puretree
cork

CORK HERITAGE FLOORING
INSTALLATION GUIDE

September 2021

puretreecork.com

Introduction

Thank you for purchasing a Puretree cork floor.

The following installation instructions have been written as a guide and must be read and followed in conjunction with BS 8203:2017 – Code of practice for installation of resilient floor coverings.

Puretree are not responsible for any floor failing as a result of or connected to the subfloor, subsurface, site damage, environmental deficiencies or problems identified after the flooring has been installed. It is imperative that all substrates must be dry, clean, structurally sound and level.

We therefore recommend that all our cork floors are installed by a professional installer who has experience in subfloor preparation and moisture testing as well as the correct installation techniques.

If you require any technical information in regards to our products or installation queries, please contact our Sales Office on 01392 849116.

Disclaimer

Our installation guide and recommendations are based on careful testing and collected data. We are free of liability regarding the outcome of our recommendations. Specific site conditions are outside of our influence and if you have any doubts, we suggest that you test the application method on site.

Pre Delivery

Prior to delivery and installation a thorough inspection of the property should be carried out to ensure the site conditions are suitable for the storage and installation of cork flooring.

All outside doors and windows must be in place and all concrete, masonry, plastering and any other wet work should be completed and dry. All plumbing, washing machines and drains should be thoroughly checked and repaired if leaking.

The walls should be painted, except the final coat and where possible delay the installation of skirting until after the flooring has been laid.

The installation site and storage area should have a fully commissioned central or underfloor heating system and have a consistent room temperature of 15°c - 24°c with a relative humidity of 50-65% for a minimum of 14 days prior to installation.

All existing subfloors must be checked for moisture prior to delivery and any subfloor exceeding the maximum acceptable moisture level must be prepared with a suitable DPM or if applicable, allowed to dry – see subfloor preparation for details.

Contents

Delivery

On the day of delivery please ensure there is room for a large vehicle to park near the property. It is imperative that you have able-bodied people on site to help offload and sign off the delivery note. If your road has any access or parking restrictions please let us know beforehand.

All floors should be carefully inspected upon delivery to ensure the correct floor, finish and quantity has been delivered prior to acclimatisation and storage.

Puretree Cork can not accept the return of flooring once it has been stored onsite

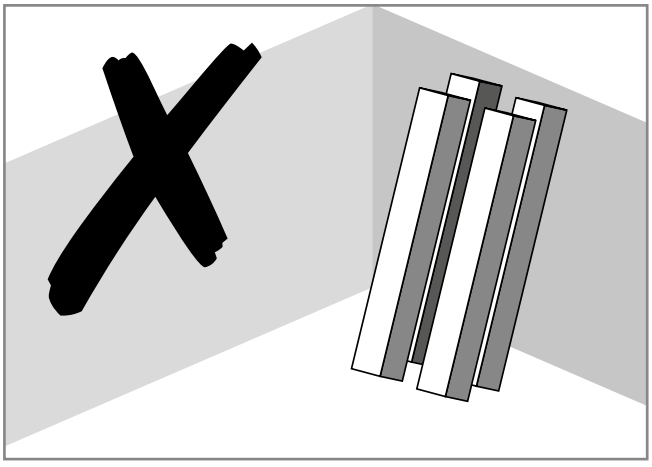
Acclimatisation & Storage

We recommend that our cork flooring is allowed to acclimatise in the room, or adjoining room, where the floor is to be laid. Acclimatisation times can vary dependant upon the environmental conditions, but we would recommend a minimum of 72 hours, or in the case of very high or low humidity environments, a minimum of 14 days.

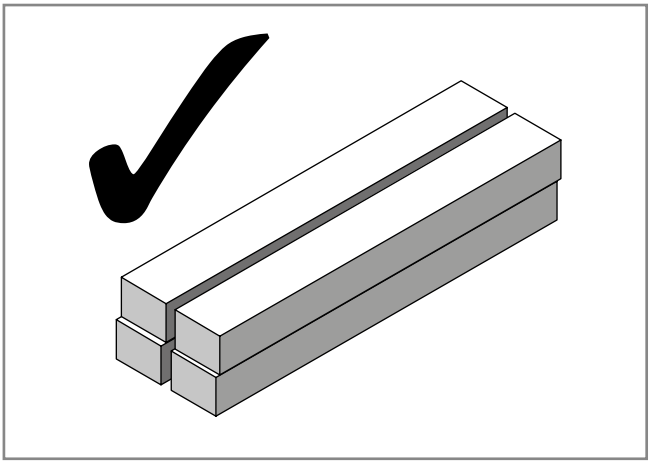
Cork flooring must be acclimatised in conditions as close as possible to those in which it will be installed.

