



### **Design aspects**

When designing the floor covering one shall establish which class of cork floating floor is suitable for the intended intensity of use. For suitability see European Standards:

*EN 685 Resilient floor coverings - Classification*

*EN 14085 Resilient floor coverings - Specification for floor panel for loose-laying installation.*

### **General**

GFIX is a revolutionary system for installing cork floating floors without using glue. GFIX uses the patented Uniclic® ingenious form of tongue and groove to “click” the panels together. The GFIX system enables you to work 50 % faster than with traditional, glued floating floors, and because there is no glue it is much easier and cleaner to work with.

### **Moisture**

GFIX is based on pre-treated, watertight HDF board. Despite its moisture-resistance, GFIX cork floating floor is not suitable for damp or steamy rooms. Do not install in bathrooms, shower rooms, saunas or other rooms exposed to excessive moisture.

### **Conditioning**

Cork floating floors must be stored unopened at room temperature for at least 48 hours before installation. Do not open packages before starting installation.

### **Sub-floor**

The sub-floor must be perfectly dry, solid, even and clean. Unevenness in the sub-floor of 2 mm over a distance of 1 m is acceptable.

On cement surfaces and ceramic tiles or on sub-floors where rising damp is possible, a 0.2 mm polyethylene sheet must be laid first. The rolled lengths of foil should overlap about 20 cm, running up the walls about 3 cm, and then be fastened with adhesive tape.

All soft-fitted carpets must be removed, but the planks can be laid on existing floor coverings like wood, linoleum, vinyl, etc. In case of an old wooden floor, the new one should be laid across the old one.

### **Planning the layout**

Before installation, please control the planks. If you come across a defect in production please register the complaint at your supplier immediately and do not install!

Cork is a natural product. Variations in colour or structure are natural and give cork a special character. Therefore, mix the planks in order to obtain the most pleasing blend of shade.

Ensure that, as far as possible, material from the same batch is used in the same area.

The planks should preferably lie lengthwise in the room or in the same direction as the light falls.

Avoid the use of sensitive patterns where there is a risk of fading from high temperatures or intense sunlight.

GFIX floorings are installed as a "floating floor". This means that the planks should not be fixed to the subfloor. The floor must be able to expand in all directions. So, expansion joints of 10-15 mm should be maintained at walls and also around pipes and door frames. The skirting boards should not be fixed to the floor.

First measure the room. If the width of the last row is less than 10 cm, saw the first and the last plank in equal length.

### **Tools and Accessories**

Moisture barrier of 0.2mm polyethylene (if necessary);

Adhesive tape;

Spacer blocks;

Hammer;

Pull bar with protruding edge (to be tapped on with a hammer);

Tapping block;

Pencil;

Measuring tape;

Saw;

Dust mask;

Safety glasses.



## Installation

Installation should be carried out at normal room temperature (18 °C) and relative humidity between 50 to 60 %.

You can join together the panels of the GFIX system in 2 different ways: The panels can be rotated to fit into one another, with either the tongue into the groove, or the groove on to the tongue. The easiest way though, is to fit the tongue into the groove. Position the panel to be installed at an angle of 20 - 30 degrees to the panel already installed. Move the panel to be fitted slightly up and down exerting forward pressure at the same time. The panels will then click into place together.

When the panels cannot be rotated into one another they can also be fitted lying flat. IMPORTANT! To do this, you need a hammer and the special tapping block. Do not use any other tapping block otherwise you may damage the panels to be fitted.

Start installing the floor on one corner, working from right to left. The first panel should be placed with the tongue side towards the wall. To ensure a perfect expansion joint, the tongues along the edges of panels that go against the wall, need to be sawn off. Now "click" the next panel rotating and pushing the tongue of a panel into the groove of previous one at an angle of 20 - 30 degrees until both panels click together on the short side. Do this for a few panels of the first row. Make sure that panels are perfectly aligned to one another. This is very important for installing the next rows.

