03 · European oak

RHINE PLANK

Installation guide for Rhine plank — Lavanda Oak and Project Oak formats.



COVERS
Lavanda Oak & Project Oak

METHOD
Glue-down & floating

EDITION
01 · 2026

TOPDECK

BEFORE YOU BEGIN

Nine points that decide the job

Rhine plank may be full-spread adhesive-fixed or floated on an approved underlay with glued tongue-and-groove joints. Select and document the complete system before ordering.

1. **Choose the method.** Glue-down suits approved concrete and structural sheet substrates. Floating is permitted only where the product format, room geometry, substrate and underlay system are suitable. Approved underfloor heating requires full-spread glue-down only.
2. **Use a competent installer.** Glue-down is professional work; a glued-joint floating installation also demands accurate set-out, moisture control and movement provision. Damage caused by work outside this guide may not be covered by the product warranty.
3. **Use in dry internal areas.** Residential or commercial, on or above grade. Below-grade work requires a dry, structurally suitable slab and a documented vapour-control system. Do not install in showers, saunas or other persistently wet areas.
4. **Order for waste.** Allow at least 5-7% for a regular plank layout and 12-13% for a diagonal or complex layout. Allow at least 20% for a standard herringbone layout. Irregular rooms, selective grading and colour blending may require more.
5. **Inspect and dry-lay.** Confirm product, colour, grade, quantity and batch. In good light, do not install visible damage or defects. Work from several cartons and agree colour blending, board direction and layout with the owner.
6. **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.
7. **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. Underfloor heating has additional controls on pages 4 and 7.
8. **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.
9. **Document the system.** Record the product and batch, room climate, substrate tests, preparation, vapour control, primer, leveller, adhesive, underlay, trowel, photographs and owner sign-off; leave the record with the owner.

THE SUBFLOOR

Check it before a board comes out of a box

Rhine must be installed over a structurally sound, rigid, dry, clean and flat substrate. Test, prepare and record it before a carton is opened.

SUBSTRATES	Concrete, flooring-grade plywood or another structural sheet approved for the selected method and complete system. Existing hard finishes are suitable only where all system suppliers approve them and their bond, flatness and moisture condition are verified.
FLATNESS & LEVEL	ATFA default: concrete maximum 3mm gap under a 3m straightedge; new sheet, batten or joist substrates maximum 3mm under 1.5m. Use compatible grinding, patching or levelling products to correct the surface. 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 11%. Investigate leaks, damp subfloor spaces 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 without written system approval.
SUBFLOOR / BELOW GRADE	Keep enclosed subfloor spaces and the ground beneath dry, with permanent NCC-compliant ventilation. Below-grade slabs require verified drainage, no active water entry and a vapour-control system approved for the measured condition.

> **DUST, ADHESIVE & EXISTING MATERIALS**
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> 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 · substrate and timber moisture meters · tapping block and pull bar · adhesive-specified notched trowel and spread-rate check · painter's tape/weights or straps only as approved · specified cleaning wipes.

METHOD ONE — GLUE-DOWN

Full bond to the substrate

Use a full-spread, compatible timber-flooring system. The current technical data sheets control substrate preparation, trowel, open time, transfer, cleaning and cure.

1. **Specify one system.** The moisture barrier, primer, leveller, bonded acoustic layer and elastic timber adhesive must be mutually compatible and approved for Rhine and the substrate. Use primer only where the complete system requires it.
2. **Set out and blend.** Confirm direction and balanced first/last rows, then dry-lay from several cartons to agree colour and feature distribution. Maintain at least one board width or 400mm between adjacent end joints, whichever is greater.
3. **Start accurately.** Maintain an 8-15mm movement gap at walls, columns, pipes and fixed items, or any larger written project requirement. Establish a true reference line; do not assume the wall is straight or square.
4. **Control the spread.** Use the adhesive-specified notch and application angle. Spread only the area that can be covered within the stated open and working time. Replace worn trowels; never re-wet or bond into skinned adhesive.
5. **Place and verify.** Press boards into wet adhesive and slide them into position without forcing the joint. Lift boards periodically to confirm the required full, even transfer. Recheck the reference line, stagger, flatness and joint closure continuously.
6. **Hold, clean and cure.** Use tape, weights or straps only as the system permits; do not clamp so hard that adhesive is displaced. Never strike the finish directly. Remove wet residue with the specified cleaner and keep all traffic and loads off until the adhesive permits.

> **UNDERFLOOR HEATING & SHEET SUBSTRATES**
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> Underfloor heating is full-spread glue-down only and must be approved in writing for the Rhine floor, adhesive and complete build-up. Properly embedded hydronic or electric systems may be considered; loose mats or elements directly beneath the boards are not permitted. Commission and thermally cycle the system, test slab moisture, 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. Mechanical assistance over approved sheet is not automatic: use it only under a documented fastener schedule and after locating services.

METHOD TWO — FLOATING

On underlay, glued at the joints

Float only an approved Rhine format, using compatible underlay and a continuous glued tongue-and-groove joint. The floor must remain free to move as one field.

