climate, water and underfloor-heating limits.
6. **Keep the spares.** Store remaining boards flat, dry and protected, with the batch details. Natural timber changes with age and light, so original-batch spares provide the best available match for future repairs.

> **TOUCH-UPS**
>
> Do not fill, stain or otherwise disguise a suspected product defect without the owner's and supplier's approval. Minor site damage may be repaired by a competent technician with a finish-compatible kit; agree and document the repair before handover.

AFTER INSTALLATION — FOR THE OWNER

A page for the owner

Timber remains responsive to air, water, heat and light after it is installed. Stable conditions and dry routine care protect both the pattern and the finish.

THE CLIMATE THE FLOOR NEEDS

TEMPERATURE	Maintain 18-25°C. Avoid rapid changes, localised heat and prolonged direct sun; use blinds or shading where needed.
RELATIVE HUMIDITY	Maintain 40-60% and monitor it. Use humidification, dehumidification or ventilation as seasonal conditions require, including while the home is vacant.
UNDERFLOOR HEATING	Use only where the Rhine floor and complete fixing system were approved. Keep the finished timber surface at or below 27°C, increase or reduce temperature gradually, and avoid heat-trapping rugs.
WATER & CLEANING	Wipe spills immediately. Use only the approved hardwood-floor method and a well-wrung microfibre mop. Never wet-mop, steam-clean, wax, polish or use abrasive pads or harsh solvents.
SPARE BOARDS	Keep labelled spare boards flat, dry and protected for future repairs.

PROTECTING THE SURFACE

- Fit felt pads and suitable non-staining protectors to furniture; use hard-floor castors or a chair mat, lift rather than drag, and keep pads clean.
- Use clean walk-off mats at external entries and remove grit frequently. Check that rug and mat backings will not stain or trap heat or moisture.
- During moving or renovation, use clean breathable board protection. Do not tape to the coating, use impervious plastic or cover before the adhesive system permits.
- If water enters beneath the floor, contact the installer promptly. The flooring and subfloor may need to be lifted, assessed and dried before reinstatement.

Rhine is the European register. Slow-grown oak, milled to long format, ready to lay.

RESPONSIBILITY

Before installation, the installer and owner must review the flooring, layout, site, substrate and complete fixing system, and stop if any requirement is unmet. Do not knowingly install a board with a visible defect. Damage caused by unsuitable conditions, incompatible products or work outside this guide may not be covered by Topdeck's product warranty. Topdeck does not warrant third-party workmanship unless it supplied that service. Nothing in this guide excludes rights under the Australian Consumer Law.

THE RECORD

Leave the owner a dated record of product and batch; room temperature and RH; substrate type, flatness and moisture test method, locations and results; preparation and moisture-control products; primer, leveller, adhesive, trowel and batch details; underfloor-heating settings; photographs and sign-off. Use the applicable ATFA QA checklist.

FOR TRADE

START A PROJECT

Specifier requests, project pricing and technical documentation.

Trade enquiry

FOR HOMEOWNERS

FIND A STOCKIST

Visit a Topdeck retailer to view boards and take samples.

Find a stockist

ADDRESS	16 Salisbury Street, Silverwater NSW 2128
TELEPHONE	(02) 9748 2288
EMAIL	info@topdeckflooring.com.au
WEB	topdeckflooring.com.au

This guide is general in nature. The installer must apply all NCC and relevant Australian Standards requirements current at the time of installation. Rhine Herringbone Installation Guide · Edition 01 · 2026 · Covers the Castel Nuovo herringbone format.

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