

THE HABITUS COLLECTION

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HABITUS CLASSIC CORK TILE INSTALLATION INSTRUCTIONS

Tools You'll Need

Utility Knife	25' Tape Measure
Pack of Extra Blades for Knife	Framing Square
9" Wide - 3/8" (med.) Nap Foam Paint Roller	4" Utility Paint Brush
9" Paint Roller Handle	9" Shurline-style Paint Pad (for finish)
Rubber Mallet	Deep Dish Paint Pan
Chalk Line w/ Chalk	Painters Stick

- When you receive the cork tiles, remove them from the boxes 3-4 days before you're going to install them. Carefully cut down opposite corners to open the boxes and lift out the tiles, making sure not to break the corners. Let the tiles acclimate to your normal room temperature for 3-4 days. You should also shuffle or blend the tiles as there is naturally some shading variations. If you have any concerns about the tiles, do not install them. Installation signifies acceptance of the materials.
- Substrate should be smooth and free of dirt, waxes, polish, old adhesives, paint and voids. Bumps or seams will telegraph through the tiles.

Layout your pattern as you would for any tile work. Chalk your lines onto the floor or walls for wall installations.

- Apply adhesive to perimeter of the room using a paintbrush. Brush adhesive close to the inside corner. If adhesive should hit the wall, simply wipe off with a moist towel or rag. (If adhesive should dry on any undesirable surface, simply rub off. Use no thinners or removers)
- Using a paint roller with a medium nap refill, apply the adhesive to your substrate as you would in painting a substrate. (Apply adhesive over the chalk lines. Adhesive will dry clear.)
- The adhesive is considered dry when it turns clear and is tacky to the touch (roughly a half hour depending on humidity). Be sure it reaches this state before continuing. Once adhesive is dry, carefully align the tile edge to the chalk line. Once tiles touch the adhesive, the tiles will grab to the substrate. If a mistake is made, slowly peel up the cork tile with the aid of a putty knife, using a slicing motion, cut the adhesive free from the substrate and or tile. Reapply the adhesive to these areas.
- Once the first cork tile is in place, align the next tile tight to the edges of the first. Press the second tile tightly against the edges of the first tile. Pay attention to your alignment with each tile and you can compression fit the tiles to stay in alignment as necessary. Initially you can slap the face of the tile in place and then you must use a rubber mallet to ensure contact, particularly around the edges and corners. Tiles must be hit with the mallet for positive contact between substrate and tile. You can also use a batten board for this process. Tiles can be cut with a utility knife - Tip: change the blade often for easier cutting. Never cut a tile while it is laying on top of another tile.

- Continue in the same fashion as above. Do not allow any traffic onto dry adhesive. This will cause a coating of dirt onto the adhesive and inhibit it from being effective in holding the tiles.
- When applying the top coat of finish on site, vacuum the tiles and seams first and then clean with a very dry sponge, or mop. cork tiles are shipped with several coats of finish. This final top coat helps to protect the underlying adhesive from water.
- 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). Apply a fairly thick coat of finish in a single pass motion. DO NOT make a "scrubbing or waxing motion" by going back and forth on the same cork tiles, simply go over them once with a thick coat. 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.
- If construction is continuing in the room after the cork floor is installed, protect the floor tiles with roll paper or masonite, not with plastic or carpet. **Do Not** use any type of tape to tape something to the newly finished floor, not even Painters Blue Tape.
- Wait for a 2 week period before washing the floor.

Installation Tip

- Stain (do not paint) the subfloor with a colour similar to the tiles. This way if you are off in laying the tile and have a gap between tiles, the gap will be less obvious. Use a water-based stain, **not** an oil-based one.

Caution

- Cork is a natural wood product and even the coloured cork product will have some shade variations due to the underlying variations of the natural cork. Before starting your project, you should shuffle the tiles to ensure that colour variations are randomly placed throughout the floor area.
- Moisture can cause problems. Be sure there are no water drainage problems and if installing on a concrete subfloor, be sure the moisture in the slab is less than 3#/1000ft in a calcium chloride test.
- Let the adhesive on the subfloor dry to a tacky state before laying the tiles. It will dry to a clear appearance in roughly 45-60 mins unless you have high humidity at the site.

Maintenance

- Never use an abrasive, oil or ammonia-based cleaning product!
- Vacuum, sweep, dry or damp mop the installed floor regularly. Do not flood the floor with water.
- Clean the floor by using a damp mop regularly with a ph-balanced detergent such as Liquid Joy or another mild soap to clean and keep the surface free of grit or sand.
- Refresh the finish on the cork tiles on a regular basis with another coat of our finish or our floor dressing products. Apply every 9-12 months for a residential installation and more frequently for a commercial installation. Frequency is dependent upon usage.
- Steam cleaning is not recommended for cork or wood flooring in general