



Organic DESIGN Blocks - Installation Instructions

Important:

- 1) Do not install with temperatures below 60° F (15°C). **Organic DESIGN Blocks** should be kept at the same temperature as the room conditions, both prior to and during the installation process.
- 2) **Organic Design Blocks** need to acclimate to site conditions prior to the start of the installation process. Though we recommend a default time of 72 hours, acclimating is not a function of time, but rather balancing of the moisture content of the material to the installation environment. Sometimes this takes longer, but it is critical that equilibrium is met or excessive expansion and/or contraction can occur.
- 3) Acclimating involves opening the packs of cork so that the tiles have access to air on all sides, so they achieve an equalized moisture/humidity level as the conditioned environment into which it will be installed (ie: HVAC running and operable). If the cork is not acclimated prior to installation, either gapping or expansion can occur.
Please Note: Shrinkage and/or expansion is not considered a manufacturing defect.
- 4) It is advisable, though not required, to paint the walls in a similar color to the cork material being installed, especially if using Contact Cement during the installation, so if movement does occur, the color behind the tiles is the similar cork to the tiles. If using the Unilateral glue (which is white), this would be less of a benefit.
- 5) Walls need to be clean and smooth, free of dirt, waxes, polishes, old adhesive, paint and voids. Follow directions on adhesive manufacturer's label to complete installation.
- 6) It is recommended that the **Organic DESIGN Blocks** is applied to primed substrates, as this will help ensure effective adhesion. When priming and painting, paint should be fully cured.
- 7) **NOTE:** Cork Strips pattern and visual seams: The Cork Strips pattern within the Organic Blocks have square edges at the ends of the panels, which effectively is a visual seam. These seams can become more visible the more intense the lighting. To make seams less visible it is recommended to stagger the seams of the panels, so the end joints do NOT line up across the installation field. Also, proper acclimation and site humidity controls are critical in ensuring the seam joint distance does not get exacerbated (due to material contraction). If you have any questions, please contact your local representative or Sustainable Materials.

Adhesive: Cork is a wood product and loves glue. Make sure that the adhesive you choose will make strong contact with the wall surface you are applying the cork to, as different wall surfaces accept adhesive differently. It is always recommended to test a small area with the selected adhesive prior to undertaking the installation (if there is any question as to whether an adhesive is suitable, or if the substrate is properly prepared). **NOTE: ineffective adhesion is not a product defect, nor a warrantable claim, and it is always recommended to test the adhesion of a product prior to its use.**

There are 2 suitable and recommended adhesives for the installation of the Organic Blocks, both of which will work, though each one is applied in different ways, and arguably has different pros and cons. The 2 recommended adhesives are:

- 1) Water-based contact cement is generally the most straight-forward option. Product sets very quickly (ie: immediately) which allows to start in the middle of the wall. Wakol Loba D3540 is the recommended adhesive, which is designed specifically for use with cork. It is important to follow the manufacturers recommendations as it relates to the application and ensuring a solid bond. A note relative to the setting procedure using the D3540 product, is that once the tile is placed on the wall, it should be forced (with impact) into place to ensure the chemical cross-linking occurs to create a solid bond. This can be done by applying force (via a non-marring mallet, or other method) to the surface of the Organic Block pieces. **Note: Be careful to not damage the Organic DESIGN Blocks during the installation, as if hit improperly the face(s) of the material can break.**



2) Single-component, unilateral urethane adhesive. We recommend Wakol-Loba MS262. Though it does not enable an immediate permanent bond like that created with 'contact cement', it is often considered easier in that the adhesive is applied to only one surface (the wall), and by the nature of the product, there is more time to set (and/or move as needed) the Organic Blocks pieces into place on the wall. For installing with the MS262 adhesive, a U-Notch 1/32" x 1/16" x 1/32" trowel should be used. Apply the adhesive to dry directly to the primed surface and spread with trowel (into level and even beads). Press the Organic Block material