The last panel of first row should be shortened accordingly. The minimum length of the panel should be 30 cm. Therefore, the width of the room has to be measured before starting the installation and, if necessary, the first plank should be trimmed.

Start on the second row with the leftover piece of plank from the previous row if the plank length is at least 30 cm. If not, use a new plank, which has to be cut in the middle.

Rotate and push the tongue of the long side of the panel into the groove of one on the previous row, until both panels click together. Now take another panel and fit it on the groove of the one on the previous row leaving a space of +/- 1 cm from the short edge of the previous panel. Then tap it until the short edges of the first two panels of the second row fit together. Install the third panel of the second row.

After joined the first few panels and have got used to the technique, then use the same technique so that the first two rows are fully installed. Now push the whole unit against the wall and fill in the expansion joint (+/- 1 cm), using spacer blocks, so that you have a sturdy whole.

From the third row on, finish off each row at a time, each time joining the panel along its long edge, then along its short edge. You can use the leftover pieces that you have at the end of each row as the beginning panels of the next row. That way, you make the best possible use of each panel. Always place a weight (a pack of panels) on the joints that you have just made in order to stabilize them.

The width of the planks of the last row should have a minimum of 10 cm. Therefore, measure the length of the room before starting the installation and if needed adapt the width of the first row.

## Finish

After installing your floor, you can immediately walk on it and begin the finishing process. This is one of the major benefits of the GFIX system.

Remove all spacer blocks. Finish by installing skirting boards, fastened to the wall (never to the floor!).

## Room conditions

Cork floating floors may also be used in rooms with floor heating. In this case there are special laying guidelines. It is especially important to note that the surface temperature of the flooring may not exceed 28 °C. Please note that gaps may occur during the months of heating.

A relative humidity between 40 % and 60 % is considered the ideal room condition, not just for your health and well-being, but also for your cork floor. When the rooms are heated during winter months, humidity is often below this range. As cork is a natural material, this may lead to gaps. Please avoid dry air by installing humidifiers and putting in houseplants.

## Preventive care

The cork floor must be kept clean. Wet maintenance should be avoided. Any excess water should be removed immediately. Never use cleaning products with abrasive ingredients or solvent based.

Furniture legs should have protective pads to avoid scratches. Furniture and other heavy objects must be placed carefully.



A doormat should be laid inside the front door to help protect against dirt and sand. Chair castors should be of type W (soft). For additional protection, polycarbonate mats under castor chairs should be used. Avoid sharp or pointed objects with concentrated weight such as high heels on your cork floor. Prolonged contact of plasticizer-containing material (e.g. rubber, latex, plastics...) with the varnish may cause non-reversible stain of the floor.

Cork is a natural product and may tend to fade when exposed to sunlight over long periods of time. Use blinds or curtains to prevent cork fading by direct solar radiation.

### **Cleaning**

Dry-clean your floor using a mop, broom or vacuum cleaner. Dust and dirt behave like sanding paper and are thus to be removed immediately. If necessary (heavier soiling) the floor can be damp-mopped using an appropriate cleaning product.

### **Maintenance**

Maintenance caring can become necessary from time to time to refresh the protective layer. First clean your floor and then apply a thin layer of a recommended maintenance product.

### **Basic cleaning**

Manual or mechanical basic cleaning can become necessary in case of heavy stains which can not be removed during maintenance cleanings. To basic-clean your floor, use an appropriate "remover", applying as little solution as possible and working in sections. Damp-mop the floor subsequently with clean water. After the floor has dried completely, a new maintenance care must be performed. Basic cleanings should be carried out as seldom as possible.

### **Renovation**

All varnished floors need refurbishment depending on the intensity of use. When refurbishing, sand the old varnish carefully and remove wax, maintenance products, dirt, etc. Remove the dust by vacuuming and apply 2 coats of a recommended varnish.

Please observe the particular maintenance instruction for your cork floating floor. For the correct use follow the instructions on the packaging labels of each product, as well as the information from technical data sheets.