



## Comcork™ - Installation Instructions

Comcork can be installed in both a 'floating' and 'glue-down' installation methods. These installation instructions first highlight the important general components similar to both methods, while specific variants for each one is listed after the general section.

**General Precautions:** It cannot be emphasized often enough that complete satisfaction and appreciation of your Comcork™ flooring is directly dependent on the proper installation techniques, inclusive of subfloor preparation, moisture protection, acclimating, and the physical installation of the product. Cork flooring problems typically are not caused the product itself, but rather by improper installation practices, site preparation oversites, and not following the manufacturer's instructions.

**Color Variation:** Comcork is made from natural cork, and as with any natural product, color variation is inherent in the product, and can be expected. If for some reason, you feel the color variation out of a normal tolerance, contact your supplier prior to the beginning of the installation process. *Please Note:* product that is installed that is visually unacceptable will not be replaced, nor is it warranted. All product must be inspected prior to the installation, and any issues presented.

### Subfloor and Moisture Preparation

Despite the method of installation used, it is critical that the subfloor is prepared properly. *Please Note:* improper subfloor preparation, inclusive of ineffectively installing a moisture/vapor barrier to isolate the subfloor from the flooring, voids all product warranties. situation.

All subfloors must be smooth, dry, clean and free of dirt, grease, wax or anything that could either affect bonding, or the act of maintaining a flat surface for the flooring to be laid upon. Subfloors must be level and moisture free.

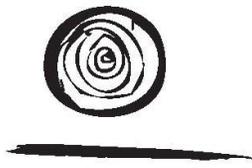
Regardless of the age of a subfloor, there is always risk of moisture movement between it, and the flooring material, and therefore it is required that a vapor barrier is installed.

- *Wood subfloors* must be leveled and all cracks filled with a wood filler or similar material. The floor should then be sanded to assure uniformity. If conditions require, existing floors may be covered with 3/8 or 1/2 inch plywood with both sides finished. Plywood must be securely anchored via NWFA (National Wood Flooring Association) guidelines.
- *Concrete floors* (new or existing) must be leveled with latex fill as needed. Prime the concrete with standard concrete primer. *Please Note:* It is not recommended to install Comcork on or below the grade, unless precautions are taken to guarantee that migrating moisture will not contact the actual flooring material. A liquid applied or 'rolled PE" vapor barrier should be installed as per the manufacturer's recommendation. *NOE:* Please follow the NWFA (National Wood Flooring Association) guidelines. If you have additional questions on the most suitable vapor barrier to use for your installation, contact your supplier.
  - General guidelines are:
    - For 'non-radiant' heated subfloors, they must be permanently dry, with a calcium chloride moisture reading not to exceed 3 lbs./1000 sq.ft./24 hours.
    - If 'floating', a polyethylene moisture barriers with a minimum thickness of 0.008" is recommended (overlapped by 20", and taping the seams).
    - For 'on-grade' and/or 'floating' basement installations, it is recommended to lay 2 layers, perpendicular to one another, which provides greater security with moisture migration.
- *Smooth subfloors* (vinyl or other smooth surfaces) can accept Comcork either by installing in a 'floating' method, or by roughing up the smooth substrate which done effectively will allow the adhesive to bond to the smooth surface. Existing vinyl and sheet goods subfloors must be in good condition, firm and clean.

### Expansion Spaces

All natural flooring moves, and it is important that the necessary expansion space is provided for the inherent movement of the product.

- It is recommended to leave 1/2" of expansion space around all walls and/or fixed objects (plumbing fixtures, door jambs, etc.).
- For molding, it is recommended the molding extend 50% beyond the expansion space left, which allows for both expansion and contraction movement (so, for a 1/2" space, molding should extend no less than 3/4").
- Floor areas over 1000 sq.ft. or those with a dimension of ≥ 30' in one direction, it is required that transition moldings be used to separate the space (effectively providing additional expansion space).



## Installation Procedure

It is important to determine the ideal installation method based on your application, use, and site conditions. **Please note:** ineffective or improper installation voids all warranties.