Direct sources of heat or direct sunlight should also be avoided.

Never lean flooring packs against walls or store them in garages/outbuildings, near recently laid concrete slabs or any wet environment.



Incorrect Flooring Storage



Correct Flooring Storage

When using a recommended product, always read the manufactures datasheet to ensure suitablity and application method.

Coverage Guide

F Ball Stopgap F77

STOPGAP F77 is a solvent free two part epoxy resin system which cures to provide a waterproof surface membrane. It can be used to isolate residual construction moisture where relative humidity values are up to 98%.

COVERAGE PER UNIT (ONE-COAT APPLICATION)		
	Up to 98% RH or up to 90% RH with Underfloor Heating	Up to 85% RH
3kg Kit	5.5m²	7.5m²
7kg Kit	12.5m²	17.5m²
14kg Kit	25m²	35m²

F Ball Stopgap 1200 Pro

STOPGAP 1200 is a low odour, fast setting, fast drying, two component smoothing underlayment suitable for preparing sound internal subfloors prior to the installation of new floorcoverings.

APPLIED THICKNESS	COVERAGE PER UNIT	CONSUMPTION PER 100m² AREA	GRADED AGGREGATE
2-3mm	5.0m²	20 units	n/a
5mm	2.5m²	40 units	n/a
10mm	1.3m²	79 units	n/a
30mm	0.6m²	172 x powder and 86 x aggregate	

F Ball Stopgap 1100 Gypsum

STOPGAP 1100 GYPSUM is a self-levelling smoothing underlayment designed specifically for application over sound calcium sulphate (e.g. anhydrite) screeds prior to the installation of new floorcoverings.

APPLIED THICKNESS	COVERAGE PER UNIT	CONSUMPTION PER 100m² AREA	GRADED AGGREGATE
2-3mm	5.0m²	20 units	n/a
5mm	2.8m²	36 units	n/a
10mm	1.4m²	73 units	n/a
50mm	0.3m²	278 x powder and 157 x aggregate	

F Ball Stopgap 700 Superflex

STOPGAP 700 SUPERFLEX is a fast drying, fibre reinforced self-levelling smoothing underlayment designed for use on plywood, sand/cement concrete and steel subfloors prior to the installation of new floorcoverings.

APPLIED THICKNESS	COVERAGE PER UNIT	CONSUMPTION PER 100m² AREA
3mm	4.8m²	21 units
5mm	2.9m²	35 units
10mm	1.4m²	70 units

F Ball Stopgap P121

STOPGAP P121 is an acrylic primer designed to promote the application characteristics of STOPGAP 1100 GYPSUM to calcium sulphate screeds e.g. anhydrite.

PACK SIZE	COVERAGE
5 Litre	50m²

F Ball Stopgap P131

STOPGAP P131 is a primer designed to promote the adhesion of STOPGAP smoothing underlayments to smooth non-absorbent surfaces. It can also be used as a general purpose primer for absorbent surfaces to promote adhesion and to prevent unacceptably rapid drying of adhesives and smoothing underlayments.

PACK SIZE	COVERAGE
5 Litres neat	50m² (max)
5 litres diluted (4:1)	100m² (max)
5 litres diluted (7:1)	175m² (max)

Subfloor Preparation for Concrete, Anhydrite or Sand/Cement Screeds

1. Surface Laitance

It is important on new screeds to remove any surface laitance which is always present on anhydrite screeds but can also be present on concrete or sand/cement screeds. Laitance comes in varying degrees of thickness, from a fine dust to several millimetres or more depending on contributing factors.

Surface laitance can be removed in several different ways depending upon its thickness and scale of the project. For large areas shot blasting, mechanical planing, scrabbling or grinding are all suitable. Handheld grinding machines, designed for precision, are recommended for use in smaller areas and edge details. Surface laitance also hinders the drying process, therefore it is crucial that it is removed as quickly as possible to minimise any delays to the installation schedule.

2. Contamination

Subfloors must be free of contamination from paint, oil, existing adhesive, grease, dirt and any previously applied sealers. Contamination can be removed by shot blasting, mechanical planing, scrabbling or grinding. As an alternative, in the case of old adhesive residues (including bitumen and carpet tile tackifiers), F Ball Stopgap 1200 PRO levelling compound on sand and cement screeds can be applied between 3-10mm to isolate the contamination. Contaminated anhydrite screeds must be mechanically cleaned to remove all contamination.

