Installation Guide

Cork Flooring

Floating Uniclic® floors with an HDF core
and attached cork underlay

A practical walkthrough from the first moisture test to the final piece of trim. Clear steps, room to move, and a floor that feels as good as it looks.

1 Prepare

Check the room, test the subfloor, and acclimate sealed cartons.

2 Install

Plan the layout, click the planks together, and leave expansion space.

3 Maintain

Protect the finish and keep cleaning simple.

Read this before opening the cartons

The best installation starts before the first click. Read the complete guide, check your product details, and keep the boxes sealed through acclimation. Your future self says thanks.

1 Before You Begin

This guide covers cork floating flooring with a moisture-resistant HDF core, Uniclic® locking edges, and an integrated cork underlay. Install it as a floating floor so the planks can expand and contract with the room. Confirm the exact product is suitable for your intended use before starting.

Choose a suitable room

Use this flooring in dry interior rooms with normal occupied conditions. The moisture-resistant core helps with everyday exposure, but the floor is not suitable for damp or steamy rooms. Do not install it in bathrooms, shower rooms, saunas, or other areas exposed to excessive moisture.

Inspect every plank as you install

Handle cartons carefully and store them flat on a smooth, level surface. Protect the locking edges. Use material from the same batch in a continuous area whenever possible. Once installation begins, inspect each plank in good light and set damaged pieces aside before they become part of the floor.

Natural cork can vary in color and texture. Blend planks from different cartons as you work for a balanced appearance. Natural variation adds character; a broken locking edge adds a problem. Learn to tell the two apart.

Who checks the subfloor

The installer or flooring contractor is responsible for determining whether the subfloor or existing hard flooring is suitable. If moisture, the heating system, or a room layout is uncertain, contact your manufacturer representative before installing.

Find your next step

Room conditions and acclimation 3
Subfloor preparation and moisture testing 4
Moisture barrier and attached underlay 5
Radiant heat requirements 6
Tools and layout 7
Click lock installation 8
Final rows and finishing details 9
Care and maintenance 10
Quick reference and final checks 11

2 Room Conditions and Acclimation

Get the room ready first. Acclimate the flooring in a dry area at the jobsite for at least two full days before installation. Keep packages closed until you are ready to install. These cork planks acclimate in sealed cartons; opening the boxes is not an upgrade.

Item	Required condition
Acclimation	At least 2 days (48 hours) at the jobsite
Room temperature	64–79°F (18–26°C)
Relative humidity	35–65%
Storage location	Dry area; cartons supported on a smooth, level surface

Set the conditions the floor will live in

1. **Condition the room.** Run heating or air conditioning long enough before delivery and installation to establish the normal conditions expected when the building is occupied.
2. **Check temperature and humidity.** Use a room thermometer and hygrometer. Maintain the ranges above during storage and installation, with conditions consistent with normal long-term use.
3. **Start the acclimation clock.** Once the room is ready, leave the sealed cartons in the dry jobsite area for at least 48 hours. Handle and stack them without damaging the edges.
4. **Check again before opening.** If the room is damp, unusually hot or cold, or outside the humidity range, correct it before installation. For radiant heat, also complete the requirements on page 6.

Pro Tip

Record room temperature and humidity when cartons arrive and again before installation. A small log is much more useful than a large guess.

Keep the room stable afterward

The HDF core contains wood, so changes in humidity and temperature can cause the floor to expand or contract. Continue maintaining normal occupied conditions and keep the expansion gaps free. The floor needs space to respond to the room, even after the tools are packed away.

3 Subfloor Preparation

A floating floor follows the surface beneath it. Before laying the moisture barrier, make sure the subfloor is dry, solid, flat, and clean. The attached cork underlay does not correct bumps, loose boards, or moisture problems.

Check the existing surface

Suitable hard surfaces can include wood boards, particleboard, OSB, chipboard, linoleum, vinyl, and certain ceramic tiles, provided they meet all preparation requirements. Remove fitted carpet and similar soft coverings. Screw down loose old floorboards and fill remaining unevenness with a suitable leveling material.