### “Floating” Installation Procedure

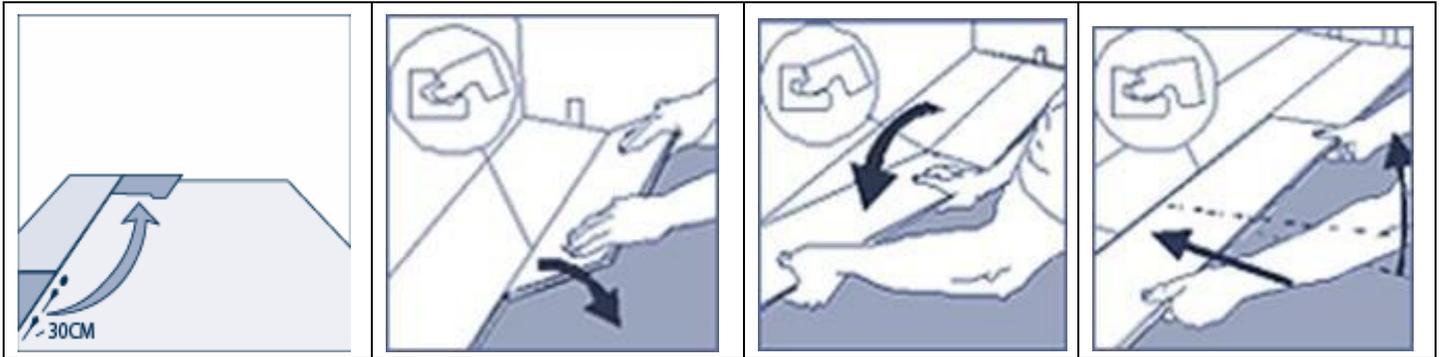
**Tools and Materials:** Saw, tape measure, straight edge, 30° wedge, crowbar, 10mm spacers, white t&G glue for small end pieces

**Storage and Handling:** Store the unopened planks at room temperature for at least 48 hours prior to installation. Planks should be stored laying flat in their original packaging. Room temperature should be at least 65 degrees Fahrenheit before and during installation.

1. Before laying the floor ensure the material being installed is within parameters (color, clarity, finish, etc.), as well as ensure that the subfloor and site conditions are as required. If any of these conditions are not met, immediately stop in the installation process, and either contact your supplier, or the party in charge of and overseeing the installation site.
2. Cut all doorframes 2mm above the finished (ie: installed) product height (to allow for the movement of the floor).
3. Visually determine where you will start the installation, and the direction you will run the planks.
  - Considerations:
    - It is often recommended to start laying the flooring in the right-hand corner of the space, using the longest dimension of wall for beginning the ‘starter’ row (though you can choose any orientation)
    - it is often recommended to install the planks parallel to incoming light in the room (as the reflection against the joints tend to be less pronounced).
4. Prior to beginning the installation, measure the width of the room relative to the plank dimensions to ensure that the final installed row is no less than 2” in width. If necessary, the planks in the first row can be ripped down to a smaller size (so, the last row is wider than 2”).
5. Begin by placing the first plank so ‘tongue’ (male) side is facing the wall.

**Important:** Remember to use the spacers, leaving a 10mm space between the plank and the wall on front and side (as you begin, and along all subsequent walls or fixed vertical obstructions).

**Tip:** If you need spacers, the Comcork planks are 10mm thick and can be cut to create the spacers
6. Place the second plank at a 30° angle to the first plank, making sure it is perfectly in line. Apply slight pressure to bring the seams of the two together. Fit the panels by hand and then adjust them by using a piece of wood and a hammer or mallet. Please Note: Never hammer directly on the panel as you can damage the panel and/or the locking mechanism.
7. As the plank is lowered, it should ‘click’ into place. If it does not lay flat to the subfloor, angle the plank and apply more pressure while moving the plank down. The seam between planks should not have any gaps and both planks must lay flat to the subfloor. If this is not the result, continue positioning the pieces until it is.
8. Continue this process until you reach the end of the first row.
9. Use a saw (compound miter saw or circular saws are recommended) to cut the last panel of the first row, making sure to leave a 10mm gap between the flooring and the wall. Place the cut-off piece at the beginning of the second row (if cutoff piece is over 12” and less than 24”). Stagger the seams from row to row to create a random or selective stagger pattern. Make sure the groove and tongue are facing each other.
10. Using a 30° angle, insert the tongue of the second row plank, into the groove on the first row of plank. Press forward and lay it flat at the same time. **Note:** Using a 30° wedge to hold the plank in place will simplify your install
11. Place the short end of the plank at an angle against the previous installed plank and fold down. Ensure that the board is positioned on the integral locking strip of the floor plank in the previous row.
12. Lift the flooring plank up slightly, together with the previous one you laid in the same row (approx.. 1.5”), and push it against the row in front, and then push it down.



