

## Floor types - from Solid to Veneer

---

We know from experience some are confused by the terminology some suppliers/retailers and (DIY)forum members use to describe a floor type.

### What's in a name?

The most confusion is about laminated flooring, used by DIY-ers (and even some suppliers) for both **Melamine Laminated** Flooring (the 'plastic' – Melamine' stuff with only a photo-copy of wood) and for Wood-Engineered and Wood-Veneered flooring (flooring with a solid wood top layer between 0.2mm and 6 – 8mm with a crossed-backing of pine/plywood or mdf).

In the (English) wood-flooring profession laminate is used to describe the Melamine flooring (like Pergo, Quick-step etc).

The term **Wood-Veneer** is used when the solid wooden top layer has a thickness between 0.2 to 2mm

**Wood-Engineered** covers the rest of the 'engineered' flooring where the solid wooden top layer is more than 2mm thick (and can go up to even 8mm), but has a crossed-backing of a different material than the top layer.

**Real wood** is sometimes used to describe Wood-Engineered and Wood-Veneer flooring as opposed to the Melamine Laminated flooring.

**Miss-use of Parquet term.** Where in the mainland of Europe Parquet (Parket) means wooden flooring (any wooden flooring, from solid, wood-engineered to wood block design patterns like herringbone) in the UK the term Parquet is commonly used to describe the latter: wood blocks in any design pattern.

We have noticed however that some manufacturers and retailers use the term Parquet in the UK to promote the 3-strip Wood-Engineered (or 3-strip Wood-Veneer) flooring, which does lead to disappointed customers expecting a real (solid) 'old-fashioned' parquet floor instead of the T&G (or click) boards they are in fact purchasing.

### Solid T&G floorboards

These boards are made out of the **same material** (Oak, Maple etc) with Tongue and Groove on all four sides (although some manufacturers/saw-mills still create them only on the two long sides).

Several wooden strips glued together (2- or 3-strip) or a plank composed out of two or three layers of the same material are also part of this group and are usual called '**composed floorboards**'.

Solid boards come either unfinished, where you can choose your own kind of finish (i.e. lacquer, varnish,

HardWaxOil or several layers of hard wax), or pre-finished. Some unfinished floors need sanding with 100 or even 80 grit abrasives before the finish can be applied.

Wood You Like's unfinished floors normally come filled and sanded.

Most solid boards have bevelled edges on the long sides, some even on all four sides.

The maximum width of a solid board is 10 times the thickness of the board (i.e. 20mm thick is maximum 200mm wide); wider and there is a higher risk of cupping.

A solid board can be installed:

**floating (glueing the T&G)** if the area is not wider than 5 - 6 meters and done by a professional floor fitter who knows what he/she is doing

**glued down** using flexible adhesive and a correct notched trowel - as long as your concrete/creed floor is sound and level (the weakest link is the quality of the concrete/screed!)

**or nailed down** directly on joist (if the thickness of the board is 18 or thicker and the joists are not further apart than 35 - 40 cm heart to heart). If using this latter method make sure you are supplied long enough planks because one plank must connect with minimal three joists.

Solid boards can be installed in all rooms/areas were there is **no risk of excessive moist** (e.g. bathrooms, en-suites, utility-rooms or kitchens) or rapid changes in temperature (conservatories).

Wood You Like doesn't recommend Solid floorboards to be installed on underfloor heating.

## Wood-Engineered boards

This type of floor has a Solid Wood top layer with a (crossed) backing of one or two other types of material, like pine, MDF, HDF, OSB, cork or plywood. Some manufactures have started to introduce the click-system, but most still come with Tongue and Groove on all four sides.

The thickness of the Solid top layer ranges from 0.6mm (what Wood You Like calls '**veneer**') to 3.6mm (standard on most products) to even 6mm (like the Duoplank boards).

The 'standard' Wood-Engineered board is a 2- or 3-strip, but more and more manufacturers have introduced the full plank with bevelled edges that, once installed has the same appearance as a solid plank.

Most Wood-Engineered floors come pre-finished lacquered or varnished, but the demand in the U.K. for oil-finish is on the increase. Some manufacturers even supply unfinished Wood-Engineered full planks.

Wood-Engineered floors can be installed:

**floating (glueing the T&G)** if the area is not wider than 10 - 11 meter

**glued down** using flexible adhesive and a correct notched trowel - as long as your concrete/screed floor is sound and level (the weakest link is the quality of the concrete/screed!)

**or nailed down** directly on joists (if the thickness of the board is 18 or thicker and the joists are not further apart than 35 - 40 cm heart to heart). If using this latter method make sure you are supplied long enough boards because one board must connect with minimal three joists.

Wood-Engineered floors can be installed **in all rooms/areas**, most of them also in kitchens, utility-rooms and conservatories because of the increase stability of the (crossed) backing. Wood You Like doesn't recommend W-E with MDF backing to be used in bathrooms/en-suites.

Most of the Wood-Engineered floors are suitable for installing on underfloor heating. The Duoplank Oak range is guaranteed on underfloor heating.

## Parquet flooring

Originally this name is given to unfinished **Solid planks/strips/tiles without T&G**, which are either glued and nailed on a plywood or chipboard sub floor or glued directly on a concrete/screed underfloor (like mosaic tiles, herringbone or other patterns). The planks/strips/tiles are 6 to 10mm thick and are known in The Netherlands and Belgium as Overlay floors.

After installing the floor is sanded three (or more) times, first with abrasive grit 40, then with grit 80 (and the sand-dust collected). Between the second and the third sanding the collected sand-dust is mixed with a special wood-filler and 'plastered' onto the floor to fill every gap/nail hole. After the third sanding (with grit 100 or 120) the oil-finish is applied. If you plan to apply a lacquer/varnish finish sand a 4th time with grit 150.

It is possible to use bevelled planks but then the filling of the nail holes is done plank-by-plank or even hole by hole.

Usually the pattern/tile floors come with borders in a different pattern and a small strip of a different wood (like very dark wedge) to accentuate the floor.

See our "7 Easy Steps to repair/restore your original parquet floor" if you are interested in more information on Parquet Flooring. <http://woodyoulike.co.uk/Guides/guide-restore-parquet.html>

**Who else wants a robust floor covering that becomes more beautiful over time?**



A wide selection of natural wooden flooring: [From Basic Oak to Bespoke](#) can be found in our [secure webshop](#)