



## City Life LOC 3/8" (10 mm) platform Installation Guide



It is **important** to read the Installation Guide, Maintenance Guide, and Mercier Warranty **before** installing your prefinished wood floor. **Failure to follow the installation instructions may void your warranty.**

For questions about installation, please contact your authorized Mercier dealer or Mercier's Technical Service at 1-866-448-1785 or [technicalservice@mercierwoodflooring.com](mailto:technicalservice@mercierwoodflooring.com).

## Product description

Mercier City Life LOC 3/8" (10 mm) prefinished flooring features a solid hardwood surface glued to a high-density fibreboard substrate and a pine balance layer. It is specially designed for a floating installation, including in basements and over radiant heating systems<sup>1</sup> and concrete subfloors. City Life LOC 3/8" (10 mm) flooring can also be installed over existing hardwood, linoleum, and ceramic flooring, if the existing flooring meets the requirements and recommendations listed in this guide. City Life LOC 3/8" (10 mm) flooring should never be installed over carpet or any other soft flooring.

Prefinished flooring is factory finished under controlled, optimal conditions. The flooring is ready to install and occupants are not required to leave the premises.

## Recommended use



### Installation sites

- 1<sup>st</sup> story : Yes
- Ground floor : Yes
- Basement : Yes



### Radiant heating systems

City Life LOC 3/8" (10 mm) flooring is recommended for use over radiant heating systems.

## Owner and installer responsibilities

**Prior to installation**, the installer and owner must ensure the installation site and subfloor comply with the conditions specified in this guide.

**The installer and owner should inspect the flooring before installation to ensure the grade, color, gloss, and quality are consistent with the product purchased.**

Mercier products meet stringent quality requirements and top industry standards. The industry standard margin of error for natural imperfections and manufacturing and grade selection defects is 5%.

If the installer has doubts about a board's grade selection or manufacturing or finish quality and cannot install it in an inconspicuous location or eliminate the imperfection, he should not install it. **Once a board has been installed, it is considered to have been accepted by the installer and the owner, even if the owner is not present during installation.**

<sup>1</sup>See Technical Bulletin #5 at [mercierwoodflooring.com](http://mercierwoodflooring.com) for specifications for use over radiant heating systems.

Depending on the site and the type of installation<sup>2</sup>, flooring orders should include 3% to 5% extra to compensate for cut loss.

Mercier Wood Flooring only replaces products with a defect rate that exceeds 5% (excluding the 3% to 5% cut loss). Mercier cannot be held liable for improper installation or poor judgement by an installer. It does not cover labor or installation costs.

## Recommended materials and tools

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This is not an exhaustive list of the tools that may be needed to install your City Life LOC <sup>3</sup>/<sub>8</sub>" (10 mm) flooring. Mercier Wood Flooring is not responsible for damage caused by improper use of tools.

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|--------------------|----------------------------|
| 1. Vacuum or broom | 5. Square                  |
| 2. Mitre saw       | 6. Handsaw                 |
| 3. Measuring tape  | 7. Mercier Touch-Up Kit    |
| 4. Chalk line      | 8. Mercier Maintenance Kit |
|                    | 9. Rubber mass             |

### Additional equipment

Recommended adhesive and membrane:

- AcoustiTECH VP acoustical membrane (or equivalent with a maximum thickness of 3.5 mm, ≥ 5 psi, and 25% compression)

## Preparing the installation site

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Installing prefinished wood flooring should be the last step in your project. Before the flooring is delivered, inspect the installation site to make sure:

- The concrete, plaster, paint, and subfloor are completely dry.
- Any heating, ventilation, or air conditioning systems are functional and running.
- The building is kept within normal ambient conditions for at least one (1) week before laying the floor, at a temperature of about 20 °C (68 °F) and a relative humidity of about 45%.

