A Look at Solid Hardwood Floors

Solid hardwood floors should neither be installed over a concrete slab nor below ground level because of high moisture sensitivity. Unsightly gaps appear when moisture dries and the floors contract in the winter heating months. The floors expand and gaps disappear during summers. The wood planks may buckle or cup because of excessive moisture. In view of these facts, enough space should be left for expansion and wood should be acclimated. Nail-down installations are most appropriate for these floors. The possibility of re-coating and refinishing increases the life and appearance of solid hardwood floors. Generally solid hardwood floors are made up of ash, maple, red oak and white oak. Solid wood floorings are divided **we are home buyers today** into three sub categories: strip flooring, plank flooring and parquet flooring. Thickness of strip flooring varies between 5/16 inch and inch. Available widths are 1 inch, 2 inch and 2 inch. Though plank flooring is sold in two thicknesses, width can range between 3 inches and 8 inches. Parquet flooring has geometrical patterns that are created with wood slats. Hand-scraped hardwood floors are hand crafted. Character markings on handscraped hardwood floors (hand sculptured floors) are a unique feature. These floors offer the best finishes for either the modern world look or the old reclaimed wood floor look. Both engineered and solid hand sculpted floors are sold. Beautiful handscraped hardwood floors are very expensive. Engineered handscraped hardwood floors are best suited for a structure erected on a concrete slab and in high humidity conditions. A few companies also market distressed hardwood flooring that has machine made markings unlike hand made markings in handscraped hardwood floor. Handscraped floor is costlier than distressed version, but both floorings offer a rich look.Hardwood floors should be cleaned with products recommended by the manufacturer. Regular use of a vacuum cleaner will clean dirt, mud, grit and small stones that may spoil the finish. Welcome mats at the entrance for wiping feet before walking on the floor are of great help in protecting the finish. When choosing furniture for you home, do not buy products with sharp metal or wooden legs to prevent denting and scratching. Use of furniture coasters or felt protectors for all legs will prevent scratching. Non-staining and wide rubber cups are a must for heavy items like piano. The use of a paste wax on the hardwood floor with a polyurethane finish damages the finish. Spills on hardwood floors need immediate attention. Clean them with a paper towel or damp white cloth and dry the area.

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