



# Wellbeing

## Kind to allergy sufferers

Laminate is kind to allergy sufferers. Laminate floors have a sealed surface which dust and dirt can't stick to. This makes laminate especially hygienic, easy to care for, and allergy-friendly.

### **Dirt-repellent and robust**

Over 80 million people in Europe suffer from allergies, and hygiene is one of the most important factors for wellbeing around the home. This is where laminate comes into its own with its particular surface qualities. The top layer of melamine resin is highly robust and hard-wearing. Even after years of heavy use, dust and other kinds of dirt can't penetrate into the floor. This helps to avoid the conditions that encourage house dust mites and other allergenic microorganisms to grow and multiply.

### **Stubborn adhering dirt? No thanks!**

Laminate floors are easy to clean, making them particularly family-friendly and pet-friendly. Household dirt and dirt brought in from outside can be easily removed by vacuuming and occasionally wiping down with a slightly damp cloth, as the smooth laminate surface doesn't give dirt a chance to stick. We recommend adding a laminate floor cleaner (available from manufacturers in stores) to the water used for wiping the floor. Only a small quantity is required, so the use of cleaning agents is kept to a minimum. This is good for both the environment and the household budget.

### **The right laminate for every room**

With the appropriate equipment, low-maintenance, robust laminate floors are suitable for all living and working areas, and they also have new applications in commercial and office spaces and doctors' surgeries. Manufacturers are also able to offer floorboards with integrated sound insulation and useful additional features: These include anti-static surfaces, increased protection against micro-scratches using electron-beam technology and special anti-slip surfaces for use in entrance areas and workspaces. Innovative moisture-protection devices allow laminate flooring to be laid in bathrooms and kitchens: A special board formulation and a corresponding impregnation of the top layer reduce swelling, whilst the edges receive a special sealant for protection purposes. Finally, patented locking

methods ensure that the joints are securely locked. Thus, laminate flooring can be employed as a warmer alternative to traditional tiling.

### **No need to worry about damp**

Nearly nine tenths of the core layers of laminate floors consist of wood fibers, which are firmly and permanently bonded to each other using modern glue systems. Some manufacturers even make flooring that also has a special edge protection. This is referred to as edge water repellent finishing. Floors like these are a good alternative for rooms where there is a lot of damp, such as bathrooms and saunas. Retailers also stock glue-like materials that can be applied to the edges when the floor is laid, protecting it against dampness. There is a wide range of accessories available for laminate flooring. Our tip: Always make sure you are buying a quality product! Look out for laminate flooring labelled with the load classes according to EN 13329 and the CE mark.

### **Antistatic protection**

Laminate flooring will charge electrostatically when the air moisture is too low (under 40 %). Therefore many of the modern laminate floorings are equipped with antistatic protection. It reduces the build-up of static electricity and thus protects from many forms of discharges due to contacts with metallic objects, e.g. when touching a door knob. Since this antistatic protection also reduces dust attraction, it makes the laminate flooring easier to clean.



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Quality assured

Made of wood

Sound insulated

Quality assured

Laminate is quality-assured. The European laminate flooring standard EN 13329 and the CE standard ensure maximum consumer protection. If a product is labelled with the load classes according to EN 13329 and the CE mark, you can be confident you are buying a quality product.

### **Separating the wheat from the chaff**

The range of products available is very large, because as well as specialist dealers, DIY stores and furniture dealers also stock laminate floors. However, don't be tempted just to compare prices. It's worth taking a closer look at the packaging, because not all products offer the same quality and environmentally-friendly production. Products labelled with the load classes according to the European laminate flooring standard EN 13329 and the CE mark offer more consumer protection and transparency. Both symbols can usually be found on the product insert, which is visible through a film.

### **EU standards safeguard quality**

The producers who belong to the EPLF (Association of European Producers of Laminate Flooring) have committed to manufacturing their products in line with the quality requirements set out in the European standard. This involves testing properties such as the abrasion resistance, impact resistance, stain resistance, lightfastness and swelling behaviour of a floor. The CE standard also includes stringent requirements for emissions, fire characteristics and anti-slip properties.

### **Remember: always look before buying!**

A quick glance is all it takes to give you peace of mind, because when laminate floors have been tested in accordance with EN 13329, this means that they are subject to the usual quality and safety standards, underlined by the CE mark.



## **Made of wood**

Laminate is made of 100% natural materials. It combines the charm of natural timber with contemporary characteristics, making it a suitable floor covering for young and old alike.

### **Suitable for young children and pets**

Laminate is made of 100% natural materials, mainly wood, as shown by this three-layer structure. So laminate is a natural product, which according to a recent study by the prestigious Fraunhofer Institut poses no risk to health. This makes it particularly suitable for young children and pets, who spend a lot of time in contact with the floor.

### **All-round wellbeing**

Laminate flooring is entirely manufactured without the use of pesticides, organic chlorine compounds or harmful heavy metals. The coatings used are free of plasticisers, so laminate can hold its own in a health comparison with other flooring types. In fact, other floors often

require special cleaning agents while laminate floors simply need regular vacuuming and an occasional wipe down. This not only saves money, it also avoids the unnecessary use of chemicals around the house.

Footstep and drum sound? With modern laminate flooring, there's no need to worry about either problem.



## Sound insulated

Laminate is sound-insulated. Laminate flooring beats all other floor coverings when it comes to footstep sound and drum sound insulation. Special underlays such as cork boards dampen sound naturally.

### **Noise isn't a problem any more**

One of the most common reasons why people are prejudiced against laminate flooring is that they believe it's noisy to walk on. That might have been the case 20 years ago, but nowadays the opposite is true. Modern insulating materials provide optimum protection against footstep sound and actually create a pleasant sound when the floor is walked on.

### **Footstep and drum sound insulation**

The noise of footfalls (footstep sound) can be significantly reduced in rooms beneath by laying a commercially available foam underlay between the floor screed and the laminate flooring, so there's no need for neighbours to be disturbed by noise. There is also a wide range of insulating underlays available which reduce or modify the noise of footfalls inside a room (drum sound). Underlays can be laid loose or permanently attached to the laminate flooring – many commercially available products even come with insulation already attached.

To sum up, laminate has developed into a versatile and modern lifestyle product.