Check	Requirement or action
Flatness	No more than 5/64 in (2 mm) unevenness over 5 ft (1.5 m)
Stability	Solid, secure support with no loose boards or unstable areas
Cleanliness	Remove dust and debris so planks and membrane lie evenly
Dryness	Investigate and correct moisture before covering the subfloor

Concrete needs both time and testing

New concrete must dry for at least 60 days. Test its moisture content before installation, even if it is older than that. Drying time alone does not establish that a slab is ready. A calendar is not a moisture meter.

Concrete condition	Maximum moisture content
Without floor heating	2.0% CM
With floor heating	1.5% CM

CM refers to the calcium carbide moisture test. Arrange appropriate testing by a qualified professional and record the results. These percentages are not in-situ relative humidity readings, calcium chloride emission results, or generic handheld meter readings; do not substitute one for another.

Stop before covering a moisture problem

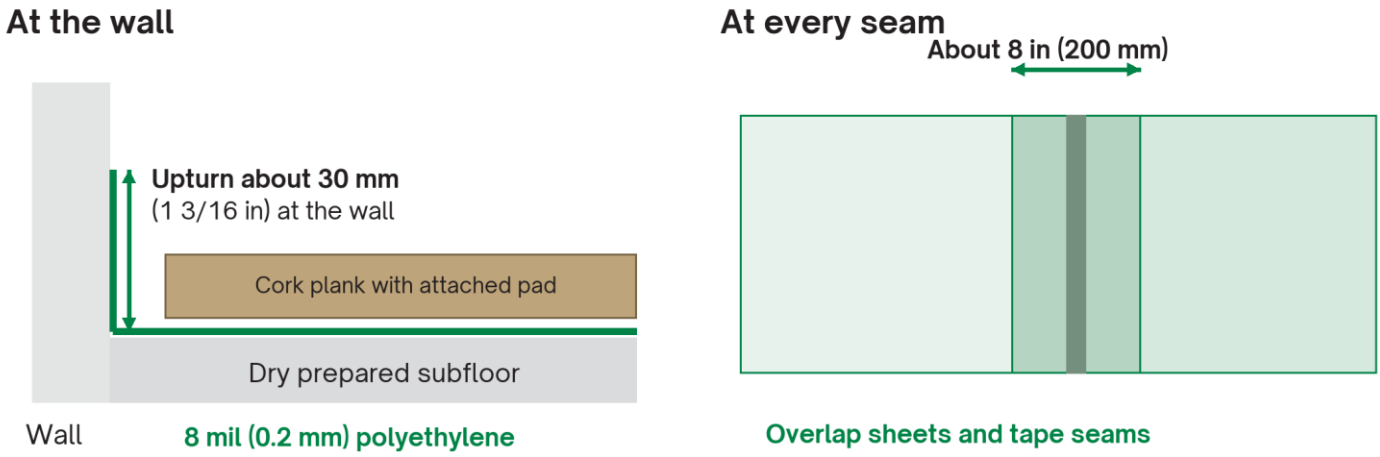
If the concrete exceeds the applicable limit or the subfloor is not dry, stop and correct the condition. The polyethylene sheet on page 5 is required protection; it does not make an unsuitable subfloor ready.

For existing flooring of uncertain composition, obtain appropriate professional advice before sanding, cutting, or removing it. Confirm suitability of the complete assembly before work begins.

4 Moisture Barrier and Underlay

Install a polyethylene moisture barrier before the flooring. Subfloors can release moisture regardless of age. The sheet also helps the floating floor move as the room climate changes.

