Cork Underlayment Installation Guideline for Ceramic Tile, Engineered Wood & Laminate Flooring Systems

The following installation instructions are a recommendation, but are not intended as a definitive project specification. They are presented in an attempt to be used with recommended installation procedures as published by the National Wood Flooring Association (NWFA), Tile Council of North America (TCNA) and the American National Standards Institute (ANSI)

Tools needed: straight edge, sharp utility knife, appropriate bonding agent or 6-mil poly plastic
Uses: used above, on and below grade to install ceramic tiles, engineered wood and laminate flooring

GENERAL SUBFLOOR PREPARATION

1. All subfloors must be clean, dry, structurally sound, and within flat tolerance of the floor covering manufacturer's specific guidelines. Additional subfloor preparation may be required for specific flooring products; consult the flooring manufacturer's instructions for details.
2. Concrete: *For ceramic tile application:* the subfloor should be in strict accordance with the installation standards of the TCNA & ANSI. Inspect the Concrete subfloor for any open cracks and fill with a high-grade epoxy filler. *Wood Flooring application:* Test for excessive moisture prior to the installation of the cork underlayments. Moisture tolerance greater than 3 lbs. per 1000 s/f in 24hrs with a Calcium Chloride test, corrective action must be taken.
3. Wood subfloors: *Under ceramic tile application:* Consult the TCNA Installation handbook for appropriate reinforcement methods. All subfloor work should be in accordance with the recommended procedures as published by the Tile Council of America and the American National Standards Institute (ANSI). Including but not limited to deflection, flat and thickness requirements. *Under wood flooring application:* must be clean, dry, structurally sound, and within flat tolerance of the floor covering manufacturer's specific guidelines.
4. Ensure the subfloor is free of dirt and debris; bond breakers and release coatings; oil or any other residue that may interfere with the bond required for the installation of a glue down application of Cork Underlayment.

5. 70-115 moisture barricade 6mil plastic can be used in conjunction with cork underlayment over concrete slabs for floating applications of engineered wood and laminate flooring products.

PERIMETER ISOLATION STRIP: TO IMPROVE ACOUSTICAL PROPERTIES

1. Keep hard surface flooring material from direct contact with walls, cabinets, columns and other fixed vertical objects for optimal acoustic insulation performance.
2. Using a utility knife with a sharp blade and a straight edge, cut the cork into long strips approximately 1" wide.
3. Install strips vertically around the entire perimeter of the install and any fixed objects. Adhere or tack to the wall for positioning.
4. Trim the Perimeter Isolation Barrier flush with the surface of the finished floor.
5. Prior to the installation of any base or trim, apply non-hardening acoustical grade sealant on the top edge of the trimmed Isolation Barrier.

ELECTRICAL HEATING SYSTEM

It is important to read and follow the Electrical Heating Systems Manufacturers Instructions COMPLETELY with regard to the installation of and the connection of the system to the Electrical System of the building.

1. When fastening any clips or retaining devices for the wire heating system, it may be necessary to use a mechanical fastener that will fully penetrate the CORK product and go into the subfloor. Please follow the heating system manufacturer's instructions with regard to their fastening requirements.
2. Be sure to perform any connectivity testing prior to the installation of the finished flooring.

INSTALLATION of CORK: CERAMIC TILE

1. Cut the Natural Cork sheet or roll to the desired length and loose lay directly over the substrate starting in a corner of the room. Butt the cork against the perimeter isolation barrier.
2. Place the end crown of the rolled material down. Any temporary end curl of the rolled material will easily flatten out, once fully installed.
3. Pull back on half of the length of the loose laid cork and apply adhesive to the subfloor, using either a 3/32"x3/32" or 1/8"x 1/8" V or U notched trowel.
4. For ceramic tile installations, use Roberts 7250 Premium Adhesive or a Type I Ceramic Tile Mastic or polymer modified thinset mortar compliant to ANSI A136.1 as the bonding

agent to the substrate. Allow the adhesive to remain open for a minimum of 20 minutes prior to rolling cork back. Gently return and fully embed the cork into the adhesive field using pressure applied with a 50# floor roller in both directions using.

5. Repeat the process for the other half of the material making sure that the underlayment is fully bonded to the substrate. Proceed to cover the entire floor area making sure that the joints are butted tight and no gaps remain.
6. For an Acoustical Insulating Application, never mechanically fasten Cork Underlayment to the subfloor, as this will severely diminish the acoustical performance of the installation.
7. Once the finished flooring material is installed, trim the perimeter isolation strips flush with the height of the finished flooring.

GENERAL PRACTICE: CERAMIC TILE FLOORING

1. It is recommended that the finished flooring be installed at least 24 hours after the application of the QEP Cork Underlayment product.
2. Using a latex modified thin-set mortar conforming to ANSI A118.1and 118.4.Follow mortar manufacturer's instructions and recommendations for trowel sizes with regard to the installation of the finished floor tile.
3. After the tile is installed and grouted, visually inspect and remove, where necessary, any excess mortar or grout that is in contact with the walls or any vertical partitions. Failure to do so may diminish the acoustical value of the system.
4. If a base board or tile base is to be used in an acoustical insulating application, leave a minimum 1/8in. gap between the finished floor and the bottom of the baseboard or tile base. Do not grout this joint. This space should be filled with a non-hardening sealant.

FLOATING / LOOSE LAY APPLICATION: ENGINEERED WOOD & LAMINATE:

1. Cork Underlayment should not be glued to the subfloor. If the flooring manufacturer recommends a Vapor Retarding Barrier over a concrete substrate, such as 70-115 Moisture Barricade, install that first and then proceed with the installation of the Cork Underlayment.
2. Cut the 6mm Cork to the desired length and install directly over the subfloor or vapor barrier material with the crown of the rolled material down. Any temporary curl of the material will easily flatten out after the flooring has been installed.
3. Repeat the process with the next course of underlayment. Tape the seams and the wall/floor joint with duct tape, or any other suitable tape, to keep the underlayment in position as the finished flooring is installed.
4. Proceed to cover the entire floor area making sure that the joints are butted tight and no gaps remain. For an Acoustical Insulating Application, never mechanically fasten Cork

underlayment to the subfloor, as this will severely diminish the acoustical performance of the installation.

5. After completion, the Cork material should cover the entire floor area without gaps.
6. Follow the flooring manufacturer's guidelines for the installation of the Loose Lay Flooring product.

GLUED-DOWN/ DOUBLE BOND of CORK with WOOD FLOORING

1. Cut the cork material to the desired length and position the material in the space to be covered. Tightly butt the material against the perimeter isolation barrier.
2. Pull the loose laid material back at least half the length of the cut material. Using a properly sized notched trowel, apply either Roberts Urethane wood flooring adhesive, or the same type of wood flooring adhesive that will be used to bond the finished wood flooring to the cork product and to the substrate.
3. Repeat the process for the other half of the sheet, rolling in both directions with a 100# floor roller.
4. Proceed to cover the entire room, making sure the sheets are tightly butted together, without gaps. Rolling the floor area in both directions using a 100# roller. Never mechanically fasten the sheets to the subfloor, as this will severely diminish the acoustical value of the product.
5. It is recommended that the finished flooring be installed at least 24 hours after the application of the Cork Underlayment.
6. Always follow the wood flooring manufacturer's installation guidelines.
7. For added acoustical insulation: if baseboard molding is to be used, leave a minimum 1/8in. gap between the finished floor and the bottom of the baseboard. This space can be filled with a color matching non-hardening sealant.