

**BT Strand T&G Installation Instructions**

Please read the following instructions before starting the installation

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**Applications**

BT Strand is an overlay flooring system and can be installed on concrete, tiles, existing timber floors, plywood or particle board as long as the floor is structurally sound, clean, level and dry. BT Strand is solid strandwoven bamboo with a Tongue and Groove profile and is designed to be installed as a direct stick floor.

BT Strand is recommended for internal use only, and should not be installed in wet areas like bathrooms or laundries or in external environments exposed to the elements.

**Pre installation**

**Inspection**

Please carefully inspect all material before installation. Any flooring installed with obvious visual or structural defects will not be warranted.

**Acclimatisation**

The building should be roofed and enclosed with the temperature and humidity as close as possible to in-service conditions including the use of air conditioning. Flooring should be delivered at least 2-5 days prior to installation and stored internally. The boxes should be opened to allow the BT Strand flooring to adjust to normal room temperature and humidity in the room it is being installed. The shrink wrap should be removed and the boards stacked off the ground to allow for complete air circulation. Avoid installing BT Strand in very damp or humid conditions. Temperature and humidity of the installation area should be consistent with normal year round living conditions for at least a week prior to installation. Air conditioning should be running at least 2 days before and during installation (especially in commercial fit outs).

**Job site conditions**

It is the responsibility of the installer/owner to determine that the job site conditions are suitable and environmentally acceptable for storage of BT Strand prior to installation as well as the commencement and completion of installation. Eco Flooring Systems declines any responsibility for failure resulting from or connected with sub floor, sub surface, or job site damage, or deficiencies after flooring has been installed.

Pre-finished BT Strand should only be installed in the final stages of completion of a construction project with all trades people having left the site. All work involving water or moisture should be completed prior to installation (cement work, plastering, painting, plumbing, and tiling etc). Should this not be the case, installation should be delayed to avoid damage to the coating of the BT Strand.

Before commencing, ensure that the floor will fit under doors and skirting boards. It may be necessary to remove the skirting boards to allow a suitable expansion gap around the perimeter, or to trim doors and architraves.

Note: Eco Flooring Systems makes no warranty or guarantee of the quality of the chosen installer's work. Eco Flooring Systems disclaims all liability for any errors or improprieties in the installation of its product by an installer.

### **Subfloor Preparation**

It is vitally important to ensure that the substrate on which the flooring is placed, is dry and in no way subject to the ingress of moisture. While BT Strand is water resistant against light spillages or occasional over zealous mopping, the aluminium oxide coating is not vapour proof. Water vapour from the soil will saturate the sub floor area and if there is inadequate cross ventilation or the flooring is exposed to moisture, the water vapour will rise upwards through the floor into the bamboo flooring. This will cause the flooring to expand and may cause buckling.

***It is vitally important to check the following points before laying your floor:***

- Good ventilation with all sub floor areas having adequate air vents to all external walls (min size recommended is 230mm x 170mm x 2000mm apart)
- Minimum clearance of 400mm from the ground to the underside of the sub floor (crawl space)
- Adequate cross ventilation in internal dwarf walls (full brick construction) ensuring these walls are ventilated in the same manner as the external walls. If subfloor is open to the elements on the underside, additional protection may be required on the underside of the subfloor.
- Level and smooth sub floor. Level flat to 5mm per 3m radius.
- Surfaces must be clean and dry, free of dirt, wax, oil, paint, curing agents or other contaminants that would interfere with the adhesive bond

### **Timber floor, particle board, tiles**

Remove all existing floor coverings prior to installation. Ensure the surface is dry and thoroughly clean. Lay a straight edge 1.5m long to the existing floor and check that no part of the surface is more than 2-3 mm below the straight edge. Sand flat or fill as required. If the surface is particularly uneven, then we recommend a plywood underlay is used. Sand flat any raised edges. The boards should be laid crossways on an existing timber floor. If installing over tiles, ensure surfaces are crazed and prepared to ensure proper adhesion of the glue.

