



CORK TILE FLOORING FAQ

What is cork flooring made of?

Allstate cork floors are made from the bark of the cork tree. The bark is harvested from the tree every 9 years, leaving the tree intact. The cork tree is indigenous to the Mediterranean region, growing mainly in Portugal and can live from 150 to 200 years.

Why Use Cork?

- Cork is 100% sustainable.
- Cork is renewable.
- Cork is 100% Natural.
- Cork is warm underfoot.
- Cork is quiet underfoot.
- Cork floors are durable.
- Cork is beautiful.

Is cork flooring an environmentally conscious flooring choice?

Yes. Cork is harvested from the cork tree every 9 years, leaving the tree time to regenerate the bark. The cork tree must be 25 years old before the bark is harvested. Several studies found that cork is carbon-negative, meaning it can store more carbon than the amount that is required to produce it. The cork oak tree is never cut down and can live for 200 years.

Dias, Ana & Arroja, Luis. (2014). A model for estimating carbon accumulation in cork products. *Forest Systems*. 23. 236. 10.5424/fs/2014232-04100.

Is cork good for allergy sufferers?

Yes. Since cork does not absorb dust, it helps in preventing allergies.

How long has Cork been used for flooring?

Cork was first used for flooring in the 1800's.

Is Cork flooring strong?

Yes. Cork flooring is made by compressing cork granules under extreme heat & pressure. Cork tile can be compressed up to 40% and "bounce back".

Does Cork have a memory?

Cork has a natural cellular construction. This it is able to bounce back.

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What type of areas can Cork tile be used?

Cork is a great floor for residential use. In kitchens it creates a softer area for one to stand while cooking. In bathrooms its "warms" up a cold space. For bathroom use, we suggest an extra layer of finish be applied and the perimeter be sealed. Cork is inherently resistant to insects and water resistant. Cork is also a good choice for contract/commercial applications.

How about loads from furniture?

We suggest using pads under the feet of furniture to protect the floor. Do not use nylon/hard plastic floor protectors on furniture feet.

How does cork handle water?

Cork is naturally resistant to water. However, we advise cleaning up any spills as soon as possible.

Does cork help with noise issues?

Yes. Cork, helps to "deaden" a room, thus reducing the echo effect. Unlike wood cork isn't prone to creaking.

Does cork flooring act as an insulator?

Yes, Cork is an excellent natural thermal insulator. Cork floors stay warm even when installed over cold concrete floors.

Is underfloor heating/radiant heat OK with cork floors?

Yes.

Are cork floors affected by moisture and temperature changes?

Cork floors are subject to expansion and contraction due to climate. During heating season, moisture is lost and the tiles may contract slightly showing small spaces between the planks. When moisture levels increase, the tiles will expand. Cork as a rule is more stable than wood flooring for the fact that when wood expands, it does so only in the direction of the grain. With cork, the expansion or contraction process is dispersed in all directions. With proper acclimation, installation and maintenance, any expansion/contraction will not be noticeable.

Do cork floors fade?

Yes, exposure to UV light as well as sunlight will cause color variations to cork; typically, cork will lighten. This is normal and not a manufacturing defect. Area rugs and large furniture will block light exposure and cause uneven coloration. To minimize, furnishings and rugs should be moved occasionally. Covering large exposed windows will help as well.

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What is the installation method for cork floors?

Glue down using the correct adhesive. See our installation sheet for details. We suggest using the ashlar or brick pattern to install cork, not corner to corner.

How do I maintain my cork floor?

All that is required to maintain a cork floor is a regular vacuuming and light cleaning with a damp mop. DO NOT use Ammonia-based cleaners or chemicals must not be used to clean the floor. A cork floor should be treated as any quality wood flooring. As durable as cork flooring is, it must be remembered that it is still a natural product. Please see our maintenance sheet for details.

Protectors should be installed under chair and table legs; when using furniture with wheels, the floor must be additionally protected by using mats; heavy furniture should have felt pads or non-staining glides or casters; steel wool or abrasives must not be used on the floor; a quality doormat at the entrance should be used to help protect the cork floor from outside grit and sand; adequate protection should be taken when moving appliances or large pieces of furniture around the floor; cork, as a natural product, may change color when exposed to direct sunlight, so use blinds or curtains to minimize this effect.

Floor Protection

Furniture legs should have large surface, non-staining floor protectors. Chair leg glides should be of at least 1 1/4" diameter and covered with felt pads, Nassco clear sleeve floor protectors are recommended. The felt pads should be checked periodically for grit and wear and replaced when necessary. Chairs with casters should have easily swiveling casters that are at least 2" in diameter with non-staining hard rubber treads at least 3/4" wide. Do not use ball-shaped casters without chair mats. Chair mats may be required under chairs with casters/wheels. Use entrance mats or walk off mats to help prevent dirt and moisture from coming in contact with the floor. Do not allow a moisture saturated floor mat to remain on the cork floor.

The Natural environmental benefits of the Cork Tree:

- Cork oak trees In the Montado area help manage the water cycle, preventing desertification and absorb significant amounts of CO2 from the atmosphere, preventing climate change.
- The cork oak tree forests have a high biodiversity rate, ranking them as one of 36 global biodiversity hotspots.
- After the cork trees are harvested, they absorb up to five times more carbon from the atmosphere.
- Cork is 100% natural, and it biodegrades completely.
- 100% of the cork bark can be recycled before and after processing.
- Allstate cork tile is GreenGuard™ Gold

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