



## **Robina Cork Installation Instructions**

Floating Installation: ROBINA INTERLOCKING CORK can be installed over most sub-floors, and are engineered to be very dimensionally stable, making them suitable for installation over all grade levels. (See information and installation guidelines below.)

### **ATTENTION – INSTALLER/OWNER RESPONSIBILITY**

Inspect “all” materials carefully before installation. All floors are manufactured in accordance with accepted industry standards. Even though our product goes through many inspections before it leaves the plant, it is the responsibility of the customer and installer to perform a final inspection prior to installation. Cork warranties do not cover materials with visible defects once they are installed.

### **TOOLS**

Basic tools and accessories: broom or vacuum, chalk line, tapping block, Cork cleaner, hand or electric, jamb saw, jig saw, safety glasses, straight edge, tape measure, square, utility knife, pry bar and approved underlayment.

Optional tools: Miter saw, table saw, wood glue

### **JOB SITE CONDITIONS**

It is the responsibility of the installer/owner to determine if the job site sub floor and job site conditions are environmentally and structurally acceptable for Cork floor installation. Robina declines any responsibility for Cork failure resulting from or connected with sub-floor, subsurface, job site damage or deficiencies after the Cork flooring has been installed.

### **SUB-FLOOR PREPARATION AND RECOMMENDATIONS FOR ALL INSTALLATIONS**

#### **Concrete Sub-Floors**

New concrete slabs require a minimum of 90 days drying time before covering them with a Cork floor.

All Concrete sub-floors must be dry, smooth (level with 3/16” in a 10 foot Radius – 1/8” in 6’) and free of structural defects. Hand scrape or sand with a 20 grit #3-1/2 open face paper to remove loose, flaky concrete. Grind high spots in concrete and fill low spots with a Portland based leveling compound (min. 3,000 psi).

Cork flooring may be installed on grade, above grade, as well as below grade where moisture conditions do not exist. Make sure that the perimeter of the foundation has adequate drainage and use a vapor barrier when installing below grade.

#### **Wood Sub-Floors**

Wood sub-floors need to be well nailed or secured with screws. Nails should be shanks and screws need to be counter sunk. The wood sub-floor needs to be structurally sound and dry, smooth (level with 3/16” in a 10 foot Radius – 1/8” in 6’). It should not exceed 12% moisture prior to installation. If the sub-floor is single layer, less than 3/4” thick, add a single cross layer for strength and stability (minimum 5/16” thick for a total 1” thickness). This is to reduce the possibility of squeaking.

#### **Sub-floor Moisture Check**

On and below grade applications are susceptible to moisture and should be tested for moisture prior to installation in several locations within the installation area. Acceptable conditions for above, on and below grade applications are:

- Less than 3 lbs. /1000 sq. ft. /24 hrs. on calcium chloride test
- Less than a reading of 5.0 on a Tramex Concrete Moisture Encounter (moisture meter)

To correct any sub-floor problems concerning moisture, either wait until the sub-floor dries to meet specifications or use appropriate moisture barrier.

### **Sub-floors Other Than Wood or Concrete**

Note: Carpet and rubber tiles are unacceptable underlayments and must be removed.

Terrazzo, tile and any other hard surfaces that are dry, structurally sound and level, as described above, are suitable as a sub-floor for Cork.

### **Radiant Heated Sub-floors**

Before installing over a radiant-heated floor turn off heat and wait until the floor has reached room temperature.

After installing the floor return the heat to the previous setting, slowly 2° at a time. Caution:

The slab surface must never exceed 78° F. in temperature.

## **INTERLOCKING CORK FLOORING INSTALLATION**

### **Preparation**

Keep the flooring in unopened cartons at room temperature for at least 48 hours before starting the installation. The temperature must be at least 65F, humidity levels of the environment should be between 45%-65%. Remove all moldings and wall-base and undercut all door casings with a hand or power jamb saw using a scrap piece of flooring and underlayment as a guide to ensure that you undercut the door jamb to the proper height. Aesthetically, Cork floors should be laid parallel to the direction of the incoming light. This helps to diminish the appearance of long seams between panels. In long narrow rooms, you should lay the Cork floor parallel to the long wall. In doing this you will have a nicer installation, and you will improve the structural stability of the floor along with reducing the amount of cutting required during installation.