3. Moisture Testing & DPMs

All existing concrete, anhydrite or sand/cement subfloors must be checked thoroughly for moisture prior to the installation of any cork floor. There are various methods for testing the moisture content of screeds: digital moisture meters, hygrometers and carbide test kits. It is the installers responsibility to take and record moisture readings across the entire floor at regular intervals to ensure a representative moisture reading is achieved.

For warranty purposes, the installer must keep these moisture readings, the location of moisture tests, the type of meter used, and the calibration date of the meter in the event of a floor failure or warranty claim. The highest moisture reading obtained must be lower than 65% RH - the maximum acceptable moisture content for screeds when installing cork flooring. If the highest moisture reading obtained is higher than 65% RH, cork flooring must not be laid.

For Wet Concrete or Sand/Cement Screeds

Wet concrete or sand/cement screeds can either be left to dry naturally or F Ball Stopgap F77 DPM can be installed if the moisture content is below 98% RH for non-heated screeds or in the case of screeds containing underfloor heating if the moisture content is below 90% RH.

After the application of F Ball Stopgap F77 the floor must be levelled with a minimum of 3mm of Stopgap 1200 Pro

For Wet Anhydrite Screeds

Wet anhydrite screeds cannot be treated with a DPM and instead must be allowed to dry.

Anhydrite screeds which contain underfloor heating can after 28 days be turned on in order to accelerate the drying process – the underfloor heating must be turned on to the minimum operating temperature for that heating system. After 24 hours this can then be increased by 1°c per day. The underfloor heating must be carefully commissioned to avoid shocking the screed.

4. Priming

For Concrete or Sand/Cement Screeds

Concrete or sand/cement screeds do not require priming if the floor has had F Ball Stopgap F77 DPM installed and the levelling process is occurring within 24 hours. If however the DPM is over 24 hours old or the screed is dusty, F Ball Stopgap P131 primer must be applied.

For Anhydrite Screeds

All anhydrite screeds must be primed with F Ball Stopgap P121 prior to levelling and the flooring being installed.

5. Levelling

All existing concrete, anhydrite or sand/cement subfloors must be checked thoroughly to ensure that the surface is flat.

The maximum tolerance for the installation of cork flooring should be no more than a 3mm deviation when a 3m straightedge is laid across the subfloor.

If the subfloor has a deviation greater than the maximum tolerance, or a DPM has been applied the subfloor must be levelled with a suitable levelling compound. For concrete or sand/cement screeds, F Ball Stopgap 1200 Pro should be used or in the case of anhydrite screeds, F Ball Stopgap 1100 Gypsum.

Subfloor Preparation for Wooden Subfloors

1. Ventilation

An inspection must be carried out to check there is adequate ventilation for suspended timber floors at ground level.

Air bricks should be kept clear of any obstructions. If issues are found these must be dealt with prior to installing a cork floor.

2. Secure Wooden Subfloors

Existing floorboards, chipboard or plywood floors must be fixed to joists or battens with good quality countersunk screws. Nails should be avoided as these loosen over time and can lead to subfloor movement which is a common cause of squeaky floorboards.

2. Contamination

Wooden subfloors must be free of contamination from paint, oil, existing adhesive, grease, dirt and sealers.

Contamination can be removed by sanding with 60 or 80 grit sandpaper or as an alternative, in the case of old adhesive residues (including bitumen and carpet tile tackifiers), 5.5mm SP101 plywood should be overlaid

4. Levelling

Wooden subfloors must be checked thoroughly to ensure that the surface is flat and no gaps exist between boards/panels.

The maximum tolerance for the installation of cork flooring should be no more than a 3mm deviation when a 3m straightedge is laid across the subfloor.

If the subfloor has a deviation greater than the maximum tolerance, the subfloor must be levelled.

Existing plywood or chipboard floors can be levelled either by overlaying with SP101 plywood (min. 5.5mm) or by applying F Ball Stopgap 700 Superflex, a fibre reinforced floor smoothing underlayment.

If the plywood or chipboard is clean and level, the joints and any screw holes must be filled with F Ball Stopgap 500 Micro and allowed to dry thoroughly.

5. Floorboard Overlay

Wooden floorboards are not a suitable subfloor for the direct installation of Cork Heritage cork tiles and must be overlaid with SP101 plywood 5.5mm.

Overlaying with SP101 Plywood

Prior to overlaying a subfloor with SP101 plywood a moisture test should be carried out to ensure that the plywood and timber subfloor are within ±2% of each other – this should be carried out with a professional wood moisture meter such as a Protimeter Timbermaster or similar.

