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# Article 2 - Preparing Wood for Bonded ARDEX Applications

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ARDEX Substrate Preparation Series, Article 2

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## Minimum Requirements for Wood Substrates

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Plywood subfloors must be a minimum 3/4" (19 mm) tongue-and-groove, APA-rated Type 1, exterior exposure plywood. An approved OSB equivalent is suitable for ARDEX underlayments only.

Plywood subfloors must be constructed according to prevailing building codes and must be solid and securely fixed to provide a rigid base free of undue flex. Any boards exhibiting movement must be properly fastened to create a sound surface.

It is the responsibility of the installation contractor to ensure that the wood subfloor is properly anchored prior to the installation of any ARDEX material.

Some flooring manufacturers recommend a finish-grade wood underlayment be installed over the existing wood subfloor. If necessary, certain ARDEX trowel-applied underlayments (see technical data sheet for verification) can be used to smooth fasteners and/or joints in the wood underlayment. Please note that the wood underlayment must be suitable for the installation of the specific floor covering and must be installed in accordance with the wood underlayment manufacturer's recommendations.

Substrate surface must be dry (free of standing water) during installation and cure of ARDEX underlayments.

The minimum recommended substrate surface and ambient temperature during installation is 50°F (10°C). Where a temporary heat source will be used, please note that the heat source must not use fossil fuels. Use propane or natural gas type heaters that are properly vented to prevent an oily residue from developing on the surface of the substrate.

## Mechanical Preparation

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Mechanically remove all unsuitable materials and bond-breaking contaminants, including, but not necessarily limited to, the following: finish flooring, adhesive residue, patching and leveling compounds, oil, grease, wax, dirt, varnish and shellac.

## Recommended Preparation Method

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Mechanically prepare, as necessary, by sanding. Note that the grit-level selected must be sufficiently aggressive to remove all bond-inhibiting contaminants down to bare wood. A commercial drum sander can be used to sand large areas.

### Prohibited Methods

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**Solvents, adhesive removers, strippers and cleaners** are bond breakers and must not be used.

### Asbestos Warning

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If any asbestos-containing materials are being removed, consult prevailing regulations to determine the required substrate preparation method. Asbestos-containing floor coverings and adhesives must be handled and disposed of in accordance with applicable federal, state and local regulations.

### **Final Step: Sweep and Vacuum**

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Once preparation is complete, thoroughly sweep and vacuum to remove all loose material. The resulting wood surface must be deemed **clean, sound and solid** prior to the installation of the ARDEX underlayment.

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