1. **Use the required thickness.** Lay 8-mil (0.2 mm) polyethylene over the prepared subfloor. This is a moisture barrier, not an extra cushioning layer.
2. **Overlap the sheets.** Overlap adjoining lengths by about 8 in (200 mm) and fasten the overlapping seams with suitable adhesive tape.
3. **Turn it up at the walls.** Run the membrane about 1 3/16 in (30 mm) up the wall. Keep the upturn in place for the wall trim to cover at the end.
4. **Check before covering it.** Keep the barrier continuous and the surface clean as you install. Repair any damaged areas using compatible membrane material and tape before laying planks over them.



Moisture barrier details are schematic and not to scale. Keep the wall upturn and tape the overlapping seams.

The cork underlay is already attached

The flooring has a built-in cork underlay. Do not add a separate foam or impact-sound underlayment unless your manufacturer representative confirms the assembly is suitable. Extra cushioning offers no significant benefit here and can make the support excessively soft.

> ***Pro Tip***
>
> Extra foam may sound cozy. Your locking joints disagree. Give them the firm, even support they were designed to have.

5 Installation Over Radiant Heat

These cork floating floors may be used over a suitable underfloor heating system. Before proceeding, obtain and follow the specific installation instructions for your flooring and heating system. The limits below must also be met; they do not approve every type of heating assembly.

When	What to do
Before installation	Operate the radiant system for at least 3–4 days before installation. New concrete may need longer to dry and complete its heating procedure.
During installation	Set and maintain an installation temperature around 65°F (18°C). Keep room humidity at 35–65%.
First 3 days after installation	Maintain the installation setting. Do not resume normal heating operation sooner than 3 days after installation.
After the first 3 days	Return to normal operation gradually, in steps, following the heating-system instructions.
Whenever heating operates	The finished flooring surface must never exceed 82°F (28°C). Follow any lower limit required by the system or product instructions.

Test the slab before the floor goes down

Heated concrete must meet the stricter maximum of 1.5% CM. The 60-day minimum drying period for new concrete still applies, and additional drying or commissioning time may be needed. Install the required 8-mil polyethylene barrier and retain the attached cork underlay without adding unnecessary soft padding.

Allow for movement

Radiant heat can change the temperature and moisture conditions around the floor. Keep the required expansion gaps around all edges and obstacles, and maintain stable occupied room conditions. Do not assume the room-air temperature tells you the temperature at the flooring surface.

Check the surface limit

Have the heating installer confirm how the system will control the actual flooring surface temperature. Turn the system up gradually after the waiting period; a sudden blast of heat is not a shortcut.

6 Tools and Layout

Gather your tools before opening the first carton. A planned layout is easier to adjust on paper than after several rows are locked together.

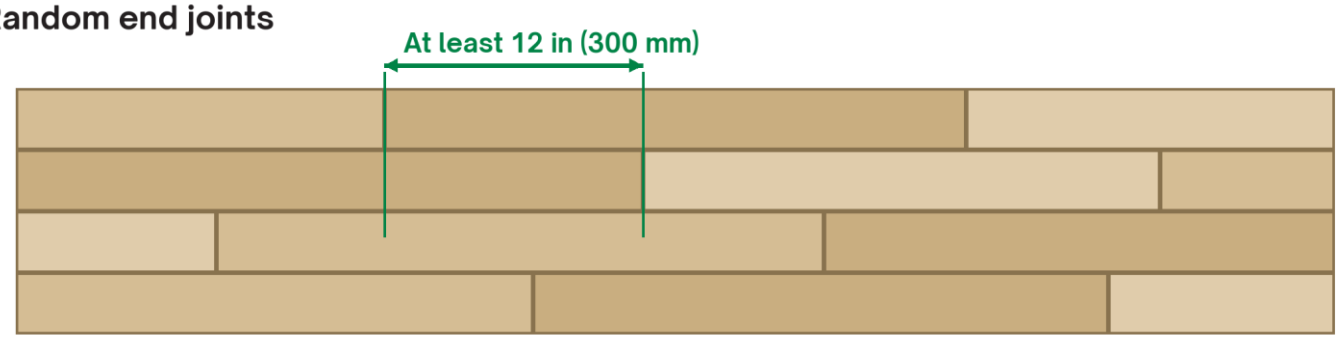
For the installation 8-mil polyethylene, compatible seam tape, spacer blocks, hammer, pull bar, tapping block, pencil, measuring tape, and a circular saw or miter saw. Use safety glasses and a suitable dust mask when cutting.

