

Cork Floating Floor Installation Guide

General Guidelines:

The term "Floating floors" means that the floor is not secured to the subfloor but rather it "floats" on top. There needs to be a roughly ½" space from walls and other fixed objects. Floor areas greater than 900 sf with dimensions greater than 30 feet in either direction will need an expansion gap. Transitions between 2 rooms using the floating floors will need an expansion gap also. If you are installing in a possibly damp area, you'll need to put down a moisture vapor barrier first.

Floating floors can be laid down on top of most hard surfaces such as vinyl, wood flooring or ceramic tiles. Do not install over carpeting. The subfloor must be flat, even and dry. Variations in the subfloor should not exceed 1/8" over 8ft. Voids should be filled or you could feel a bounce in the floating floor over a void area. If laying on top of hardwood floors, the planks are normally laid across the existing floorboards. All concrete and ceramic subfloors require a moisture barrier against dampness. This includes concrete floors topped with vinyl or other resilient flooring. Use a moisture barrier film with a minimum thickness of .01 inches and allow for at least 8 inches overlap between sheets before taping. Run the film up the walls at least 2 inches. You'll trim it down after you affix the quarter round or baseboards.

Acclimate the snap-lock cork planks. Remove the plastic wrapping from the boxes to allow the warm room air (above 60 degrees) to circulate around the planks for a minimum of 2 days. As a wood product, cork responds to changes in temperature and humidity and you'll want the product to be stabilized to the room before installing it.

Tools Needed

1/2" Spacers

Rubber Mallet or Hammer

Tapping Block or Floating Floor Scrap

Crowbar

Hand, Jig, Table or Circular Saw Deep Dish Paint Pan

Painters Stick

9" Shurline-style Pain Pad

25' Tape Measure

Laying the Planks:

1. Begin by laying down the plank in the corner of the room. Place the plank a ½" away from both walls at the corner. Using a ½" spacer will help maintain proper flooring placement.

2. You are making the first long row of flooring in the room with the planks locked short end to short end, not side to side. Snap the next plank into the end of the first plank by placing it in at an angle (roughly 25 degrees) and then pushing it down and in until it locks flat and tight with no gap. Wiggle the new plank as you push down and into the first plank at the same time. You can tap it with the side of your hand or use a small tapping block to lightly tap the plank as you push it down and inward. Do not hammer directly on the clicking ridges or the cork as they will break. You can use a scrap piece of the floating floor panel as a tapping block also.

3. When you reach the end of the first row of flooring where you need to cut the plank, turn the last plank face down, slide it to a ½" away from the wall and mark the back of the plank for your cut.

4. Place the plank to be cut on a work surface and cut it to size using the mark you just made. You can cut the plank with a hand saw, table saw or circular saw.

5. Place the newly cut piece into place in the starting row and then use the remainder of the cut plank to start the 2nd row of flooring. Use this piece only if it is at least 10" long. Otherwise cut a new plank in half and use a half to start the 2nd row. Leave a ½" gap from the wall just like the first row and snap the side of the plank into the side of the plank of the first row. Snap the plank by placing the long side of the plank into the long side of the plank of the previous row at an angle of roughly 25 degrees. Push down and in on the angled plank until it is flat on the floor. The planks should snap tightly together with no gap and lay flat. Each row of planks should be staggered or offset from the previous row a minimum of 10", never a straight grid pattern. If necessary, use a small tapping block and small hammer to tap the plank into place so the end fits tightly into the end of the previous plank. Do not hammer directly on the snap-lock fiberboard ridge - always use a tapping block.

Laying the Floating Floor

6. Continue laying the rows of planks. When laying the last row, measure and cut the planks to fit but leave a ½" space between the last row of planks and the wall.

Cork Floating Floor Layouts

7. Top Sealer Coat: After laying the floor planks, vacuum up any dust and dirt. Then roll of the top sealer coat of finish on the floor. Move methodically so as not to miss any spots. Do not move back and forth in a scrubbing motion but rather make a single pass the floor using plenty of finish. Finish can be applied with the use of a 3/8" foam roller. Best results is to use a pull foam applicator. This will prevent air bubbles from possibly forming. (Shureline 9" applicator pad works very well).

8. Let the finish dry for 4 hours before walking on it without shoes. After 24 hours, you can walk on the tiles with shoes. Do not use rubber-soled shoes on the new floor for

several days as this might cause smudging to occur during the hardening period. Final hardness is achieved after 8 days. Protect the floor with masonite or paper if construction is continuing in the room. Do not cover with plastic or carpet during the curing process. Do not clean with water for 2 weeks.

9. Install quarter round or baseboards around the room to cover the ½" gap between the floating floor and walls.

Maintenance:

Vacuum regularly. For more thorough cleaning use a damp mop with a mild Ph-balanced dish soap such as Liquid Joy. Use only a Damp mop, not a wet one, to prevent water from seeping between the planks. Too much water could cause the middle fiberboard to swell. Do not use abrasive or ammonia-based cleaning products.