### **Concrete**

As in the case above, ensure the concrete floor is dry and clean with a moisture content not exceeding 5.5%. Refer AS1884. Generally, concrete slabs younger than 60 days are too wet and installation is not recommended. A suspended concrete slab that is well ventilated is considered to be a very suitable substrate if dry and clean as required. On ground concrete slabs are rarely dry enough to apply any pre-coated flooring system and must be treated with an epoxy moisture and vapour barrier coating. In addition to testing the moisture content with a commercial moisture meter, carry out the following tests:

- Check that the membrane under the slab is continuous and covers the edges
- Remove any dirt that is piled against the slab
- Ensure that the drainage around the slab is adequate

### **Moisture Barrier**

We recommend that all installations use a suitable moisture barrier – either a high quality epoxy moisture barrier (eg Bostik Moisture Barrier or Sika MB), or a 2 in one moisture barrier underlay. If using Builder’s polythene sheeting under ply on the subfloor, tape all joints with waterproof tape to ensure a continuous seal. Fold the sheeting up the walls of the laying area by 50mm. If subfloor is open to the elements on the underside, additional protection may be required on the underside of the subfloor.

### **Leveling**

Uneven or damaged surfaces must be repaired with a cement leveling compound, following the manufacturer’s instructions (EG Bostik Ultralevel SL) or use a plywood underlay (10mm min). Leave a 10mm gap between each sheet of ply and the walls. Secure plywood with corrosion proof concrete nails or screw fix with masonry spaghetti. Seal all drill holes. The ply must be fixed securely with nails at least 300mm apart. Inadequate fixing will result in your floor having a “drummy” sound when you walk on it

### **Installing the Floor – Glue Down Method**

We recommend using a premium eco friendly wood flooring adhesive. For glue down applications that are on or below grade (directly on concrete slab) a moisture barrier MUST be used.

#### Materials needed

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Adhesive such as Bostik Solvent free Ultraset or Regupol one part Polyurethane Acoustic) Carefully follow the manufacturer’s instructions provided with the adhesive</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Notched trowel – recommend v-notches @ 5mm centres</li> </ul> |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Saw, tape measure, tapping block, 10mm spacer, hammer, weights</li> </ul>   | <p><i>Recognised brand of sealer to coat any cut surfaces (eg Bona, Peerless)</i></p>                  |

Flooring is usually laid square with the space and parallel to its longest dimension. Place a 10mm spacer against the starting wall or skirting board. Using a 5mm notched trowel spread the adhesive evenly over the prepared surface. Only spread enough glue for 3 or 4 board widths at a time. From the starting wall, place the groove first and lay each board carefully and firmly. Place each tongue firmly into the corresponding groove of the next board. BT Strand is laid in a brick pattern. Check every 4-5 boards to ensure that you are square to the starting wall. It is a good idea to mark a line on your underlay or sub-floor to line up the joints. Make sure the floor is adequately weighted to secure the floor while adhesive is setting. Continue this process until the floor is complete. Remember to leave a 10mm gap at each wall surface or edge. Do not walk on floor for at least 24 hours to allow adhesive to set.

***Important: Do not allow glue to penetrate through the tongue in/on to the surface. If this occurs, then wipe off immediately with a turps or methylated spirits covered rag.***

### **Direction of laying**

Ideally, the floor should be installed parallel to the longest wall. In a square room, the natural light source should fall along the length of the boards. When installing over existing timber boards, the new floor should be laid at 90 degrees to the existing floorboards.

***Important: Work out of multiple boxes.*** Bamboo is a natural product with natural colour variations. While our quality standards ensure the flooring is separated by shade at the factory, shade differences between cartons may be noticeable. Mixing cartons creates a random, natural shade effect.

***Important: When trimming or cutting the BT Strand boards, make sure you coat the cut surface with a recognised brand of sealer. Take special precautions and seal side and ends near bathroom or laundry doors, windows and entries that could be subject to water ingress.***

### **Expansion gaps**

Because the humidity of a room can vary due to differences between seasons, the floor must be able to expand and contract in all directions. It is critical that an expansion gap of 10-15mm is allowed around the full perimeter of the floor ie: at all walls and fixed vertical obstructions eg kitchen islands, pipes and columns. Allow additional expansion gaps for floors wider than 6m.

### **Completing the installation**

Once adhesive has set according to glue manufacturer's instructions, remove all spacers. Fix the skirting boards, edge profiles to the wall or base floor, never to the floor itself to allow for the floor to move underneath the skirting board. Finish pipes with silicone. In places where no profiles or skirting can be used, the expansion should be filled with silicone. Silicon should also be inserted in to the expansion at the perimeter where the flooring may be exposed to excess moisture eg dishwasher, sinks, entrance to bathrooms and laundries.