

## Taking the mystery out of a floating floor!

### What is a “floating” floor?

A “fixed” floor is glued or nailed permanently to the subfloor – a ‘floating floor’ the exact opposite. A floating floor uses “gravity,” its sheer mass and the tight UNICLIC join system to hold it down! Floating floors have been used for decades in the Northern Hemisphere and they are now the standard installation method in New Zealand too.

A floating floor is locked together by the UNICLIC system built into each plank. If the flooring has Tongue and Groove (T&G) construction, the tongues and grooves are glued together instead. Floating floors are always laid over an especially designed underlay, such as our Accord Premium Underlay which provides a layer of IXPE Crush Proof foam between the floor and subfloor.

### If it's not glued or nailed what holds it down?

The weight or mass of the planks are the first part of the answer and secondly the flooring is held by trims around the edge of the room. These are often the skirting boards, but may also be colour matched aluminium trims at doorways and full length windows. In the case of kitchens, toe-kicks are left off when the kitchen is installed (or removed for a retro-fit), then the toe kicks are re-installed which holds the flooring down under the cabinetry. Under-cutting of door trims and sometimes the panel ends which go to the floor is usual practice.

### What are the advantages of floating my floor?

The advantages are that the floating floor method allows for the slight expansion and contraction that occurs naturally in the flooring according to environmental conditions. All timber and bamboo floors are installed with a perimeter expansion gap - this is concealed by skirtings and aluminium floor trims.

It's also quick to install as there is usually no glue and has a comfortable feel that is easier on the legs than hard floors such as tiles or glued down floors.

### Can it be repaired if there is any damage like a flood?

Yes, damage to a floated floor is easier to repair than a glued down floor.

### Is there anything to avoid?

Yes, heavy fittings like kitchen islands should be supported directly on the subfloor, so that the slight natural movement in the floor can occur.

### What order should I install my floor and new kitchen?

If you are having a new kitchen installed make sure your kitchen company are aware of the flooring thickness 14mm + 2mm for underlay and allow for this. Pre-notching of any cabinet panels at production level is preferable to undercutting onsite. Give the kitchen company an offcut of the flooring and underlay to help them template panels, etc. Put the kitchen base units in first, with heavy cabinets supported directly on the subfloor to distribute weight. Leave the toe-kicks off until after the floor is installed. “Waterfall” bench ends may need to be templated after the floor is installed.

For existing kitchens ask the kitchen company to come and remove the toe-kicks, then adjust and re-install them after the floor is laid.

### Will I notice the floor moving at all?

You may perhaps notice the floor give very, very, very slightly as weight is transferred from the planks to the resilient underlay. We specify only high quality crushproof 3-in-1 Accord Premium Underlay. Movement on thin laminate floors which are typically only 6-8mm thick is much more noticeable. Our Bamboo and Oak floors are at least 14mm - 15mm thick, so movement is not an issue.

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