For checking the jobsite A straightedge for flatness, a room thermometer and hygrometer, and access to the appropriate concrete moisture test where needed. Follow all tool instructions and control cutting dust.

Plan the rows before you cut

1. **Prepare the perimeter.** Remove baseboard, quarter round, or other wall trim as needed. Undercut door trim so the flooring can fit underneath and still move freely.
2. **Choose the direction.** Preferably run the planks lengthwise in the room or in the direction of the incoming light. Plan to start in a corner and work from right to left.
3. **Protect the final row.** Measure across the planned rows and allow for both perimeter gaps. The last row must be at least 4 in (100 mm) wide; narrow the first row if necessary.
4. **Plan a random stagger.** Keep end joints in neighboring rows at least 12 in (300 mm) apart. Vary starting lengths rather than repeating the same pattern.

Random end joints



Vary starter lengths and avoid repeating aligned end joints.

Last row at least 4 in (100 mm) wide after allowing for the wall gap.

Schematic only Maintain a 3/8–5/8 in (10–15 mm) perimeter gap.

Plan the full floor width before starting. Keep random end-joint spacing and avoid an undersized last row.

Maintain 3/8–5/8 in (10–15 mm) expansion space at walls, pipes, door frames, and other fixed obstacles. Larger areas need more room to move. For a large or connected layout, confirm expansion-joint locations with your manufacturer representative before installation; this guide does not establish a maximum continuous run.

7 Click Lock Installation

Work at 64–79°F (18–26°C) and 35–65% relative humidity. Uniclic® joints normally lock without glue. Use the angled engagement and rotation method below; the small-piece glue exception is on page 9.

Build a straight first row

1 **Start right to left.** Place the first plank tongue-side toward the wall. Saw off tongues on wall-facing edges and insert spacers for the full 3/8–5/8 in (10–15 mm) gap.

2 **Join the short ends.** Rotate the next plank up and down while pressing its tongue into the previous plank's short-end groove. Lower it when locked. Repeat for several planks.

3 **Check the row.** Keep planks perfectly aligned, flat, and tightly joined. Re-engage any open or lifted joint before continuing. A crooked first row rarely improves with company.

Add the second and following rows

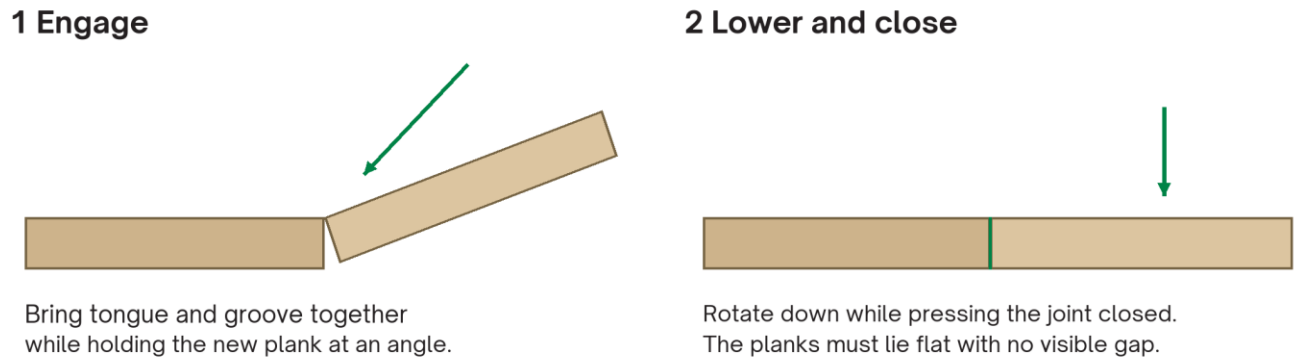
4 **Choose the starter.** Reuse an offcut at least 12 in (300 mm) long if it maintains the required stagger. Otherwise, cut a new starter. Vary starting lengths.

