



Construction Site Conditions

Having more than 25 years' experience of building and major construction sites we think we have seen it all!

In fact we know there are things that we can learn about and situations that will still astonish us. Some examples are listed here and some simple rules to follow are listed below. There will be other documents in this section of the Library as we pull together more research and experiences.

Installation of Wood Flooring:

Cleaning: This is just a guide to help reduce dust and grit that can damage wood floors in any construction but large high rise blocks in particular

There are certain tools that should never be allowed on site, one in particular is a **BRUSH**. Builders love brushes as it is easy to use, can be left anywhere and they say they have cleaned the floor! In fact with a brush all they do is re-distribute the dust and grit particles.

The most effective cleaning tool on site when installing wood floors is an industrial vacuum cleaner with a soft brush head and secure dust bag.

Protecting the Floor after installation: We always insist that if other trades are to follow the floor installation that a 2mm to 3mm breathable membrane is put on the floor with a 3mm to 4mm thick hardboard cover fully taped on top. The dust will still get through but at least it should not damage the floor and be susceptible to plumbers and carpenters cutting things on the floor.

Template Covers: What we mean by this is if you are fitting wardrobes or kitchen units on top of a fitted floor you should get the floor layers to cut this footprint shape before taping up the cardboard so that it is a simple job to remove just that part of the protection and not get the rest ripped up. Below are examples of what we have seen on too many construction sites especially modern tower blocks.

- a) Plumbers cutting and fitting pipes on an unprotected wood floor
- b) Corridors that have still not been finished having dirt and dust everywhere as they are communal areas for everyone to walk through and doors left open or unsealed with dust swirling around which will contain grit which will damage any wood floor in these types of conditions.
- c) Builders and plasterers completing snagging work on an unprotected floor.

A clean site is a safe site and there is no excuse for leaving dust and grit floating around, proved the right tools for the job to be completed professionally.

The above are just a few examples of what should not happen and the **picture below** shows how **not to protect a floor** and what can happen. Luckily this was an unfinished parquet block so it was easy to sand and clean off afterwards.

If it had been a pre-finished floor the damage would have been extensive.



Using Corex or a plastic membrane can make the floor “sweat” and here the moisture content has gone from 8% to 24% which is why there are black spots on the floor.