When you are laying Cork flooring in several rooms, it will be necessary to trim the doorjamb, and entryways in all of the affected areas. There should be an expansion gap of at least 1/2" to all fixed objects and walls in the room. Rooms with a maximum of 800 square feet are possible to install without any transitional concerns. For rooms larger than 800 square feet you will need to increase the edge spacing accordingly. The rule to follow is to allow an additional 1/16" for every 3 feet of wall length. This additional expansion gap cannot be occupied by anything. Please understand that this is not an infinite formula, there will be a point where the flooring itself weighs too much to efficiently move as required and it will buckle. Remember when you are planning your installation to allow for t-molding transitions at all pass-through doorways that are less than 48" inches in width.

Unevenness in the wall/loosening of the joints

- In cases of a starter wall not being straight, it will be necessary to scribe the first row of panels to the contour of the start wall.
- Then remove the panels by holding the long side, raising it and at the same time taking it out from the adjacent panel seam.
- The loosened panels then can be easily separated on the end (short) side. You should never bend the panels, which have been joined together backwards as they will be damaged.
- Cut the panels using a saw suitable for your application such as a jigsaw or a circular saw.
- Reinstall the first row of cut panels again from left to right. Press the first panel of the second row using the groove-jointing ledge into the first row panel.

### **"Racking the Floor"**

As you install the floor, blend the Cork planks from several cartons to provide a random look throughout the installation. As you continue working across the floor be sure to maintain the 8" minimum stagger between end joints on all adjacent rows. Never waste material; use the left over pieces from the cuts to start the next row or to complete a row. All flooring installations must use an approved underlayment. In a floating installation, a 1/2" expansion gap must be maintained around the perimeter of the room. After allowing the floor to acclimate and ensuring that proper subfloor requirements are met, you can begin the installation by laying the underlayment. As you lay the first plank, use spacers to maintain

the minimum 1/2" expansion gap around the perimeter of the room. Install the first panel. You should begin in the left hand corner of the room and lay the panel so that the tongue faces the wall. Install the end seams together at a 45° angle. Lower the panel to the floor. The cut piece from the first row (which is at least 8" long) will be used to start the second row. Be sure to always stagger the end seams a minimum of eight inches. To begin the second row, place the tongue of the cut piece into the groove and lock down into place. Joining multiple panels together is quite simple. Insert the short seam into the first panel of the second row. Slide the tongue as close to the existing row as possible. Lower the panel completely to the subfloor. In this position the long tongue will be laying on the existing panel groove. Take care not to damage the groove joint. Put your fingers under the second panel of the second row (near to the joint with the first panel) and lift the up slightly on the panel. The first panel on the second row will also lift up slightly. Now slide the panel towards the first row by pulling toward you (if you are kneeling on the flooring) or pushing the plank into the first row if you are kneeling on the underlayment. Once the panel is fully seated in the first row lay the panel flat, the joint should be closed by now. If not do not force the locking mechanism, stop and repeat the process listed above until you have successfully engaged the locking mechanisms. Now that you have joined the first few panels together, the rest of the flooring should be a simple repeating of the process you have just completed. Remember to check the wall for unevenness and refer to the instructions in Interlocking Cork flooring installation. Here is a tip; if necessary you can assemble the first three (3) rows of flooring at a distance from the wall. Once you have sufficient flooring installed to sit on top of it during installation, you can reposition the flooring the proper 1/2" from the wall. This method is easier than trying to assemble the planks while kneeling on the underlayment.

#### **Last Row Installation**

The last row will be cut to fit and should be wider than two inches. Existing doorframes should be undercut, in order for the Cork to be installed under them. You need to maintain an expansion space of 1/2" inch, around the fixed objects under the doorframe. Remember to use a T-Molding when installing flooring through doorways less than 48" in width. While installing at doorframes, if the panel cannot be installed at the proper angle it will be necessary to sand the joint sides in order to achieve this requirement. Please use a bead of wood glue when you do this to ensure that the flooring stays together. It will be necessary to use a tapping block and a mallet, in order to push the panels into one another. If the doors have not been undercut, then a 1/2" inch expansion gap must be maintained in front, between the Cork flooring and the doorframe.

#### **Final Touches:**

Install the proper trim molding at the doorways to achieve the transition and along the walls to cover the edges of any gaps along the wall due to irregularity. (Do not attach transitions or trim pieces to the floor.)

Every effort is made to ensure the accuracy of these instructions at the time of printing, however, this document is subject to change. Please consult our website for the most up to date information. For installation help please contact Robina Floors, 825 Great Southwest Parkway SW, Atlanta, GA 30336. Call Toll Free: 888.862.9898 or visit [www.robinafloors.com](http://www.robinafloors.com).