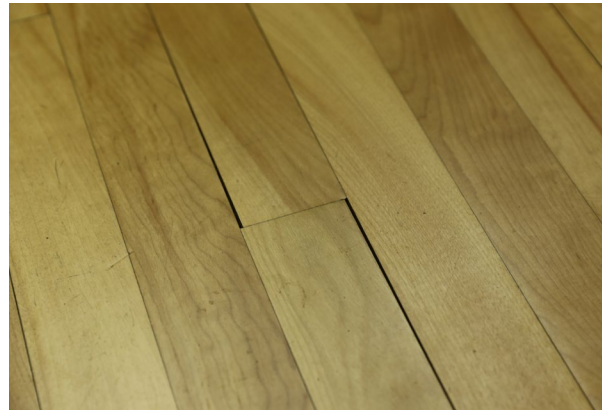


Seasonal Gaps

Seasonal gaps are a normal occurrence with wood floors. This is because wood is a hygroscopic material that absorbs and loses moisture in response to its environment. During warm, humid months, wood will gain moisture and swell. During cool, dry months, wood will lose moisture and shrink. This dimensional change is a normal function of wood that can result in seasonal gaps.

Typically, seasonal gaps will appear when wood shrinks (winter) and disappear when wood swells (summer). As long as these gaps return to normal, there is no need for concern or for repair. Gaps of this nature may be more noticeable with wood floors that utilize wider width boards. In addition, gaps may be more noticeable with square-edged floors than with bevel-edged floors, and with light-colored species as opposed to dark-colored species.

Most seasonal gaps can be minimized by maintaining the structure within normal living conditions year-round. The best results will be achieved when the temperature is kept between 60-80 degrees Fahrenheit, and humidity is kept between 30-50%.



More-detailed information about wood flooring gaps is available in the NWFA Wood Flooring Installation Guidelines and Methods publication, or at <http://member.nwfa.org/default.asp?page=InstallGuidelines>.