**The installer should check the moisture content of the subfloor (plywood or OSB) and flooring at various locations using a moisture meter for wood.**

**The moisture content of the subfloor should not exceed 12%. The difference between the moisture content of the subfloor and the flooring must not exceed the internal moisture content of the flooring by more than 4%. The internal moisture content of the flooring should be between 6% and 9%.**

**If the humidity of the subfloor or the difference between the flooring and the subfloor is outside recommended levels, heat, ventilate, and dehumidify the site further and delay delivery and installation until recommended levels have been reached.**

If the subfloor is a concrete slab, allow a minimum 30-day drying period for a reliable moisture-level test. Measurements should not exceed 4% using a concrete moisture meter. If there is moisture, test using calcium chloride. The moisture content measured with the calcium chloride test should not exceed 3 lb. per 1,000 sq. ft. over 24 hours.

<sup>2</sup>Diagonal installation results in increased cut loss of up to 7% to 9%.

## Acclimation

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Once the recommended conditions have been reached, store the flooring at the installation site. Allow the flooring to acclimate for at least 24 hours before installation. Make sure the wood is at the same temperature as the installation site (about 20 °C (68 °F)). Never store flooring in unsuitable locations such as sheds or unheated garages.

## Subfloor preparation and levelling

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- The subfloor must be structurally sound and securely fastened to the joists with floor screws to prevent movement of the plywood panels, which could cause creaking.
- **The subfloor must be flat and level, the maximum tolerance is  $\frac{3}{16}$ " (5 mm) over a distance of 10' (3 m).** If necessary, fill or sand any unevenness, depression or bulge in the subfloor.
- The surface of the subfloor must be free of defects. Remove minor imperfections with a sander.
- The surface must be clean and free of all contaminants, including grease, dust, oil, nails, staples, etc. Remove staples, drive in protruding nails, and remove dirt and dust with a vacuum cleaner.

For installation on a wood subfloor, make sure the structure meets the following requirements:

- $\frac{3}{4}$ " (19 mm) plywood or oriented strand board (OSB) for joists spaced 19  $\frac{3}{16}$ " (488 mm) or less on centre
- Minimum  $\frac{5}{8}$ " (16 mm) plywood panels for joists spaced 16" (406 mm) or less on centre.

## Recommended installation method

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- Plan your project by making a sketch.
- Determine your start point.
- Determine the direction of the flooring. We strongly recommend installing flooring at a 90-degree angle with respect to the floor joists on wood subfloors.
- Use a protective surface under tools and the floor nailer during installation.
- Before you begin, cut the bottoms of door moldings to insert flooring under them.
- Leave space for the wood to expand as a result of humidity changes. The expansion gaps will be hidden by the baseboard and/or quarter round, which should be nailed to the wall, not the floor.
- Pick boards from at least 3 boxes at a time to ensure consistency.
- Vacuum frequently during installation to remove sawdust and dirt.

## Installation

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### How to install flooring

- The floor should not be attached to any surface. Expansion gaps are required for all fixed elements. See Table 1 below for the recommended expansion gap based on the dimensions of the room.

Table 1

Expansion gap	Maximum room width	Maximum room length
$\frac{1}{2}$ " (13 mm)	26' (8 m)	52' (16 m)
$\frac{3}{4}$ " (19 mm)	40' (12 m)	80' (24 m)

- When the room dimensions exceed the above values, use a T-molding.
- Install the acoustical membrane over the entire subfloor in the opposite direction to the flooring (see the installation instructions for the acoustical membrane).
- The first rows of flooring are the most important. They must be straight and all joints must fit perfectly. Use a chalk line to snap a guide line parallel to the starting wall.
- Install the first board along the guide line, with the groove towards you and the tongue towards the wall. Always leave the required expansion gap listed in Table 1 (see Images 1 and 2).
- Always leave a ½" (12 mm) expansion gap on either side of each row for expansion. If the walls aren't square, use wedges or shims between the flooring and the wall in order to keep an expansion gap.
- Remove anything that could prevent the tongue from fitting into the groove.
- Install the next board on the right. Insert the end tongue into the end groove of the first board at an angle. Install the remaining boards in the row and cut the last one to fit. If necessary, lightly tap the joint at the end of the planks with a rubber mallet in order to properly position the board end lock. Never use excessive force.
- Start the second row with the offcut. For a more attractive result, make sure the board is at least 20" (50.8 cm) long.
- Insert the side tongue into the side groove of the board in the first row at a 45° angle. Align the left end, lower the board and apply a small amount of pressure to engage the locking system.
- Install the remaining boards in the same manner until the entire surface is covered with ¾" (10 mm) City Life (LOC) flooring.
- Rip the last row of boards to width and allow for an expansion gap.

