

Cork Floating Floors

Laying Instructions

Distributed in the UK by Natrul | Manufactured by Granorte, Portugal

CORK

Combining undeniable acoustic and thermal qualities, cork brings warmth, silence and comfort to all interiors. Environmentally friendly, naturally stylish, hard-wearing, water resistant, yet easy to install and maintain, cork is the perfect material for floors.

GENERAL

Before deciding to install a cork floating floor, it is important to establish if it is suitable for the intended intensity and type of use. Cork floating floors use pre-treated, watertight HDF boards. Despite its moisture resistance, cork floating floor is not suitable for damp or steamy rooms. Do not install in bathrooms, shower rooms, saunas or other rooms exposed to excessive moisture.

Natrul's cork flooring by Granorte uses the patented Uniclic® ingenious form of tongue and groove to "click" the panels together. The Uniclic® system enables you to work 50% faster than with traditional glued floating floors, and because there is no glue it is much easier and cleaner to work with.

Handle cartons carefully to protect the locking edges from damage. Store cartons on a smooth, level surface.

CONDITIONING

Floating floors must be acclimatised at job site in a dry area for a minimum of 2 days before installation. Do not open packages before starting installation.

During storage and installation, temperature and relative humidity should be maintained to a level consistent with the conditions which will prevail when the building is occupied. In most cases, this means maintaining temperature range between 18°C to 26°C (64°F to 79°F) and relative humidity range of 35% to 65%. Heating or air conditioning should be used for an appropriate length of time prior to installation.

SUB-FLOOR

Natrul's cork flooring by Granorte can be laid on top of most hard surfaces such as wood, particle board, OSB, chipboard, linoleum, vinyl, certain ceramic tiles, etc. All soft-fitted carpets and similar must be removed. Old floor boards have to be screwed down and the remaining unevenness levelled using suitable filler.

The sub floor must be perfectly dry, solid, even and clean. Unevenness in the sub-floor of 2 mm (5/64") over a distance of 1.5 m (5 ft) is acceptable.

It is essential to control moisture of the subfloor when installing floating floors. New concrete subfloors must dry out at least 60 days. Before installation, moisture content on the concrete should be measured and may not exceed 2.0% CM. In case of floor heating, the moisture content may not exceed 1.5% CM and some specific installation instructions apply.

Despite their age, there is always a risk of moisture in subfloors. Before installation, a 0.2 mm (8 mils) polyethylene sheet must be laid first. The rolled length of foil should overlap about 20 cm (8") running up the walls about 3 cm (1 3/16"), and then be fastened with adhesive tape. The foil is a protection against moisture and it helps the movement of the planks when room climate changes.

As Natrul's cork flooring by Granorte has a built-in cork underlay, it is not necessary to lay an impact noise insulation underlayment; it would bring no significant improvement and it could create an excessively soft sub-floor.

Note: The responsibility of determining if the existing flooring or subfloor is suitable for the installation rests solely with the installer and flooring contractor.

UNDERFLOOR HEATING

Cork floating floors may also be used in rooms with floor heating. Please follow the specific instructions for underfloor heating installation. The radiant heating system should be turned on for at least 3-4 days before installation and should be set and maintained to an installation temperature of around 18°C (65°F). Normal operation of the heating system should be carried out in steps not earlier than 3 days after installation. The surface temperature of the flooring may not exceed 28°C (82°F).

It must be taken into account that expansion and contraction of the floating floor can occur.

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TOOLS

Moisture barrier of 0.2mm polyethylene; Adhesive tape; Spacer blocks; Hammer; Pull bar; Tapping block; Pencil; Measuring tape; Circular saw or mitre saw; Dust mask; Safety glasses.

CONTROL

Ensure that, as far as possible, material from the same batch is used in the same area. Before installation, please control the planks. If you come across damaged panels do not install them. When checking the cork planks, keep in mind that you are dealing with a natural material. The cork surface may have slight variations in colour or structure. They contribute to the charm and originality of a cork covering. To achieve the most pleasing blend of shades, you can shuffle planks from different packs before laying.

INSTALLATION

Installation should be carried out at normal room temperature, preferably between 18°C to 26°C (64°F to 79°F), and relative humidity between 35 to 65%.

Remove plinth, quarter-round and other wall base material. Under-cut door trims to allow flooring to be installed under trim and move freely.

