

# Lay a Laminate Floor

**SKILL LEVEL**



To complete this project, you'll need accurate measuring and cutting skills.

Floormaster laminate floors are precision-made, making them easy to work with.

## **SAFETY FIRST**

Always wear a face mask and goggles when cutting laminate flooring. Ensure children and animals are out of the way.

## **INTRODUCTION**

Laminate flooring can transform any room with its warmth and beauty. Simply choose from our range of LOC or Tongue and Groove laminate flooring and give your room a facelift by following these step by step instructions

## **2 - How Much Will I Need?**

### **How much underlay will I need?**

To work out the amount of underlay needed for your floor, measure the length and width of the room. Multiply the two numbers together - this figure will tell you how many square metres the underlay needs to cover.

**For example: if your room is 4 metres long and 3 metres wide,  $4 \times 3 = 12$  square metres. You will need to buy underlay to cover 12 square metres of flooring.**

Never be tempted to buy less than you really need and allow an extra 5% for cutting.

### **How much laminate flooring will I need?**

Remembering the length and width of your room, use the tables below to calculate the number of packs of laminate flooring you will need.

**For example, if your room is 6 metres long and 5 metres wide and you have chosen to use Floormaster 900 LOC laminate flooring, you will need to buy 15 packs of flooring to cover the floor.**

FLOORMASTER 900 LOC (Allowing approx. 5% wastage)					
L \ W	3m	4m	5m	6m	7m
3m	5	6	8	9	10
4m	6	8	10	12	14
5m	8	10	12	15	17
6m	9	12	15	18	21
7m	10	14	17	21	24

**Floormaster 900 LOC**  
LOC laminate flooring  
requiring no adhesive.

- Can be fitted anywhere except bathrooms and humid areas
- Resistant against cigarette burns, fading, stains, impact and scratching
- Available in wood effects and coloured

FLOORMASTER 1600 LOC (Allowing approx. 5% wastage)					
L \ W	3m	4m	5m	6m	7m
3m	5	7	9	10	12
4m	7	9	11	13	16
5m	9	11	14	17	19
6m	10	13	17	20	23
7m	12	16	19	23	27

**Floormaster 1600 LOC**  
LOC laminate flooring  
requiring no adhesive.

- Water resistant, so can be fitted anywhere **including bathrooms**
- Resistant against cigarette burns, fading, stains, impact and scratching
- Available in wood effects and coloured

FLOORMASTER TILE LOC (Allowing approx. 5% wastage)					
L \ W	3m	4m	5m	6m	7m
3m	6	8	9	11	13
4m	8	10	12	15	17
5m	9	12	15	18	21
6m	11	15	18	22	25
7m	13	17	21	26	30

**Floormaster Tile LOC**  
LOC laminate flooring  
requiring no adhesive.

- Water resistant, so can be fitted anywhere

**including bathrooms**

- Resistant against cigarette burns, fading, stains, impact and scratching
- Ceramic tile effect, available in a range of colours

**Extras**

You should not fit your laminate floor right to the edge of the room. You will need to allow a 10mm gap for it to contract and expand with the room temperature. Use fitting wedges (shaped pieces of plastic), included in the fitting kits, to create this 10mm expansion gap. When the floor has been laid, the wedges are removed and the gaps can be covered with skirting or laminate flooring edging trim for a professional looking finish.

Measure round the perimeter of the room (or add the length and width measurements of your room together and multiply by two) to find the length of beading needed to cover the extension gap.

**3 - Laminate Flooring Basics**

Laminate flooring is laid as a loose, 'floating' floor. The boards are not nailed to the floor but simply joined to each other without the need for nails or screws. This means laminate flooring can be laid on top of most surfaces, including timber or concrete, as long as it's dry, clean, and level.

**Choose carefully**

In bathrooms or other areas of high humidity, ensure you select a suitable grade of flooring. The Floormaster 1600 LOC and Floormaster Tile LOC ranges are water resistant and suitable for bathrooms where the flooring may get wet.