Image 1

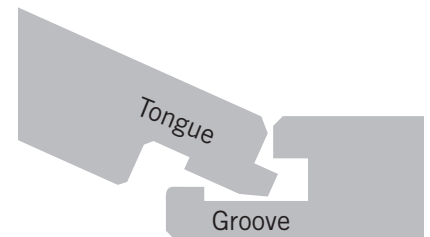
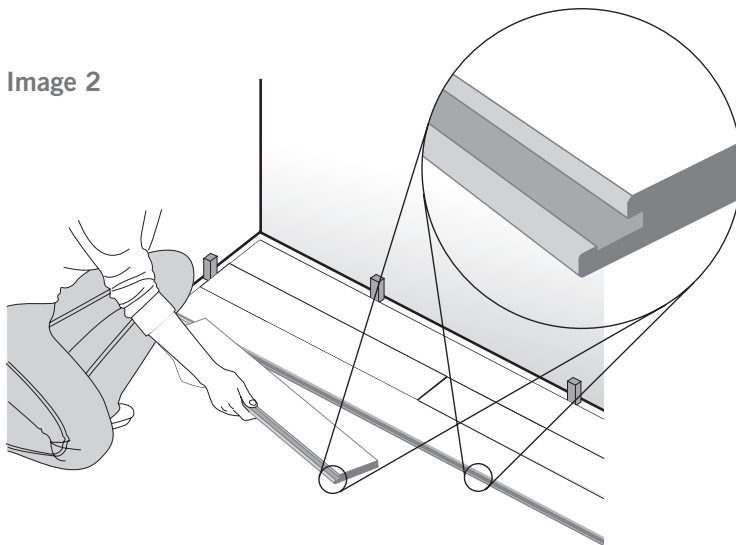


Image 2



## Installation over radiant heating systems

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Refer to the radiant heating system manufacturer's recommendations for more information. City Life LOC  $\frac{3}{8}$ " (10 mm) flooring may be used over a radiant heating system in basements, ground floors, and subsequent storeys by following these instructions. See Technical Bulletin #5 on flooring over radiant heating systems at [mercierwoodflooring.com](http://mercierwoodflooring.com) for more information.

### Precautions and recommendations:

- The system must be tested and turned on a few weeks before installing the floor.
- Turn the system off during installation.
- Floors with radiant heating systems should not exceed 27 °C (80 °F) while in use.
- Visible or exposed pipes must be covered with  $\frac{3}{8}$ " (10 mm) plywood or a layer of concrete to ensure uniform heat distribution.
- When turning radiant heating on or off at the beginning or end of a season, gradually increase or decrease the temperature to limit stress on the wood.

You may need to install T-moldings and quarter-rounds.

### Warning!

We recommend pre-drilling pilot holes in the moldings to avoid splitting them.

When installing moldings such as baseboard and quarter round, make sure to attach them to the wall, not the wood floor, to allow for movement.

Always leave the recommended space for expansion.

## Inspection, finishing, and maintenance

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When installation is complete, vacuum the floor and clean it with Mercier Cleaner according to the instructions. NEVER use large amounts of water to clean a hardwood floor.

Use the Mercier Touch-Up Kit to fill and conceal small nail holes. For more information, see Technical Bulletin #7 on the Touch-Up Kit at [mercierwoodflooring.com](http://mercierwoodflooring.com).