



To be installed floating, glued down or nailed down?

Is it a free choice or are there real arguments for each alternative?

Boen's engineered hardwood flooring is industrially manufactured with prefinished surface in accordance with DIN 280 part 2 and can be installed floating, glued down or nailed down.

In reality all methods are generally accepted by Boen for the majority of their 3-ply products, with the exception of the Boflex P1 sports-floor, which is made purely for floating installation. The other exception is the 2-ply products, Classic and Traffic which are only made for glue down and nail down installation.

Which method is to be recommended? There are a large variety of 3-ply products on the market, based on varying methods of construction. This means that there is no simple answer to this question.

A lot can be said for the floating installation, but at least as much can be said for glue down installation. While the traditional method of nail down is also recommended in certain circumstances.

The advantages of the floating installation are as follows:  
It can be used for installation on all kinds of sub-flooring, including thin carpet, old loose concrete or concrete sub-flooring with a variable/uncertain moisture content. Prior to installation, a simple levelling of the sub floor can be done. Sub-floor requirements are less critical when using the floating system than those required for glue down installation.

Installation is easy for both craftsmen and Do-It-Yourselfers alike. The quantity of adhesive used is considerably reduced as it is only required for the connection between tongue and groove.

The visual effect and performance of the floor is more even because a floating floor appears as a single sheet and any expansion/contraction only occurs at the perimeter of the floor.

While on the other hand a nailed or glued down floor can experience individual expansion/contraction of each board and in dry climates this can lead to small gaps between each board.

It is absolutely essential to have an even sub floor. If the sub floor is uneven, it could lead to damage of the tongue and groove connection. This normally leads to gaps, which expose the wood to damage from moisture which again can cause discoloration of the wood.

The step-sound is kept within the room and does not carry to apartments/rooms below.

It is much easier to remove the floor, should this be necessary.

The advantage of the glue down installation are as follows:  
Craftsmanship has improved greatly with respect to the glue down method of installation.

One main advantage is the total stability under point-pressure, e.g. very heavy furniture, heavy closets, pianos, etc. The function of the tongue and groove which hold the boards together is of lesser importance. This means that a glued down hardwood floor does not display movement or weakness.

The step-sound is considerably reduced. The sound is absorbed by the sub-floor. If sub-floor heating is installed, a glued down product will give less resistance to the transfer of heat compared to a floating system. It is however necessary to adhere to certain rules where sub-floor heating is installed.

Relative humidity does not have the same immediate effect on a glued down floor as with floating floors.

From a designers point of view, a glue down solution is often recommended when installing floors through narrow doorways, on stairs and in adjoining rooms without the need for doorsills and other types of moulding.

Sanding and repairs of old glued down floors is simple. Replacement of staves is also easy when the boards are glued to the sub-floor.

A glued down floor will perform satisfactorily, because the floor is fixed to the sub floor. From the long life cyclops angle, it means a reduction in the utilisation/exploitation of hardwood and can as such be included in Boen's Environment Certificate.

With regards to adhesive, there are many solutions. In general the solvent based- and the polyurethane adhesive are used for critical sub floor conditions. The water based dispersion adhesives today are of high quality, and these products are being used more and more. Boen has a full program of primers and adhesives for glue down installation.

## BOEN PARKETT