

FAQ's

I want a wooden floor - what options do I have?

1. Traditional solid timber floors (T&G floorboards like Rimu or Matai)
2. Engineered timber floors (eg. Karelia or Royalplank)

NB. Neither a laminate nor bamboo floor is a wooden floor!



What is Karelia?

Karelia is a pre-finished, engineered timber floor.

What does that mean: "a pre-finished engineered timber floor"?

An engineered timber floor is made out of several layers of timber. The top layer is the actual "wear layer" you use once installed. The key advantage, as opposed to solid timber, is that these cross-glued layers of timber make Karelia more stable. Karelia does not cup or bow and is not as vulnerable when it comes to moisture (eg. change in humidity).

Furthermore, Karelia comes "pre-finished". That means the finish has already been applied in the factory in Scandinavia. There is no sanding, dust, fumes or waiting for polyurethane to dry after Karelia has been installed. No sand dust or smell! **Once Karelia is installed you can walk on it straight away!**

What is a laminate?

A laminate is a fake timber floor. It is a photograph or print of a wood floor which is pressed/glued on an MDF or HDF (woodchip) base. The surface is then finished with a clear resin to give the appearance of a wood floor. This is the same principle a lot of kitchen units are made of. The print repeats itself on a regular basis, so you get the same board over and over again.

You cannot sand a laminate floor and it has to get installed as a floating floor.

Karelia is an authentic wood floor made of 100% timber. Each floorboard comes from a different part of a tree and therefore each board looks different in pattern and colour.

What is the thickness and wear layer?

The total thickness of the Karelia pre-finished hardwood floor is 14mm. The wear/top layer is European norm: 3.5mm +/-10% tolerance (hardwood layer of your choice). Middle (8mm) and bottom (2mm) layers are cross glued and made of Finish spruce (softwood similar to pine).

"Such a thin wear layer – why would I go for that?"

Please note: the wear layer of a traditional solid timber floor - that is what is **above** the tongue & groove - is thicker (approx. 7mm). However, after sanding a solid timber floor, you end up with approx. 5mm wear layer to start off.

Karelia's wear layer is just less than 4mm, so there is not much of a difference in the wear layer.

Do all products cost the same?

No. Every product has a different price. The price of the flooring depends on:

- Design chosen (Single Plank = dearer; 3-Strip = cheaper)
- Timber species
- Square meterage
- Current exchange rate

Can I re-sand Karelia?

Yes, up to three times.

Will the timber change colour after installation?

All authentic wooden floors age or change colour when exposed to sunlight. Please note that New Zealand has the highest UV light in the world. However, you do not usually notice the colour change when seeing your Karelia floor every day.

We do not recommend covering your Karelia floor with rugs, etc, for the first couple of months though, as this is the time the timber ages the most.

Please note: everything changes colour when exposed to sunlight: curtains, fabrics, carpets, vinyl, etc.

Do the individual boards look different?

Yes, they do. Remember: Karelia is an authentic wooden floor. Every board comes from a different part of a tree.

That means some boards might have knots, and some won't. Some boards take on a stain or oil finish differently to other.

Never make a purchase decision solely based on a small sample. As a service, we can email you installation images of the products we offer. That way you get a better idea about the overall selection/appearance.

Does Karelia mark and scratch?

Yes, every authentic timber floor does. This is part of the character of a wooden floor and makes it authentic.

Please read our *maintenance guide* for tips on minimizing scratches.

Do you offer installation?

Yes we do!

Due to our experience, and the fact that we've been around for a long time, we have a wide installer network throughout New Zealand.

Please note: we only work together with professional installation partners, as we can't justify getting a top notch product installed by a cowboy.

Can I install Karelia myself and save money?

Of course you can!

Well, minimum skills are required, but we have had people working in IT install Karelia themselves, so it can't be that hard, can it? ;-)

Have a look at our installation guide and judge for yourself.

We promise we will support you as best as we can with full technical support, advice on the right accessories, and tips & tricks on the installation, so you get a stunning result.

Can I glue down Karelia?

Yes, you can. Karelia can get installed as a floating floor installation or glued direct onto the substrate.

Quality Floors' recommended installation method is glue down, especially in larger, open plan areas.

Please call 09 443 0747 and we will explain this to you in detail.

Can I install Karelia over vinyl or tiles?

Yes, Karelia can be installed as a floating floor over vinyl or tiles (over foam underlay), but the subfloor must be level to industry standard.

What about the environment?

All timbers Karelia uses are from sustainable sources (PEFC certified). For further information please see Environment/Sustainability.

Is Karelia suitable for underfloor heating?

Yes! As a matter of fact, Karelia is actually **designed** for underfloor heating due to its special construction.

An exceptionally comfortable environment is achieved when Karelia is combined with underfloor heating, since wood flooring distributes the heat evenly into the air of the room across the entire surface of the flooring.

Karelia is suitable for underfloor heating with **both** installation methods (glue down or floating floor).

Please see our underfloor heating sheet.

Is Karelia suitable for wet areas?

No! Karelia wood floors are not suitable for wet areas such as bathrooms and laundries, where there is condensation and higher levels of humidity and dampness.

Karelia is suitable for kitchens providing extra care is taken:

- Wipe up spills straight away
- Use professional plumbers to fit appliances
- Most important of all, buy **quality** appliances

How do I clean my Karelia floor?

The main rules are:

- **Do not** use excessive water!
- **Never ever use a steam mop!**
- Vacuum or dry mop the floor whenever needed. The floor should be dry after 1 minute

Please read our maintenance guide. We recommend special cleaning kits for your Karelia floor - please enquire.

Do you offer solid timber floors as well?

Yes and No...

Not a traditional solid timber floor as such, but an unfinished European oak engineered timber floor (Royalplank) with a total thickness of 21mm and a wear layer of 6mm. Please see www.royalplank.co.nz for further information.

Pros & Cons of Flooring Options

	Pros	Cons
Engineered timber floors (e.g. Karelia)		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Authentic wood product • 3 layer construction; top layer hardwood of your choice 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Re-sandable (3 times) • Ideal DIY product as comes pre-finished • Very stable due to construction (no cupping) • Glue down OR floating floor installation possible 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Marks and scratches (gives your home character) • Timber will age (colour change in first months will appear as it is a natural product)
Solid timber (traditional floorboards)		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Authentic wood product • Block of timber all the way through 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Re-sandable • Warm, natural flooring option 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Marks and scratches (gives your home character) • Dust will settle in joints • Higher installation costs compared to all pre-finished options due to sand and polyurethaning after installation
Laminates		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Plastic product • Photocopy of a timber floor pressed on an MDF core 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cost effective • Hard wearing • Scratch resistant 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Not re-sandable • Board repetition (exact image repeats) • Easy to chip (only option is replacing) • Colder on feet than any timber floor
Bamboo		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Grass from Asia • Comes as 3-layer construction or solid bamboo 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Quickly renewable • Cost effective 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Only 1 natural colour option • Hard to re-sand due to nature of bamboo (fibre) • Marks and scratches • Scratches show as white due to ceramic lacquer used • Very high energy consumption during production