SP101 plywood can be fixed with countersunk screws or divergent flooring grade staples.

Fixing screws should be spaced at a maximum 100mm centres around the perimeter of each plywood sheet, 12mm from the edge and at a maximum 150mm apart within the sheets. It is recommended, where possible, that sheets are laid perpendicular to floor boards with the joints in the plywood staggered.

Pre-Installation Checklist

✓ Inspect the flooring for damage and check the specification against the order. If you (the fitter) or your customer is not happy with the flooring, do not fit it, instead contact our sales office.

An installed floor is an accepted floor

✓ Check that you have all of the tools required for the installation (pages 10-11)

✓ Check that you have prepared the subfloor as per our guidelines

✓ Check that you selected the correct installation method for the type of subfloor and type of flooring

✓ Check that you have material (such as Correx®) to cover the finished floor to avoid other trades damaging the floor after installation

DO NOT START to fit any flooring if any wet trades are working in the same building or if there is evidence of wet plaster, concrete or recent building work such as paint etc. Conditions must be the same as when the room will be in final use.

Puretree are not responsible for any floor failing as a result of or connected with sub-floor, subsurface, site damage, environmental deficiencies or problems identified after the flooring has been installed.

We therefore recommend that all our wood floors are installed by a professional wood flooring installer who has experience in subfloor preparation and moisture testing as well as the correct installation techniques.

If you require any technical information in regards to our products or installation queries please contact our Sales Office on 01392 849116.

Moisture Testing Results

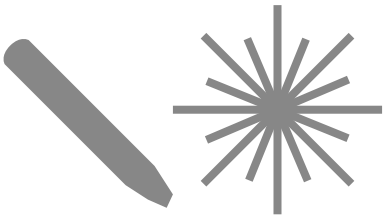
Contractor	
Site Address	
Customer	
Subfloor Type	

Date	Location Ref	Meter used	Calibration Date	Moisture Reading

Recommended Tools

Vacuum

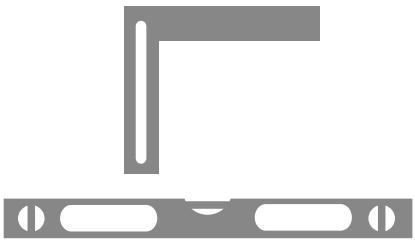
Dust Mask & Eye Protection



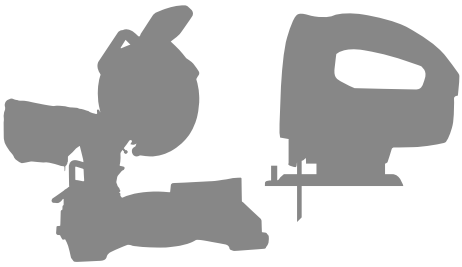
Chalk Line or Laser

Pencil

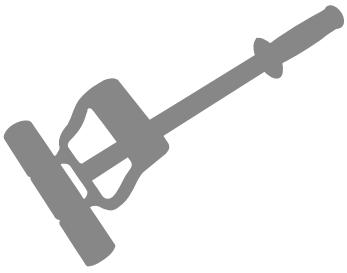
Straight Edge (3m)



Spirit Level & Set Square



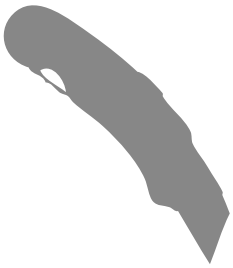
Compound/Chop Saw or Jigsaw



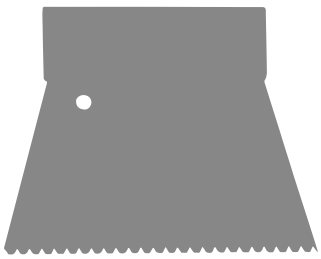
Hand or Floor Roller

Moisture Meter

Tape Measure



Utility Knife



B3 Notched Trowel

General Guidance

Setting Out

It is important to ensure that the first row of tiles are installed in a straight line as this sets the layout for the rest of the floor.

It is recommended to start laying out tiles by using a chalk or laser line to create a straight line against the straightest wall and then offset to get a centre line down the length of the room.

This will ensure that the first and last row of tiles have similar widths. For walls which aren't straight it will be necessary to scribe the last row of tiles to the shape of the wall.

It is important to avoid ending up with narrow cuts down both sides of the room. For design purposes it may be necessary to move the centre line to line up with features such as fireplaces or focal points.