Wood is the primary constituent of the floating floor core. As a consequence of changes in interior room temperature and humidity, expansion and contraction of the floating floor boards can and will occur. The floor must be able to expand or contract on all sides. To facilitate this, an expansion gap of 10-15 mm (3/8" to 5/8") should be maintained at walls and also around pipes and door frames. Expansion joints can be covered with suitable profiles.

The planks should preferably lie lengthwise in the room or in the same direction as the light falls. Plank ends should be staggered randomly. Keep end joints at least 30 cm (1 ft) apart. Start each row with planks of varying lengths. Usually, the left-over piece from one row can be used as the starter piece on the next row.

Due to the patented glue-less Uniclic® system, an easy and simple installation is guaranteed. Start installing the floor on one corner, working from right to left. The first panel should be placed with the tongue side towards the wall. Do not forget the spacer blocks. Now "click" the next panel rotating (up and down) and pushing the tongue of the panel into the groove of the previous one until both panels click together on the short side. If panels do not stay flat or if the joint is not perfectly tight, the joint has not been fully made. Rotate and press both panels again using more force until they click in together. Make sure that panels are perfectly aligned to one another.

Start on the second row with the leftover piece of plank from the previous row if the plank length is at least 30 cm (1 ft); if not, use a new plank. Rotate and push the tongue of the long side of the panel into the groove of the one on the previous row, until both panels click together. Now take another panel and fit it into the groove on the short edge of the previous one, leaving a space of around 1 cm (5/16") from the long edge of the panel in the first row.

Slightly lift up the panels on the second row and push (or tap) the panel being installed on the long edge side so that it moves in the direction of the first row until the tongue of the long side comes into direct contact with the groove of the first-row panel. Rotate the panel up and down in order to click the tongue into the groove. Always make sure when rotating that you press the tongue and groove together with sufficient force. When the tongue-and-groove joint has been made, you can let the panels lie flat on the ground.

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Using this technique, install one row after the other (do not forget setting spacer blocks). The width of the planks of the last row should have a minimum of 10 cm (4"). Therefore, measure the length of the room before starting the installation and if needed adapt the width of the first row. If small or narrow fill pieces are required it is recommended to apply a small bead of wood glue along the tongue of the small piece, use a pull bar to pull piece in tight and use painters' tape to hold piece in place until glue is set.

In case it is necessary to join planks in horizontal position (door frame, heating pipe) use a pull bar (stroke iron) and a hammer.

Upon completion remove all spacer blocks, fix the skirting boards to the wall to cover the expansion gap. Never fix the skirting boards to the floor itself, to allow the floor to expand and contract underneath. In places where no profiles or skirting boards can be used, the expansion gap can be filled with elastic paste.

PREVENTIVE CARE

The cork floor must be kept clean. Furniture legs should have protective pads to avoid scratches. Furniture and other heavy objects must be placed carefully. Chair castors should be wide and soft.

A doormat should be laid inside the front door to help protect against dirt and sand. Ensure you use non-staining mats on the floor. Rubber, latex, plastics or other plasticizer-containing materials may cause non-reversible staining of the floor.

Avoid sharp or pointed objects with concentrated weight such as high heels on your cork floor.

Cork is a natural product and may tend to fade when exposed to sunlight over long periods of time. Use blinds or curtains to prevent cork fading by direct solar radiation.

CLEANING AND MAINTENANCE

The cork floor must be kept clean using a mop or vacuum cleaner. Dust and dirt behave like sanding paper and are thus to be removed immediately. If necessary the floor can be damp-mopped using an appropriate pH neutral cleaning product. Never use cleaning products with abrasive ingredients, solvent or ammonia based.

Natrul's cork flooring by Granorte has a pre-treated, water-resistant HDF core. Despite the floor's water and moisture resistance, remove any excess water immediately.

The floor surface treatment is designed to provide wear protection. However, depending on the level and intensity of traffic, maintenance can become necessary from time to time to refresh the protective layer. First clean your floor and then apply a thin layer of a recommended maintenance product.

Recommended cleaning and maintenance products:

Cleaning: Loba Cleaner; Bona Cleaner; Dr. Schutz Wood and Cork Floor Cleaner.

Maintenance: Loba KorkCare / Loba FloorCare; Bona Polish; Dr. Schutz Wood and Cork Floor Polish.

Thorough cleaning: Loba CareRemover; Bona Remover; Dr. Schutz Wood Floor Deep Clean.

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