

You must read and understand these instructions completely before installing Aronson's Cork Tile Flooring. If these instructions leave you with unanswered questions or if you need additional information, please contact Aronson's Floor Covering at (212) 243 4993 before starting installation.

It is the responsibility of the installer to determine suitability of Aronson's Cork Tile Flooring for each application. Prior to installation, installer should inspect all material. Any defect must be reported directly to Aronson's. Should an individual tile be doubtful in appearance or dimension, the installer should not use the tile. Aronson's will send a replacement in a timely manner.

Aronson's guarantees the quality of our cork flooring. Our warranty does not extend to the quality of work performed by a selected installer. Aronson's disclaims all liability for faulty installation of its product. This warranty does not cover material with visible defects once they are installed. Aronson's declines responsibility for failure resulting from or connected with subfloor or job- site damage or deficiencies.

Color Variation:

Cork is a natural wood product; variations in color, therefore, occur naturally. Mix tiles from different boxes to maintain natural color and pattern variation and achieve an optimal visual blend.

Acclimation:

Cork Tile Flooring must be allowed to acclimate on-site for a minimum of 48 hours in advance of installation. Stack boxes of tiles no more than 3 high on their edges. The adhesive supplied by Aronson's should be stored at room temperature and not allowed to freeze. During storage and installation, maintain temperature and relative humidity to levels consistent with the conditions that will prevail when the building is occupied. Optimum conditions are 70°F (21°C) at 30-50 % relative humidity.

Substrate Preparation:

Cork Tiles may be installed directly over concrete or wood subfloors. In both cases the subfloor must be sound, clean, free of contamination, dry, smooth, level and flat with a maximum variation of 1/8" across 10'. Any surface imperfections in the subfloor can telescope through the cork tile and be visible on the finished surface of the cork floor.

We recommend using an underlayment-grade plywood or board that is guaranteed smooth and free of voids (follow manufacturer's installation instructions). Fill and smooth all joints, cracks and imperfections with a Portland cement-based underlayment patching product such as Ardex Feather Finish, Henry 549 Feather-Finish, or Mapei PlaniPatch.

Subfloor must not exceed 14% moisture content (as measured by electrical resistance testing). Check basements and crawl spaces to ensure that they are dry and well-ventilated. Aronson's recommends placing 6 mil polyethylene sheeting as a vapour barrier in crawl spaces.

Concrete Substrate:

Fill any low spots with appropriate filler (as above) and scrape or grind any high spots. Slab must be cured a minimum of 28 days. Flooring must not be installed if vapor pressure exceeds 3 lbs. per 1000 sqft in 24 hours as tested according to ASTM F 1869 (calcium chloride test method). Preferably, the slab should be tested according to ASTM F 2170 (Standard Test Method for Determining Relative Humidity in Concrete Floor Slabs Using In-Situ Probes). Flooring must not be installed if the relative humidity inside of the concrete slab exceeds 75%.

Required tools:

- Vacuum cleaner and broom
- Tape measure
- Chalk-line
- Short nap (3/8") roller and frame for applying contact adhesive to floor
- Painter's extension pole for glue roller
- Clean paint tray
- Sharp utility knife
- Straight-edge or carpenter's square
- Small hand j-roller
- 75 or 100lbs roller (available as a tool rental)
- Water-based low VOC contact adhesive (supplied by Aronson's)

Floor Layout:

Decide in which direction you will lay the tile in the space (i.e., running ↔ or ↕). Establish a straight line parallel to the longest wall that runs in the same direction as you want the tiles with the aid of a chalk-line. Using a tape measure or ruler, measure the width of one cork tile away from that wall and mark the floor at both ends of the wall. Snap a chalk line between these two points. Verify at several points that the distance between the line and the wall never exceeds the width of one tile. If the space is bigger than the width of one tile at any point along the wall (because of irregularities or imperfections in the wall), snap a new chalk line that is a bit closer to the wall. This chalk line will serve as your guide to keep your first row straight and parallel to the wall.