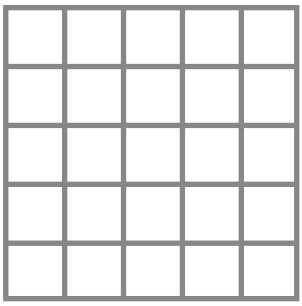
Expansion Gap

An expansion gap of at least 10mm should be left between the flooring and any walls or any other fixed object.

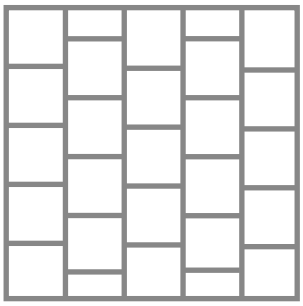
The necessary expansion gap must be evenly spaced around the perimeter of the floor – an expansion gap cannot be left on one side of the floor only.

Tile Layout

Tiles can be laid either in a grid pattern or they can be laid 'brick style' with each row of tiles offset by half the length of a tile.



Grid pattern



Brick style

Site Cleanliness

It is imperative when laying any cork floor that the area is clean, tidy and that any dust from cutting is kept to an absolute minimum.

Ideally all cutting should be carried out using sharp tools with good extraction minimising any dust in the environment. Any dust which falls on the subfloor must be vacuumed up prior to installing cork flooring.

Floor Protection

We recommend that after a cork floor is installed and where other building works are ongoing such as kitchen installations or skirting board installation, the floor should be immediately protected with Correx®.

Correx® is a recycled fluted polypropylene board which is designed to provide a waterproof surface as well as impact resistance. Joints should be taped to retain the waterproof properties and avoid fluids leaking onto the finished cork floor.

Correx® will prevent damaged caused by buliding works dust and painting as well as scuffing and scratching caused by step ladders, site footwear and general debris.

If you require Correx® floor protection please visit our website or contact our sales team for pricing.

Installation

Prior to commencing the installation it is crucial to ensure that all of the requirements outlined in the subfloor preparation section have been met, before the starter row is laid out as per the setting out guidelines.

Apply the Cork-a-Bond adhesive directly to the subfloor only using a B3 notched trowel held at an angle of 60°. Enough adhesive should be applied to completely cover approx. 0.5m^2 of the subfloor at a time, ensuring that the adhesive is evenly distributed and doesn't exceed the guide lines.

Installation should start from the centre line and work outwards towards the edge of the room. This is the opposite to installing a laminate or wood floor.

The tiles should then be laid directly into the wet adhesive and pushed tightly together. It is important to ensure that the joints are tight and the tiles align to any lines marked on the subfloor during the setting out stage.

Clean any adhesive that appears on the surface of the tiles or exceeds the guidelines by wiping away with a damp cloth. Do not use any chemicals, builder wipes or baby wipes as this can damage the finish.

It is recommended to occasionally test for proper bonding by lifting a tile which has been laid and checking that the whole underside of the tile is in contact with the adhesive – if the bond is satisfactory, the tile can then be replaced back into the wet adhesive.

After 30 minutes the floor should be rolled with either a hand roller for small areas or a 50-70Kg floor roller.

After a further 60 minutes the floor should be rolled again to ensure the tiles are securely bonded to the subfloor.

The last row of tiles should be scribed according to the shape of the room.

Whilst the adhesive is drying it is important to avoid point loads from knees or feet and therefore plywood or a similar sheet material should be used to spread the load.

Before sealing the cork tiles, the adhesive must be allowed to fully cure and therefore the floor should be left for 24 hours prior to applying any finishes or sanding the floor.

Initial After Care

Unfinished Tiles

Our unfinished tiles require a site applied finish to be applied directly after installation.

We recommend sanding any unfinished cork tiles directly after installation to remove any marks or adhesive residue which has occurred during the installation process.

Floors should be lightly sanded to a 150 grit using an orbital sander – we recommend using a Mirka Deros sander with a good quality dust extractor with 150 grit Abranet sander discs for the perfect finish.

After sanding, the floor should be thoroughly vacuumed to remove any dust from the floor.

The floor is then ready to be finished with your chosen oil, lacquer or varnish finish as per the maunfacturers instructions.

Pre-finished Tiles

Our pre-finished tiles can be used directly after installation in dry environments, however, if they are being installed in a wet area such as a kitchen or a bathroom or in a commercial application, the tiles must be sealed to help prevent the ingress of moisture in the joints between the tiles.

We recommend using either Rustins Quick Dry Varnish Matt or Bona Traffic HD, both of which have been extensively tested with our cork tiles.

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