



How To Install Cork Tiles

Preparation

Place the tiles in the room you are to fit them, open the boxes, spread on the floor in small piles give them at least 4 days to acclimatise to the area.

Turn off under floor heating at least 48 hours before fixing.

The better the floor is prepared the better the finished floor will be, so make the sub floor as good as you want the finished floor to be.

For the natural tiles, (without self-adhesive backing), we recommend good quality natural latex adhesive for most floors finishes. Follow the instructions on the adhesive carefully. Make sure the floor is dry, wax, grease and dust free (for new concrete floors it is recommended to leave the floor to dry for 1 month per inch of depth). **All sub-floors need priming with a good quality floor primer (not sealant)** and you may need to use a contact adhesive to get good adhesion. (For self-adhesive tiles you should ensure the sub floor provides good adhesion; the self-adhesive backing is very sticky as you will see if you get 2 tiles stuck together they are impossible to get apart). Some surfaces are better than others and it is important to test a small area of the floor to ensure adhesion is good before proceeding with laying the full floor.

Where you intend to use the tiles on a wall, e.g. as a notice board, the surface should be clean, dry, free of wax, oil etc. **It is particularly important that you do test areas with walls.** Most walls will have been painted, paint can vary a lot from old paint that may have a poor or powdery surface to new modern paints that are designed to be cleanable, to be wiped clean or are anti-graffiti. These paints are sometimes called Diamond and other similar names. They are designed to stop things sticking to them which means the adhesive on the cork tiles may not be adequate. These walls should be rubbed down and the coating removed. Sizing or priming with a contact adhesive may be required to provide an adequate surface for the tiles to stick to. **When sticking tiles directly to walls it is imperative that you test the area first.** Ensure that the surface is such that the tiles stay in place for at least 2 days before continuing to put up the rest of the tiles. **If the tile peels the surface is not adequately prepared.**

Installation

We advise the use of contact adhesive for wall or notice board use; contact adhesive has a strong grab and more mechanical strength than latex adhesive. For notice boards it is preferable you stick the tiles to a base board that you attach to the wall with mechanical fixings, e.g. screws. If you require a thicker notice board you can use 2 layers of tiles, be careful as if you put 2 tiles together adhesive side to adhesive side as the glue is very strong and once stuck together they will not come apart.

Apply adhesive to the floor with a notched / serrated spreader as per the adhesive instructions; **spread what you can work in half an hour**. Do not use an excessive amount of adhesive that would wet the tiles or float them above the floor. You need them to make good contact with the floor. Press the tiles firmly onto the adhesive, a tile roller is best, if you don't have one a rolling pin could be used. If you get an excess of glue remove it carefully while it's wet with a damp cloth.

Different floor surfaces need different amounts of adhesive. You want enough to achieve a good bond without surplus under or coming out of the edge of the tile. A little testing will soon give you the feel for the amount you need.

After 2 hours check all floor tiles to make sure they are bedded securely, a roller can help you achieve good bonding.

Don't overdo the amount of water based adhesive, cork is a wood product and like all wood products they are affected by water.

Give the adhesive at least 48 hours or adequate time to go off as per the adhesive instructions, before you seal the floor or allow the floor to be used.

Finishing & Protecting

To protect your floor you can seal it with acrylic polish or Polyurethane varnish. Water based varnish dries very quickly; you can usually do several coats in one day. A paint roller with a very short pile is best. It is important with water based seal that you do not over wet the cork, cork is a wood product and affected by water. Start with a very light coat to seal the surface, an almost a dry coat. Water based varnish dries very quickly and you can return to add another coat usually after 1 hour and then repeat several times in 1 day. Carefully check the instructions from the varnish manufacturer. 5 coats will usually give a great finish, and can be done in one day with water based seals and they have little smell and do not usually yellow over time. Solvent based seals don't affect the tiles as much as water based seals. We still recommend that you use very light sealing coats as the bare tiles will absorb a lot of varnish if its put on heavily, which can make sealing them proportionately quite expensive. **Let it dry, which may take a day or more, then re-coat.** Once you have the first sealing coat on you can use a little heavier coat each time.

Cork is a wood product and you can use coloured varnish on it like you can on wood. **Experiment on a small piece first to get the result you want.**

Troubleshooting, if the cork cups or curls up after varnishing you have wet it too much and it has made the tile top shrink. Be careful to apply varnish. If cork does not stick to the floor check if it's the floor or the tile that not make good adhesion, make sure you get good contact when laying the tiles, enough adhesive, but not so much that the tiles float. **If you put tiles on a wall and they start peeling off the wall has not been adequately prepared.**

Important points

- Let the cork tiles acclimatize to the room
- Prepare the surface well, priming it if needed
- Use good quality adhesive
- Test and make sure the surface provides adequate adhesion
- Let the adhesive dry fully before sealing or using the floor
- Seal with multiple very light coats of varnish applied with a short hair roller

Contact Us

If you have any questions or queries regarding the **Cork tiles** we offer, or about the installation process, simply contact a member of our team on **01636 639 900** and we'll be happy to help.

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