And remember, inappropriate floor covering is always a false economy, especially where there is a lot of foot traffic or other wear and tear.

**Condition the laminate flooring**

Before you lay your laminate flooring, it must be conditioned to the room's atmosphere. If this is not done it could warp (become twisted and bent out of shape).

To condition the flooring:

- Make sure it's kept in its original packaging

- Put it in the room where the floor will be laid (ideal temperature of 18°C to 20°C)
- Lie the pack horizontally
- Leave the flooring in this position for at least 48 hours

#### **4 - Sub-Floor Preparation**

The floor you intend to lay the laminate flooring on top of must be dry, firm and level. A floor is considered level if the deviation in height is less than 1mm over a distance of 1 linear metre. Sheets of fibre-board can be used to level minor deviations and they have additional acoustic and thermal properties. Deviations above this must be levelled out before laying the new floor. The following sections advise how this should be done, depending on the type of sub-floor you have.

##### **Wooden sub-floor preparation**

- Remove any protruding nails or tacks to ensure you have a smooth surface.
- If you are laying your laminate flooring on an upper floor, re-fix any loose boards using screws rather than nails as hammering might damage the ceiling plaster below.
- Use a detector to identify if there is any underlying pipework or electricity cables so that you can avoid these areas when driving in nails or screws.
- Smooth any high spots in the floor using a plane, and fill hollow patches with levelling compound (sometimes called screed) to make the floor level.

##### **Concrete sub-floor preparation**

Some concrete sub-floors have raised 'high' spots of concrete that can be chipped away with a bolster, but the easiest way to achieve a smooth surface is with levelling compound (screed). Simply mix this in a bucket with water, then pour and spread with a trowel. It will then set to a level finish.

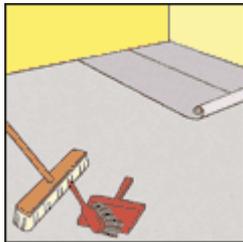
We recommend that newly laid concrete or screed be allowed to dry at a rate of 1mm per day prior to fitting laminate flooring, i.e. 50mm screed = 50 days.

##### **Damp-proof membrane**

A damp-proof membrane should be fitted to stop any moisture from damaging the new boards. This is in addition to a damp course which may already be present in the sub-floor. The following sub-floors require a damp proof membrane of 0.2mm thick:

- concrete
- vinyl tiles
- asphalt
- quarry tiles

## **Underlay**



Once you are sure the sub-floor is clean, dry and level, you will need to install underlay prior to laying your laminate flooring. There are three types of underlay available:

- Floormaster Laminate Flooring Underlay - can be used with all laminate floors
- Wood Fibre Underlay - has extra acoustic and thermal properties
- Combilay - laminate floor underlay and damp proofing all in one

## **Doors**

Check that your doors will clear the new floor. Place a board of the laminate flooring you have chosen to lay, together with any underlay you are using, on top of your sub-floor and mark off how much of the door (if any) needs to be planed away.

**While you have easy access to your sub-floor, carry out any plumbing tasks or electrical installations you have planned.**

## **Cutting laminate flooring**

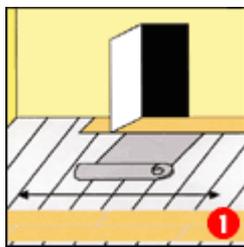
You will need to cut your laminate flooring to fit the shape of your room, remembering to leave space for items such as pipework.

Use a power circular saw with a carbide toothed blade and cut from the non-decorative underside of the boards to avoid chipping. Alternatively, use a hand saw and cut from the top of the boards. Ensure you cut the planks carefully - they are strong and durable but may chip during cutting if care is not taken.

## 5 - Laying a LOC laminate floor

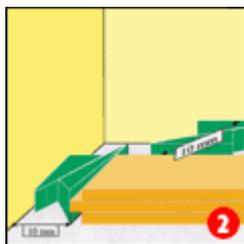
LOC laminate flooring simply 'locs' together, so no adhesive is required. It is quick and easy to install and can be re-laid up to six times - but remember that care should always be taken when doing this.