5 **Engage the long edge.** Angle the starter's long tongue into the previous row's groove. Rotate and press until locked, then lower it.

6 **Join the next short end.** Connect the next plank, initially leaving about 10 mm (approximately 3/8 in) between its long edge and the previous row.

7 **Close the long joint.** Slightly lift the joined planks. Push or gently tap with a tapping block toward the previous row until tongue meets groove. Rotate while pressing together, then lower flat.

8 **Inspect and repeat.** Close visible gaps by repeating the rotation and pressure or tapping gently with the block. Keep spacers in place. Never strike the locking profile directly with the hammer.



Engage the tongue, rotate the plank down, and confirm a tight, flat joint. Schematic only.

8 Final Rows and Finishing Details

Keep the last pieces secure

Cut the final row to fit while preserving the 3/8–5/8 in (10–15 mm) wall gap. The last row must remain at least 4 in (100 mm) wide. If necessary, use a pull bar to bring the joints together without damaging the plank edges.

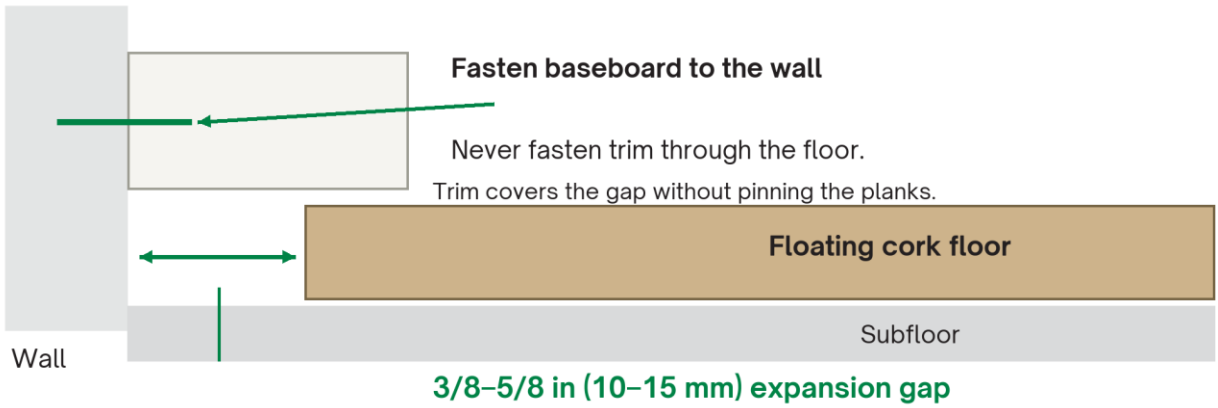
For small or narrow fill pieces, apply a small bead of wood glue along the tongue. Pull the piece snug with a pull bar and hold it with suitable painter's tape until set. Test tape compatibility on a spare piece and follow its removal time. This local joint treatment must not bond the floor to the subfloor.

Door frames and pipes

Leave expansion space around pipes and door frames, including hidden edges. Where there is no room to angle a plank, join it horizontally using a pull bar and hammer carefully. Protect the locking edges.

Attach trim to the wall

Remove every spacer when installation is complete. Fit baseboard or other suitable profiles over the expansion gaps and the membrane upturn. Fasten the baseboard to the wall, never to the flooring itself. The planks must remain free to expand and contract beneath it.



Cover the expansion space without fixing the floating floor in place. Schematic only.

Where a profile or baseboard cannot be used, the factory permits a compatible elastic filler in the expansion gap. Use a flexible product and detailing that preserve movement; do not fill the gap with rigid material.

Before the furniture comes back

Vacuum debris, inspect the joints, and add furniture pads. Lift heavy items carefully. Save spare planks and product and batch details for repairs and cleaning tests.