13. As you continue, you will need to make some gentle adjustments on the pressing angle, as well as ensuring that you are keeping your ½” expansion around the perimeter of the wall. Please Note: beyond 3 rows, it becomes difficult to move and realign, so keep that in mind as you progress.

14. Proceed with the installation, as described above, until reaching the opposite wall.

15. For the last row, measure and cut the planks in the last row to size. Allow for the ½” distance to the wall. And, as described at the beginning, no plank should be less than 2” in width.

*Note:* If the last row is very narrow and the planks are not laying flat, first make sure tongue and groove are properly joined, and if they are secured properly, you will need to use ‘white t&g’ glue to hold the last row in place. Once glued, place a weight on the last row for 24 hours or until the row remains flat. **Important Note:** No adhesive should ever be used between the floor and subfloor when the ‘floating’ installation method is use.

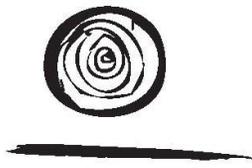
16. Remove all spacers and clear the floor of debris and abrasive particles. The floor may be used immediately following installation.

## “Floating” Installation and Hydronic radiant heating

*General Guidelines:* Comcork can be installed with ‘hydronic’ radiant heating systems, but the surface temperature of the subfloor must never exceed 82° F. For detailed information, follow the instructions supplied by the subfloor heating system manufacturer/contractor, or contact your supplier. **Important Note:** it is not recommended to use Comcork on ‘electric’ underfloor heating systems due to the nature of the heat output.

*Hydronic Installation Instructions* (as they relate to site prep and operating conditions):

- When installing on newly poured concrete or gypcrete, it is critical to ensure the substrate is completely dried, and done so in a systematic nature to ensure any moisture within the substrate is removed prior to the installation of the flooring.
- The main steps for this are:
  - Drying the substrate by turning the heating on/off with a pause before installation of the floor, following a documented protocol. After that you can begin the “heating phase”.
  - The heating phase of preparing concrete subfloors for flooring installation needs to occur for a minimum of 21 days after concrete/gypcrete is completely cured. The heating phase begins with a constant running temperature of 78°F, for no less than 3 days.
  - The temperature should then be increased each day until the maximum temperature allowed according to the manufacturer system. This maximum value should be kept for at least 72 hours and maintained for 5-7 days without any turning off.
  - Then, decrease the temperature each day by 1 degree until 65°F on the surface is achieved.
  - During the installation, the temperature of the surface should not exceed 65°F and should be kept at that temperature for 3 days after completing the installation.
- The temperature should be increased slowly to a max. of 82°F (note: temperatures in excess of that can damage the flooring product, and this would void any warranty protection).



## “Glue-down” Installation Procedure

**Tools and Materials:** Saw, tape measure, straight edge, 30° wedge, crowbar, 10mm spacers, roller, paint tray, contact cement, cloth, rubber mallet.

**Storage and Handling:** Store the opened planks at room temperature for at least 72 hours prior to installation, at a consistent level where the Relative Humidity and Temperature will prevail when the building occupied. The operating conditions must be held between 65-82° and between 35-65% Relative Humidity – before, during, and after the installation.

1. Before laying the floor ensure the material being installed is within parameters (color, clarity, finish, etc.), as well as ensure that the subfloor and site conditions are as required. If any of these conditions are not met, immediately stop in the installation process, and either contact your supplier, or the party in charge of and overseeing the installation site.
2. Cut all doorframes 2mm above the finished (ie: installed) product height (to allow for the movement of the floor).
3. Visually determine where you will start the installation, and the direction you will run the planks. Generally, it is common to lay the planks following the direction of the light.
4. Apply adhesive (recommended: Loba Wakol D3540) using a roller to subfloor, as well as the back of the planks. Follow adhesive manufacturer's directions for use (inclusive of set time, cure time, clean-up, etc.).
5. Once the adhesive is completely dry (tacky to the touch – and transparent; often between 45-60 minutes), you can begin laying the panels.
6. Lay the planks in a random or predetermined stagger pattern, pressing the tiles in place with either a rubber mallet or hand roller once it is positioned in the right spot.
7. Throughout the process, and then once again after all the planks are installed, roll the floor with a 100 lb. roller – to ensure all edges and seams have effectively bonded to the substrate.

For any questions, either contact your supplier, or Sustainable Flooring directly.