

We talk a lot about temperature, and for that we make no apology. Your floor getting too hot can cause all sorts of issues.

There's often a misunderstanding between the two types of temperature a floor encounters in day-to-day life. There's the ambient room temperature, that's to say how hot or cold your room feels when you walk into it. Then there's solid mass temperature, this is what's most important.

Have you ever sat in your garden on plastic garden furniture. Those white chairs or maybe the green ones? Have you noticed that even though it feels pleasant outside the chair is hot to sit on? Ever got into your car in the summer and felt just how hot your steering wheel or seats are? This is what we mean by solid mass temperature, and it's just the same for your floor.

Darker colours tend to absorb more of the sun's energy than lighter ones, this is why Mediterranean houses are often painted white or pastel shades.

Your floor is no different, whether you have LVT, which is essentially a thermoplastic material, or an engineered wood or laminate, it needs protecting from excessive heat. And by that, we mean nothing over 27°.

This heat could come from underfloor heating (UFH) or equally your lovely new bifold doors or even those wonderful skylights. Even more so if your windows face south.

Fortunately, with UFH you can control the temperature of your floor by using probes to alert you to a high temperature and shut off the energy supply. Where you have bifold doors you should consider solar reflective glass and blinds, the same goes for skylights.

But that's not all you can do to protect your flooring and give it the best possible chance.

Expert installation is key. We've seen many installers fitting with little attention to detail when it comes to expansion gaps, and then tidying up the rough edges with silicone. This completely defeats the object of expansion gaps and can lead to significant issues when it comes to your floor. It's important that care is taken to have uniform expansion gaps, and that a low modulus silicone is used. Ideally skirting will always be removed and refitted over your new floor, allowing for expansion without needing to fill the gaps to make them more presentable. Whilst this is sometimes cost prohibitive if you're on a budget, it will always give you the most stable flooring.

Finally consider whether you need profiles in doorways. The trend is to have one consistent floor between rooms, and we agree it looks lovely. However, it's not always practical if the solid mass temperatures of your floor vary much between rooms. Where you have individual rooms expanding and contracting in different amounts to neighbouring rooms, you could potentially be asking for trouble.