1. **Confirm suitability.** Floating is not permitted over underfloor heating. Confirm the product format, room geometry, run limits, substrate and acoustic requirements before work. Do not install cabinetry or other fixed loads on top of the floor.
2. **Control vapour.** Over concrete or mineral substrates, use 200-micron polyethylene or an approved underlay with an equivalent vapour-retarding layer. If separate, turn the sheet up at edges, overlap at least 200mm and tape every seam vapour-tight.
3. **Install the underlay.** Use only a system compatible with Rhine and any project acoustic requirement. Butt and tape seams as specified; do not overlap or double-layer underlay. Wood substrates require moisture assessment before any vapour layer is added.
4. **Set out, blend and stagger.** Plan balanced first/last rows, maintain 8-15mm at every fixed vertical surface, and dry-lay from several cartons. Maintain at least one board width or 400mm between adjacent end joints, whichever is greater.
5. **Glue every joint.** Use the specified cross-linked D3 PVA. Apply a continuous bead in the side and end groove of every board as directed by the adhesive and flooring instructions; fully close each joint and remove squeeze-out immediately.
6. **Assemble without damage.** Work from a straight reference line. Use a tapping block and pull bar at the board edge; never strike the face. Use straps and painter's tape only as required, and recheck alignment, joint closure and movement clearance frequently.
7. **Respect the cure.** Where starter rows need to set, wait for the joint adhesive's stated time rather than a generic two hours. Cut the final row while retaining the full movement gap; protect the field from traffic and loads until the adhesive permits.

> **FLOATING MEANS FREE TO MOVE**
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> Skirting, scotia, trims, island benches, cabinetry and other fixed items must not pin the floor. Never fill a required movement gap with rigid filler, adhesive or fasteners. Install movement profiles at or before the run limits and wherever compartmentalisation is required.

EXPANSION & COMPLETING

Room to move, then finish the edges

MOVEMENT - FLOATING FLOORS

- Maintain a clear 8-15mm gap at the full perimeter and around columns, pipes, fireplaces, floor outlets, door frames and every fixed vertical obstruction; larger gaps may be required by the project or environment.
- Maximum continuous field: 9m across the board width and 12m along the board length. Install a movement break at or before either limit. Do not exceed a run by increasing the perimeter gap by 1mm per metre.
- Compartmentalise at doorways, narrow passages and complex changes in room geometry where separate areas need independent movement. Fix T/H profiles to the substrate or adjacent construction, never through the floating floor.
- Install permanent cabinetry and fixed joinery before the floor. Do not use rigid caulk, filler, adhesive or fasteners in a required movement gap, and do not bridge building control or structural joints.

> **MOVEMENT - GLUE-DOWN FLOORS**
>
> Maintain 8-15mm at fixed vertical surfaces, or the larger project requirement. Provide intermediate movement allowance where the selected system, building design or service environment requires it, and continue structural/control joints through the finished floor.

COMPLETING - BOTH METHODS

1. **Inspect before cure.** Confirm alignment, joint closure, surface level and every movement clearance while correction is still possible. Remove residue as specified and photograph the completed floor.
2. **Finish the edges.** After the relevant adhesive permits, remove spacers and temporary restraints. Install movement/transition profiles and fix skirting or scotia to the wall only.
3. **Clean and protect.** Vacuum with a hard-floor tool. Do not wet-clean until permitted. Use clean, dry, breathable and non-staining hard protection for ongoing trades; never tape to the finish or trap moisture under plastic.
4. **Return loads carefully.** The selected adhesive instructions control all traffic and furniture timing - do not rely on a generic 10-12/24-hour rule. Lift furniture into place and fit suitable clean felt pads first.
5. **Handover.** Give the owner the records, product/system data sheets, cure restrictions and Care & Maintenance guide. Keep labelled spare boards flat, dry and protected for future repairs.

AFTER INSTALLATION — FOR THE OWNER

A page for the owner

European oak continues to respond to air, water, heat and light after installation. Stable conditions, dry routine care and unobstructed movement protect the floor.

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	Only an approved glue-down installation. Keep the finished timber surface at or below 27°C, raise or lower temperature gradually, and avoid rugs or furniture that trap heat.
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 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 floor and substrate may need to be lifted, assessed and dried before reinstatement.
- Do not disguise a suspected product defect. Agree any finish-compatible touch-up or repair with the owner and supplier before work is done.

As timber is a natural product, colour, pattern and texture vary between boards. Variation is character, not defect.

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 installation system, and stop if any requirement is unmet. Do not knowingly install a board with a visible defect. Installing a defect that was reasonably apparent may affect responsibility for avoidable installation or relaying costs. 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; method; room temperature and RH; substrate type, flatness and moisture test method, locations and results; preparation and vapour-control products; primer, leveller, adhesive, underlay, 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 Plank Installation Guide · Edition 01 · 2026 · Covers Lavanda Oak and Project Oak plank formats.

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