

Cork Bark™ - Installation Instructions

Important:

1. Do not install when temperatures are below 60° F (15°C). Cork Bark™ should be kept at the same temperature as the room conditions, both prior to and during the installation process.
2. Cork Bark™ needs to acclimate to site conditions prior to the start of the installation process. Though we recommend a default 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 movement can occur. See our 'Acclimating' Reference guide here: <https://www.sustainablematerials.com/acclimating/>.
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. The substrate to which the Cork Bark™ is installed, must be structurally sound and flat (free of voids, and level within ½" over 48"), dry, clean, and free of any contaminants (such as dust, adhesive, drywall compound, etc.) which would affect adhesion. **Note:** If any of these characteristics are not met, it is imperative to fix them prior to the start of the installation process. If you are in doubt, contact your supplier for application assistance.
5. It is advisable, though not required, to paint the walls in a similar color to the cork material being installed (so if movement does occur, color contrast is kept to a minimum).
6. Walls need to be clean and smooth, free of dirt, waxes, polishes, old adhesives, peeling paint and voids. Follow directions on adhesive manufacturer's label to complete installation.
7. **Note:** cork is a natural product that can include voids, gaps and/or holes. Prior to installing any piece or panel, a thorough review of that piece should be made, and if any piece looks undesirable, do NOT install it.
8. It is recommended that the Cork Bark™ is applied to primed and painted substrates, as this will help ensure effective adhesion (as this keeps the adhesive from absorbing into the substrate). When priming and painting, paint should be fully cured prior to applying the tiles.
9. Relative to tile layout, though tiles can be stacked on top of one another in a straight set pattern, staggering the tiles (and therefore the seams) by using an 'offset' or 'running bond' installation method is preferable because fewer seams connect at any one point (which tends to better hide the inherent expansion and contraction).
10. Install Cork Bark™ 'panels' once desired layout is determined, using a 'single component' unilateral glue. Wakol Loba MS 262 is recommended.

Pre-Installation Guidelines and Considerations

These instructions are designed to supplement common sense during the installation procedure. If you have any questions, please contact your supplier prior to the installation process.

Sorting:

It is always recommended to mix multiple boxes of material together when you are installing in a multiple box increment. Cork is a natural material that inherently has variations in size, color, and shape, and this is expected, and one of the beauties of using Cork Bark™.

Working with Cork Bark™:

Cork Bark™ can be cut with standard woodworking tools. Cork Bark™ Panels are made with cork that has naturally occurring characteristics (including but not limited to color variation, open pores, and minor size variations), and moss (with inherent density and color variations) – variations are inherent and should be expected. Always test the fit of the Cork Bark™ Panels prior to adding adhesive to the wall.

Recommended adhesive:

- 1) WAKOL MS262 (single component urethane adhesive). For installing with the MS262 adhesive, a U-Notch 1/32" x 1/16" x 1/32" trowel should be used. Apply the adhesive directly to the primed surface and spread with trowel (into level and even beads). Press the Cork Bark™ Panel directly into the adhesive and gently tap on the surface with a rubber mallet to ensure even and level bond. Do not use too much force when tapping as to damage the surface of the panel. **Note: It is important to follow the manufacturer's recommendation as it relates to the application and ensure the tiles are applied within the optimal 'open' time.** High humidity will decrease your working time so adjust accordingly. **Please Note: ineffective or improper installation is not considered a warrantable issue.**

Installation Procedure

Once your substrate is properly prepared, the material is acclimated, and you have determined the layout you will use, the installation can begin.

Follow the manufacturers' recommendations for the adhesive selected.

Based upon the layout chosen, determine where you want to start the installation.

For horizontal or vertical (full wall) installations, it is recommended to mark off a level line (using a level) at roughly eye level (approx. 72" up from the floor), and then another line, vertically, at the center of the space to which the Cork Bark™ Panels are being installed. Where the lines cross is where you should begin. You can also measure a certain distance off the floor (or the ceiling) and use that as the level line for beginning installation – this works fine if the floor (or wall) is level.



To install the Cork Bark™:

- Align one edge of the first panel along the guideline 'level' (ie: starting point) you created and press the Cork Bark™ panel into place into the troweled adhesive (avoid touching the adhesive surface or allowing it to get dirty or wet).
- Install the subsequent Cork Bark™ Panels in the same fashion, until the installation is complete.
- Please note that it is advisable to install the subsequent Cork Bark™ Panels at an angle, starting the placement at the edge of the panel formerly installed to ensure that each panel is abutting each other tightly.

Care and Maintenance Instructions

Stains should be removed as quickly as possible to eliminate any reaction between the staining agent and the product. Time is especially important for removing materials containing colors or solvents such as ball point pens, nail polish, lipstick, oil shampoo tints, paint, lacquer, enamel, and certain food items.

Precautions: Excess soiling materials such as chewing gum, asphalt, crayon, paint, nail polish, or tar should be carefully scraped off prior to the application of other cleaning attempts.

Cleaning: The normal cleaning of the product should be done with a dry and soft lint-free cloth or dry sponge. If stained, a stronger cleaning is required. Rinse thoroughly with clean, clear water, often to ensure the water remains clean and clear. After cleaning an area, be sure to dry with absorbent cloth so it can be examined to ensure complete cleaning.

Deep Cleaning: If more vigorous cleaning is needed, you can clean the panels with BonaX surface cleaner available from your local hardware store or www.bona.com. Sustainable Materials further recommends using Terry Cloth to prevent scratching or marring of wall. You can also use a vacuum with a clean vacuum cleaner brush (do NOT use a vacuum with a "beater" bar).

NOTE: Do not use wet mops, wet scrubbers or steam cleaners as these products may cause irreversible discoloration and damage.



NOTE: NEVER USE ABRASIVE CLEANERS OR MIX CLEANING REAGENTS TOGETHER, AS VIOLENT REACTIONS MAY OCCUR WHEN CHEMICALS ARE MIXED WHICH COULD CAUSE VIOLENT REACTIONS. OBSERVE ALL LABEL PRECAUTIONS WHEN USING ANY CLEANING AGENTS.

Protecting your investment: Cork Bark™ panels are made from natural wood fibers and moss, and therefore are subject to change from excessive moisture, or nonconforming environmental conditions. Remove moisture and/or contaminants immediately and maintain an indoor relative humidity level of 35-55% throughout the year.

For any questions regarding Installation and/or Care and Maintenance instructions, please contact Sustainable Materials or your local representative**