



Shrinkage Cracks

Wood is a hygroscopic material. When exposed to varying temperatures and humidities, it will release or absorb moisture until it is at equilibrium with the surrounding atmosphere.

The Maple Flooring Manufacturers Association (MFMA) recommends that the facility's environment be stable when the flooring materials arrive -- air temperature between 55 and 75 degrees and indoor relative humidity between 35 and 50 percent. In some cases, the maple should be stored in the room where it will be installed for a period of time to acclimate. Consult your MFMA installer for specific acclimation information.

After installation, maple flooring typically requires a year or two to stabilize -- through a complete cycle of seasonal changes. The floor will continue to adjust to environmental changes throughout its life span.

The appearance of shrinkage cracks during winter months is not unusual. These cracks will normally close in the spring and early summer, as the floor picks up moisture from the air. We do recommend the use of humidification/dehumidification systems if available to maintain proper humidity levels.

If cracks persist, and the indoor atmosphere has been maintained between 55 and 75 degrees and between 35-50 percent indoor relative humidity (or no more than a 15 percent fluctuation between highest and lowest average IRH), contact your flooring installer or the MFMA immediately.

If you have additional questions, please contact MFMA's Technical Director at 888/480-9138.

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