



MEDITERRA CORK TILES FAQ

MEDITERRA CORK IS A FLOORSORE® CERTIFIED PRODUCT

What is cork flooring made of?

Cork flooring is made from the bark of the cork oak tree, *Quercus suber*. Unlike other oak trees, it is an evergreen and is native to the Mediterranean Sea region. The outer bark "cork" has many uses and is used in many products including inside hat liners, shoe soles, life preservers, the core of baseballs, as wine stoppers, fishing bobbers and floor tiles and planks.

When the bark is removed, does it damage the tree?

Most trees will die if the bark is removed since the bark carries the sap, which is essential to a tree's survival. This is not true with the unique cork oak which grows bark in two layers with the outer bark or "cork" only serving as a protective coating that can be removed without causing injury to the tree. The outer bark is light weight, resistant to rot, fire, water and insects. The inner bark is alive and as new layers grow, the outer bark ceases to be a living part of the tree and merely serves as insulation to protect the tree against hot desert winds.

Why consider cork flooring?

With all the unique physical qualities cork offers, it is an excellent material for durable, natural, quiet and comfortable flooring. Cork can be compressed yet remain resilient and has the ability to recover from most compressions. It is impervious to water and other liquids, has a high coefficient of friction, low thermal conductivity, and the ability to absorb vibration/sound.

Where is cork flooring made?

All cork from Capri is made in Italy and Capri's US warehouse facility is in Lancaster, PA. Capri warehouses substantial inventory of Mediterra cork in the Lancaster facility.

How long has cork flooring been around?

Manufacturing of cork flooring dates back to the early 1900s, with many cork floors installed in Europe and North America in the 1920s and 1930s, still viable, beautiful floors today. It is a proven flooring option that has survived the test of time. An aged cork floor develops a beautiful "patina" only nature could create.

Is cork flooring harmful to the environment?

No, cork is a natural, renewable resource. The outer bark (cork) regenerates every 7-9 years and is harvested without causing damage to the tree. After harvesting, the first industry to use the cork bark is the wine industry as wine stoppers "corks" are drilled in the large pieces of harvested outer bark. Cork flooring is made with the pre-consumer (post-industrial) waste left after the "corks" (wine stoppers) are drilled. At Capri we use no or low VOC adhesives, finishes and cleaners, all of which further the cork green story.

Is cork durable?

When properly maintained, cork flooring can last for many decades, even under high traffic. Cork has a natural resilience due to its unique cell structure and has the ability to give or bounce back. The Mediterra Cork Collection comes pre-finished with 3 coats of commercial grade water-based polyurethane which add durability and resistance to scratches and gouges.

Where are cork floors installed?

Many libraries, churches, university and government buildings as well as residences have used cork floors for decades. Notable architects Frank Lloyd Wright and Mies Van der Rohe both used cork floors in residential applications. While many areas in residences are suitable for cork, kitchens are among the most popular areas in the home for cork floors. In recent years corporate areas, restaurants, spas, hotels and healthcare facilities have begun to use cork because of its resilience, durability, acoustical qualities and ease of maintenance.

Do cork tiles have shade variations?

Since cork is a natural material, shade variations are an inherent characteristic of cork and Medium has the largest range of shade variations of all colors/patterns. Attention to blending shades when installing is necessary. All cork patterns (including hand-laid lines) from Capri are random and not intended to match or line up.

Will cork dent?

Cork has the ability to bounce back when compressed. However, as with all resilient flooring, if too much pressure is exerted in too small an area (i.e. high heels, spikes or improper furniture glides/footings) denting will occur. Proper furniture

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glides/footings and chair mats under casters are necessary on cork floors. Cork must be protected when moving heavy equipment, appliances or furniture.

Will cork fade?

Yes, cork like all natural wood will fade when exposed to UV rays.

Will the cork smell go away?

Yes, the smell is from the baking process and will eventually dissipate. Mediterra Cork has earned FloorScore® certification for indoor air quality and meets the requirements of CA section 01350 and CHPS.

What types of substrates are required for cork?

All substrates should be cleaned, dry, smooth, flat and structurally sound. Substrates should be free of dust, solvent, paint, wax, oil, grease, sealers, old adhesives or other materials. The area must be completely dry and flat to within 3/16" in 10 feet. No substrates other than those listed and described in the Capri instructions are acceptable; these requirements also apply when Mediterra is being installed over access flooring.

What testing must be done prior to installing cork?

A calcium chloride and/or relative humidity test must be done and pH level should be checked. Moisture should not exceed 3 lbs/ 1000 sq ft 24 hours prior to install; relative humidity of substrate should be less than 75%; and pH level should be 7-10. If moisture exceeds acceptable levels contact Capri technical department for solutions.

Complete preparation and testing requirements are available in Capri document CC005.

How is cork installed?

Cork tiles are installed on clean, flat, and smooth substrates using WAKOL D3540 water based contact adhesive. Complete installation instructions are available in the Capri documents MT205C and MT205V. Instructions must be followed for successful installations. WAKOL D3540 is the only Capri approved adhesive for installing Mediterra cork.

Can cork be installed over radiant heat?

Mediterra homogeneous colors/patterns Medium, Dark, Light Tracks, Espresso and Terrain can be installed over radiant heat systems provided the floor temperature will not exceed 85° F. While the other Mediterra homogeneous colors can be used, they are less dimensionally stable. We do not recommend Mediterra veneer cork tiles be installed over radiant heat systems. Electric mat systems cannot be installed directly beneath resilient floor coverings, including cork. Read Capri document MT216 for more information.

Can cork be installed on vertical surfaces?

Yes, refer to Capri document MT205V for vertical installation instructions.

How are cork floors maintained?

Maintenance of cork requires regular vacuuming/sweeping and damp mop cleaning with neutral floor cleaner (available from Capri) as needed. Use mats at exterior doors and do not allow moisture to collect under mats. Use protective furniture footings/pads (available from 1877floorguy.com) and chair mats/pads under desks/workstations or other areas where chairs with casters are used, as casters can damage finish. Cork must be protected when moving heavy equipment, appliances or furniture. High heels can damage flooring and finish coats. Read Capri document MT206 for complete cleaning instructions.

Can cork floors get wet?

While cork is resistant to liquid penetration, just like other wood flooring, spills should be removed immediately and liquids should not be poured on cork or allowed to stand on cork. Avoid excessive liquid "pooling" on the cork tiles.

Can cork be refinished?

When the polyurethane shows signs of wear, the cork should be screened and recoated with additional coats of polyurethane (only Capri approved polyurethane can be used). The screening and recoating procedure should be done only by professionals familiar with the process. Read Capri document MT212P for complete recoating instructions.

Can cork floors be sanded?

Homogeneous cork tiles can be sanded but veneer cork tiles CANNOT be sanded. Sanding of homogeneous tiles should be done only by professionals familiar with the process. Please contact Capri technical department (800.492.2613) for instructions for sanding homogeneous cork floors.

All Capri documents are available in the document library on the Capri website: capricork.com or by calling Capri at 800.492.2613.