



TRADITIONAL CORK SUB-FLOOR PREPARATION INSTRUCTIONS

TECHNICAL SUPPORT 800.345.6202

Acceptable Sub-Floors

Wood - Must be smooth, level and structurally sound. New plywood: AC plywood should be 3/8" or 1/2" thick with one side finished. Do **not** use oil treated or otherwise coated wood material.

Concrete - Must be good quality, structurally sound and free of any sealers or coatings. It is highly recommended that *Expanko 570* or *Expanko 960* be used to coat new and existing concrete sub-floors prior to installation to prime the concrete and/or create a moisture barrier. Apply primer or sealer after the floor has been patched and/or leveled. *Expanko 570 Primer Instructions (Document ID: 001)* and *Expanko 960 Sealer Instructions (Document ID: 002)* are available and should be followed.

ALL SUB-FLOORS MUST BE CLEAN, DRY AND DUST-FREE PRIOR TO INSTALLATION

Level Tolerance: 1/8" in 10 ft

Recommended Leveling Compound: Expanko recommends *Ardex* products
DO NOT USE ANY GYPSUM BASED LEVELING COMPOUNDS OR FILLERS. Do not apply patching/leveling product over old/existing adhesives.

Moisture Emission Level: ≤ 3 lb/1000 ft²/24 hrs

Recommended Concrete Moisture Emissions Sealer: *Expanko 960*

Recommended Concrete Primer: *Expanko 570*

pH Level: 7-10

1. Proper preparation of the sub-floor is essential for the successful installation of cork floor tile. New plywood or clean level concrete sub-floors are recommended for the best installation results. Remove paint, wax, sealers, old adhesives and any other substance that may prevent proper adhesive bonding. For existing wood floors, clean with a paint or varnish remover, then scrub with tri-sodium phosphate. In severe cases, it may be necessary to machine sand the floor to remove any materials that may inhibit adhesive bonding. When these steps have been completed, the sub-floor must be cleaned thoroughly, swept and vacuumed.
2. Wood sub-floors (new or existing) must be leveled and patched with *Ardex* products. Allow leveling material to dry for 24 hours prior to installation of cork tile. The floor should then be sanded to assure uniformity. If conditions require, existing floors may be covered with 3/8" or 1/2" thick plywood installed with the smooth side up. Plywood must be securely fastened with underlayment glue and screwed with a spacing of 6 inches. Proper acclimation of new wood sub-floors is required prior to cork tile installation. Expanko does not recommend the use of luan or chip board underlayments.
3. Concrete sub-floors (new or existing) must be leveled with the appropriate *Ardex* cement based leveling compound as needed. Please follow the manufacturer's instructions. Allow leveling material to dry for 24 hours prior to installation of cork tile. All existing sealers, adhesives, etc. must be

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removed prior to application of sealer, leveling compound or adhesive. DO NOT USE ANY GYPSUM BASED LEVELING COMPOUNDS OR FILLERS DURING INSTALLATION OF CORK FLOORING. It is highly recommended that *Expanko 570* or *Expanko 960* be used to coat new and existing concrete sub-floors prior to installation to prime the concrete and/or create a moisture barrier after the floor has been patched or leveled. *Expanko 570 Primer Instructions (Document ID: 001)* and *Expanko 960 Sealer Instructions (Document ID: 002)* are available and should be followed.

4. **IMPORTANT:** Sub-floor temperature must be at least 65°F for 72 hours prior to, during and after installation.
5. Sub-Floor - moisture emissions and pH must be tested. A calcium chloride moisture test * must be used to verify moisture emission levels are below 3 lbs/1000 ft²/24 hrs. Sub-floor pH test must be performed to ensure levels between 7 and 10.
6. Test the bond of patch/skim coat by pounding with a hammer. Patch should not crack or delaminate. Sub-floor must be dust free prior to installation.
7. We do not recommend installing cork floor tile below grade, unless precautions are taken to guarantee that moisture will not penetrate through the sub-floor.

*Calcium chloride moisture test kits are available from any commercial flooring distributor or by calling Taylor Flooring at 888.440.3567.