

CORK FLOATING FLOORS LAYING INSTRUCTIONS

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.

GRANORTE's cork floating floors use 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 stored unopened at room temperature for at least 48 hours before installation. Do not open packages before starting installation.

Installation should be carried out at normal room temperature, not below 15 °C (59 °F), and relative humidity between 45 to 65%.

SUB-FLOOR

The sub floor must be perfectly dry, solid, even and clean (observe moisture content of fresh screed and underfloor heating screed). Unevenness in the sub-floor of 2 mm (5/64") over a distance of 1.5 m (5 ft) is acceptable. 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 (1.2"), and then be fastened with adhesive tape. The foil is a protection against moisture and it helps also the movement of the planks when room climate changes. All soft-fitted carpets must be removed, but the planks can be laid on existing floor coverings like wood, particle board, OSB, chipboard, linoleum, vinyl, certain ceramic tiles, etc. Old floor boards have to be screwed down and the remaining unevenness has to be levelled using suitable filler.

As GRANORTE floating floor elements have built-in impact noise insulation, it is not necessary to take further measures; it would bring no 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.

UNDER-FLOOR HEATING

Cork floating floors may also be used in rooms with floor heating. In this case, 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 (new concrete slabs may require longer periods of time) 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 72 hours after installation. It is especially important to note that the surface temperature of the flooring may not exceed 28 °C (82 °F).

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

TOOLS

Moisture barrier of 0.2mm polyethylene (if necessary); Adhesive tape; Spacer blocks; Hammer; Pull bar; Tapping block; Pencil; Measuring tape; Saw; Dust mask; Safety glasses.

CONTROL

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. Ensure that, as far as possible, material from the same batch is used in the same area.

INSTALLATION

Installation should be carried out at normal room temperature, preferably not below 15 °C (59 °F), and relative humidity between 45 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.

Expansion and contraction of the cork floating floor can occur. This is a consequence of changes in interior temperature and humidity as well as in the structure's moisture content. So, expansion joints of 10-15 mm (0.4-0.6") 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 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 of planks.

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 (to ensure a perfect expansion joint, the tongues along the edges of panels that go against the wall, need to be sawn off). Now "click" the next panel rotating and pushing the tongue of a panel into the groove of previous one at an angle of 20-30 degrees until both panels click together on the short side. Do this for a few panels of the first row. Make sure that panels are perfectly aligned to one another. This is very important for installing the next rows.

Start on the second row with the leftover piece of plank from the previous row if the plank length is at least 30 cm; if not, use a new plank. Rotate and push the tongue of the long side of the panel into the groove of one on the previous row, until both panels click together. Now take another panel and fit it on the groove of the one on the previous row leaving a space of +/- 1 cm (0.4") from the short edge of the previous panel. Then tap it until the short edges of the first two panels of the second row fit together. Install the third panel of the second row. 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. 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, install skirting and quarter-round to cover gap around the

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wall. Take care to nail or glue the skirting and quarter-round to the wall and not to the flooring.

PREVENTIVE CARE

The cork floor must be kept clean. Never use cleaning products with abrasive ingredients, solvent or ammonia based.

Furniture legs should have protective pads to avoid scratches. Furniture and other heavy objects must be placed carefully. Chair castors should be of wide and soft.

A doormat should be laid inside the front door to help protect against dirt and sand.

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

Prolonged contact of plasticizer-containing material (e.g. rubber, latex, plastics...) with the varnish may cause non-reversible stain of the 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 (heavier soiling) the floor can be damp-mopped using an appropriate pH neutral cleaning product.

The floor surface treatment is designed to provide wear protection for the floor covering. However, and 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.

Please observe the particular maintenance instruction for your cork floor. For the correct use follow the instructions on the packaging labels of each product, as well as the information from technical data sheets.

Manual or mechanical basic cleaning can become necessary in case of heavy stains which cannot be removed during maintenance cleanings. To basic-clean your floor, use an appropriate "remover", applying as little solution as possible and working in sections. Damp-mop the floor subsequently with clean water. After the floor has dried completely, a new maintenance care must be performed.

Basic cleanings should be carried out as seldom as possible.

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