9 Care and Maintenance

Keep grit off the floor, use very little moisture, and protect the finish. Dirt behaves like sandpaper; it does not need your help rearranging the furniture.

Prevent damage before it starts

- Use protective pads on furniture legs. Place heavy objects carefully and use wide, soft chair casters. Avoid sharp, concentrated loads such as high heels.
- Use a non-staining doormat inside the entry. Rubber, latex, plastics, and other materials containing plasticizers can cause permanent staining; check mat compatibility.
- Use blinds or curtains to limit prolonged direct sunlight. Cork is natural and may fade with long-term sun exposure.

Make routine cleaning simple

1. **Remove loose dirt.** Dust-mop or vacuum with a suitable non-abrasive head. Remove grit promptly.
2. **Damp-mop only when needed.** Use a lightly damp mop and a pH-neutral cleaner suitable for the exact finish. Follow its label and technical data sheet. Test new products on a spare plank.
3. **Remove excess water immediately.** Use minimal moisture and dry any excess promptly. Water resistance is not permission to leave puddles.

Do not use abrasive cleaners, solvents, or ammonia-based products. Avoid soaking or steam-cleaning the floor. An aggressive cleaner is not a substitute for the right cleaner.

Refresh the protective maintenance layer

When traffic makes a maintenance treatment necessary, clean the floor and apply a thin layer of a compatible maintenance product. Confirm finish compatibility with your manufacturer representative before using a polish or refresher. Follow the label and technical data sheet.

Deep clean only when routine cleaning is not enough

For stubborn heavy soiling, use a suitable maintenance-product remover with minimal solution, working in sections. Damp-mop with clean water, let the floor dry completely, then renew the compatible maintenance-care layer. Deep clean as seldom as possible.

Choose products by the job

Cleaners, maintenance refreshers, and deep-cleaning removers do different jobs. Confirm finish compatibility and follow current product instructions. Ask your manufacturer representative before mechanical cleaning, sanding, or recoating.

10 Quick Reference Card

Use this as the final check, not a replacement for the full instructions. Resolve any item outside these limits before installing.

Item	Cork flooring requirement
Room suitability	Dry interiors only; no bathrooms, shower rooms, saunas, or excessive moisture
Acclimation	At least 2 days (48 hours) at the jobsite; cartons remain sealed until installation
Room conditions	64–79°F (18–26°C); 35–65% relative humidity
Subfloor flatness	Maximum 5/64 in (2 mm) over 5 ft (1.5 m); dry, solid, and clean
New concrete	Dry at least 60 days and test before installation
Concrete moisture	Maximum 2.0% CM; maximum 1.5% CM with radiant heat
Moisture barrier	8 mil (0.2 mm) polyethylene; overlaps about 8 in (200 mm); wall upturn about 1 3/16 in (30 mm); tape seams
Extra soft underlay	Not needed with the attached cork underlay; avoid an excessively soft assembly
Expansion space	3/8–5/8 in (10–15 mm) at walls, pipes, frames, and fixed obstacles; allow for larger-area movement
End-joint stagger	At least 12 in (300 mm); vary starting lengths randomly
Reused row starter	At least 12 in (300 mm), with the required stagger
Final-row width	At least 4 in (100 mm)
Radiant heat	Operate at least 3–4 days before installation; install around 65°F (18°C); wait at least 3 days afterward before gradual normal operation; surface maximum 82°F (28°C)
Trim	Remove spacers; fasten baseboard to the wall, never the floating floor

Leave the next person a useful record

Give the owner this guide, product and batch details, spare planks, the room-condition and moisture-test results, and the heating settings where applicable. Show them the cleaning method and explain that expansion gaps must remain free.

Product and batch _____ Installed on _____

Installer _____ Moisture test record _____

This guide provides installation and care guidance. Check the applicable product technical data and warranty for your exact flooring. It does not replace the installer's assessment of suitability or change the terms of the product warranty. If any requirement is unclear, contact your manufacturer representative.