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SILENCE THAT SQUEAKY FLOOR

Like fingernails clawing on a chalkboard, squeaky floors can drive homeowners crazy! It's especially galling if the squeaks are emanating from a beautiful hardwood floor. What causes flooring squeaks and what can you do to fix them?

Most often, **movement** is the cause of the squeak; stop the movement, and you'll stop the squeak. Generally, the finished flooring isn't what's causing the squeak; the culprit is below the finished flooring. The floor joists or sub floors may be rubbing against each other, or loose pipes or heating ducts may be rubbing against the joists.

The location of the squeak will dictate whether a bottom up or top down procedure is used. If the ceiling below is unfinished, have a helper walk on the floor while you watch for movement while listening for the squeak. If the ceiling below isn't open, you'll have to watch and listen from floor level.

Once you've diagnosed the cause and location of the squeak, you can begin the repair with *shims*, *adding a sister joist*, *construction adhesive*, *installing additional screws to better secure the joists to the sub floor*, or *tightening the strapping on piping or ducts*. Sometimes ductwork can be installed too closely to a joist, and pressure from above causes the ducting to squeak or pop. In that case, a professional may have to be called in to move or replace portions of ducting. If you find that seams of a sub floor are moving against each other, you'll want to '*bridge*' or '*block*' the seam by screwing and gluing a small piece of wood that will inhibit movement. With a little time and effort, you can silence that squeak.

Alberta Hardwood Flooring is your full service wood flooring specialist, with locations in Edmonton and Calgary.