### Choose the direction



Most manufacturers recommend flooring is laid lengthways, along the room, running the boards towards the window if there is one. If you're laying over floorboards, lay the laminate boards at 90° (right angles) across them to reinforce the joints (1).

### Laying the first row



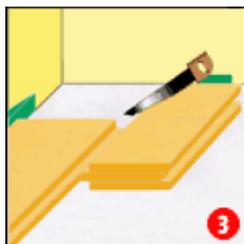
Lay the first board with the Groove or small tongue against the wall. Two spacers should be used to allow for the 10mm expansion gap between the boards and the wall (2).

Check alignment and squaring.

Lay the next board against the short side and fix into place. Once fixed be very careful if separating the joints as

this may result in damage.

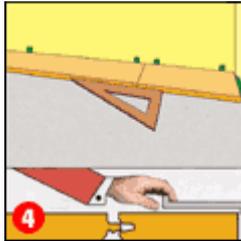
### The end of the row



To measure the correct length of board to use at the end of a row (allowing for the 10mm gap), place the final board next to the existing flooring with the tongues facing each other. The groove end should be pushed up to the spacers against the wall (3).

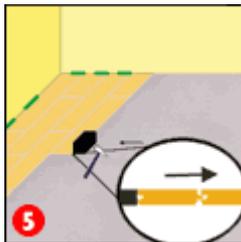
Cut the required length and turn the board so that the groove and tongue are together.

## **Fitting the boards**



Check that the first row is positioned correctly and the spacers are in the right place.  
Insert the tongue of the first board at an angle to 'loc' the boards firmly together (4).

## **Starting a new row**

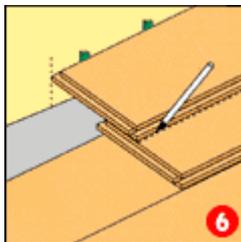


When starting to lay a new row of flooring, make sure that the first piece you are going to lay is at least 30cm in length.

Remember to stagger the joints (creating a 'brick wall' effect) when laying the boards (5) and tap them together using a tapping block - the long side first, followed by the short

side.

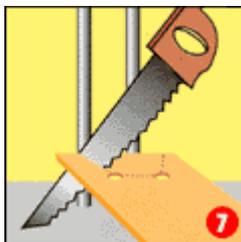
## **The final row**



When you come to lay the last row, place a loose board on top of the previously laid row, then place another board on top of this with the tongue touching the wall.

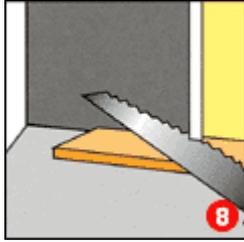
Mark the board underneath so that it shows the required width (6) and cut along this line before fitting it.

## **Pipes**



If you need to fit your flooring around pipes, start by measuring the diameter of the pipe then drill a hole, 20mm larger than the pipe diameter, in the laminate board. Saw a section out of the board which goes through the hole (7) so that it can be laid around the pipe and replace the sawn out section and glue in to place.

## **Mouldings and skirtings**



You may need to make minor adjustments to door mouldings and skirtings to ensure your new flooring fits comfortably.

Place a piece of the flooring face down on to any underlay you are using and saw the moulding above this board at the base (8).

Fit the floorboard under the moulding, remembering to leave a 10mm expansion gap.

## **Finishing**

When you have laid your floor, remove the fitting wedges. If you are using floor edging to hide the expansion gaps, pin or glue it to the wall or skirting board (not the floor). Use a nail punch to drive the pin heads below the surface. Cover holes made for pipes with pipe covers and glue into place.

To restore your floor's shine, go over the surface with a broom or vacuum cleaner (with the brushes down). To add extra shine to your newly installed floor, use a laminate floor cleaner.

Laminate flooring repair kits are available should your new floor suffer any damage. Please refer to the product instructions for advice on ongoing care and maintenance.

If you require additional advice on fitting a laminate floor, please contact the Floormaster Helpdesk on 01276 410200.