Trim Tiles to Size:

Due to the natural expansion and contraction of cork, some tiles may vary in size. This is a typical characteristic, and minor trimming may be required. Loose-lay all tiles and trim them before spreading the glue. Any size variations resulting from these natural changes are not considered defects but rather an inherent property of cork flooring.

Spreading the adhesive on the floor:

Sweep and thoroughly vacuum the floor to remove all debris and dust leftover from subfloor preparation. Pour the adhesive into a paint tray and apply with a new short nap roller attached to a painter's extension pole. Take care to gently seal your chalk-line with the adhesive. You may coat the entire floor area or as much square footage as you feel you can install in one day. Wait at least 60 minutes for the contact adhesive to dry. The glue will become translucent (more transparent, less opaque) when dry. A slight gloss on the surface of the dried glue indicates that there is enough glue on the floor. If the substrate was too porous (absorbing the glue) and the dried glue looks dull (matte, no gloss), roll on another thin coat of adhesive and wait 60 minutes for it to dry. Avoid walking on the glued floor.

Installing the pre-glued tiles:

Make sure that you brush or dust off the back of the tiles before installing them. Any debris left on the back of a tile will telescope through the cork and be visible on the face of tile.

We recommend loose laying all tiles before gluing them.

You will start your first row of tiles along your chalk line, leaving the space between the line and the wall to be filled later. Continue to work away from the wall, laying parallel rows. When using a 12" x 24" format tile, subsequent rows should be offset to stagger the joints. As in brickwork, start a new row by laying a tile at the mid-point of a tile from the previous row to offset the joints.

Line up the edge of your tile with your chalk guideline and set the tile down lightly. Only apply pressure when the cork is perfectly aligned. Pressure will cause cork to stick firmly and further adjustment will not be possible. When laying subsequent tiles, play around with the flexibility of the cork to make the joints between the tiles as tight as possible and avoid gaps.

Use a small hand J-roller to press down all the edges and joints between tiles as you go. Once all the tiles have been laid in the space, roll down all of the joints again with a 100 lbs. roller to make sure that all the tiles are firmly adhered.

Fill visible gaps between tiles with a color-matched latex caulking (available at special wood flooring stores) or wood filler putty tinted with touch-up stain supplied by Aronson's. Wipe away excess with a damp rag.

Mix tiles from different boxes to maintain natural color and pattern variation and achieve an optimal visual blend.

Your cork floor is very well protected by our oil finish. To keep it looking beautiful over a long lifetime, the secret is to keep it clean by regular sweeping and vacuuming.

- Prevent grit, sand, salt and dirt from being ground into the floor as this will dull or scratch the finish.
- When occasionally damp-mopping the floor, use Oil Soap only. Pour 50 to 100 ml in 10 liters of water and clean with a damp mop. One liter of oil soap will suffice for ~80 floor washes. Use a well wrung mop.
- Do not clean with a solvent cleaner (e.g., hardwood cleaner) as this will tend to remove the oil.
- Never use a buffing machine to maintain the floor as it will damage the floor.
- Spills should be wiped up immediately. Walk-off mats at entrance doors and in front of kitchen sinks are encouraged.
- Protect your floor from everyday use by installing felt or plastic protectors under “feet” of furniture.
- Caster-wheeled chairs should have wide casters, preferably in neoprene.
- Observe re-finishing maintenance schedule (see below) and re-oil the cork floor when high-traffic areas begin to show signs of wear.

Warranty:

We offer a 5-year renewable finish warranty for our cork flooring for normal wear and tear if you follow the following re-finishing maintenance schedule.

Apply one coat of our Universal Oil:

- Once a year for high-traffic commercial;
- Once every 2 to 3 years for low to medium commercial traffic; or,
- Once every 5 to 7 years for residential cork flooring applications.

You can also spot repair or refinish a worn area of your floor.

Never apply urethane to your hard wax oil finish cork floor as it will be damaged by urethane!