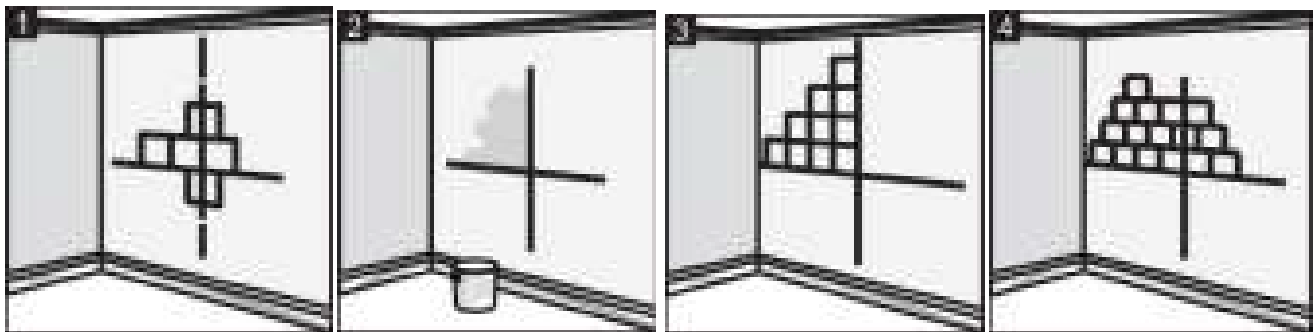
with equal and level pressure, directly into the adhesive. If you are using the Cork Strips version of the Organic Blocks, additionally roll with hand-roller (kitchen rolling pin, etc.) to ensure even and level bond. For the other, more three-dimensional shapes, apply solid pressure to ensure the material is set into the adhesive. **Note: It is important to follow the manufacturers recommendation as it relates to the application and ensuring the tiles are applied within the optimal open time (see instructions included in the packaging).**

Substrate: Make sure substrate is clean and free of debris. Make sure substrate is nonabsorbent. If you have an absorbent substrate, it is required that it is sealed and/or primed to enable a solid bond with the selected adhesive. Poor adhesion of the cork to substrate chosen is not a product failure.

Tips: Establish a level line (if installing horizontally), and a plumb (vertical) line to work from. Use a measuring tape, 4' level and a non-staining chalk line.

Pre Lay material flat before applying to the wall. It may be helpful to pre-cut the cork pieces on the ground, not on the wall for vertical seam applications.

Check the wall dimension by measuring from the middle, making sure that the widths of the first and last tiles will be identical and greater than 2 inches. If necessary, repeat the previous step by drawing new parallel lines to the first ones.



****ANY QUESTIONS REGARDING INSTALLATION – Please contact Sustainable Materials or your local representative****

Organic DESIGN Blocks - Care and Maintenance Instructions

Your new **Organic Blocks** covering will add warmth and beauty to your home or commercial setting for years to come. Following a few simple maintenance steps however, will help protect your investment.



Cleaning

- Do not use abrasive materials.
- Blot up spills and spots immediately (Trapped moisture can penetrate into the **Organic DESIGN Blocks**, which can cause irreversible discoloration and damage).
- Vacuum and/or dust mop the wall to minimize abrasive grit and dirt. *Note: make sure there is nothing on the bottom of the vacuum that can scratch or mar the surface of Cork Strips.*
- If more vigorous cleaning is needed, we recommend cleaning with BonaX surface cleaner, and using a Terry Cloth to apply (as this will prevent marring or scratching of wall surface).
- ALWAYS WIPE DRY IMMEDIATELY until no moisture is visible on the wall. Do not use wax, polish, oil soap, abrasive cleaners, steel wool, scouring powder, or ANY appreciable amount of water
- Do not use wet mops, wet scrubbers or steam cleaners as these products may cause irreversible discoloration and damages

Protecting Your Investment

- Your newly installed **Organic DESIGN Blocks** is made from natural wood fibers and therefore is subject to change from excessive moisture, or nonconforming environmental conditions. Remove any standing or trapped water immediately, and maintain an indoor relative humidity level of 35-55% throughout the year.