

## **UNICORK Flooring Installation and Maintenance Guide**

UNICORK flooring is a high quality environmental flooring product made of natural cork. Proper installation procedures must be followed in order to insure a successful installation.

### **UPON RECEIPT OF MERCHANDISE, PLEASE COMPLETE THE FOLLOWING PRE-INSTALLATION CHECKLIST:**

- Inspect your shipment for damage
- Verify packing slip for proper color, thickness and amount of material shipped
- Check the shipment for adhesive and sealer
- Adhesive must not be exposed to freezing temperatures
- Store material in a clean/dry area at 70° F
- Read material safety data sheets

### **I. UNICORK Tools and Accessories Required:**

(Rollers and brushes necessary for applying the adhesive, lacquer and polymer are included with shipment)

- Small latex paint brush
- Broom handle (threaded)
- Clean and smooth-headed metal hammer (not rubber)
- 150 lb roller (clean)
- Measuring tape
- Utility knife
- Chalk line
- Lint free cloth

**Adhesive:** (included with shipment)

- Unicork contact adhesive
- .9, 2.75 quart 1.37-gallon or .8, 2.5 and 5kg containers
- Approximate coverage is 430 square feet per 1.37 gallon or 5kg container

**Lacquer:** (included with shipment)

- Unicork high traffic lacquer
- 1.05, 2.6 and 5.25-quart or 1, 2.5 and 5 liter containers
- Approximate coverage is 100 square feet per quart
- 2 coats recommended per job

**Polymer Finish:** (included with shipment)

- Unicork Polymer Finish
- .8 quart or 1 liter container
- Approximate coverage is 650 – 850 square feet per quart.
- 1 coat (applied with lint free cloth)

## **II. UNICORK Preparation of Sub-Surface**

### **A) Concrete Sub-Surface**

The subfloor needs to be completely cured for a minimum of 28 days and measure no more than 3lbs of moisture per 1,000 square feet in a 24-hour period. This should be measured by the calcium chloride test.

Sub-floor shall be free of all dust, debris, grease, adhesive residue and must be straight and level to a tolerance of  $\pm 1/8"$  in ten feet under a straight edge.

All old floor coverings must be removed so Unicork can be fitted directly on to the subfloor (All remnants of adhesive must be removed and any unevenness repaired). On concrete use Portland based cement floor leveling compound and allow to fully dry. ***Gypsum based patching and leveling compounds are not acceptable and will void warranties if used.*** Clean and vacuum floor to remove any debris, which could prevent proper bonding.

Under no circumstance should Unicork be laid on cork, linoleum or vinyl flooring. Under floor heating should be turned off while glue and lacquer are being applied.

### **B) Wood Sub-Surface**

Plywood 3/4" tongue and groove exterior grade, smooth side up is the minimum requirement for wood sub-floor installations.

Secure all loose flooring and protruding nails, screws etc.

Replace any damaged wood.

Fill cracks with plastic wood or wood stripping. Clean and vacuum floor to remove debris which could inhibit proper bonding.

### **III. UNICORK Before Installation**

- Complete pre-installation checklist
- The sub-surface must be level, clean and dry.
- Installation should not start until all other trades have finished in the area.
- All materials must be stored and installed at room temperature (above 68° F and below 95° F).
- Do not apply in humidity over 80%.
- Dry lay tiles to ensure accuracy of pattern and reduce waste.

18" x 24" tiles are directional and can be fitted in a pattern or design. Create your design by drylaying the tiles prior to installation.

When setting out the designs make sure that the joints do not coincide with the joints in the sub flooring. Unicork is installed from the middle of the room to the edge of the room.

First work down a wall to find the center point of the first wall, take a tile and mark out the tile widths from the center of the wall to make sure that you end up with over half a tile width in the end row. Adjust your mark at the center point of the room if needed. Then use the same measurement from the center point of the opposite wall. Using a chalk line make a line across the center of the room by joining up these two points. Use a tape measure to find the center point of the chalk line.

This will be the starting point when you start laying. Lay tiles on one side of the room at a time. To apply the adhesive to the floor, first use a small brush to apply to the edges and corners, then use the roller for the larger expanses. It is essential to use only the Unicork contact adhesive, which was supplied.

Affix the roller to a broom handle, so that the adhesive can be applied from a standing position. This will enable the installer to see that the adhesive has been applied thoroughly and evenly.

Take care not to walk on the floor during or after application. Prior to use, prepare rollers by brushing by hand or with a stiff brush to remove any excess lint. Glue and fit one side of the room at a time. The adhesive should be allowed to dry (from white to clear) which should take from 1 to 2 hours, depending on room temperature. After gluing, commence laying.

### **IV. Installing UNICORK**

Commence laying the tiles when the adhesive floor has become transparent. Begin by mixing up the tiles from at least three different packs. Check each pack before and during laying. The first tile is started in the center of the room, with the long side of the tile carefully aligned along a chalk line.

Do not put any pressure on the tile until correctly aligned. To ensure good adhesion and tight joints, Unicork is tapped down with a hammer. Make sure the hammer is clean and free of sharp edges. ***Do not use a rubber mallet as this will mark the tiles.*** Strike the tile with only the flat head of the hammer. ***Never use the edge of the hammer, or use excessive force.*** Do not leave gaps between the tiles.

18" x 24" tiles are directional and can be fitted in a pattern or design. Create your design by drylaying the tiles prior to installation.

When cutting tiles to fit, use a sharp utility knife and a straight metal edge to ensure accuracy. Around the edges of the room you will need to cut tiles. ***When cutting around posts, drains, etc., measure carefully to ensure a proper fit and that no gaps remain.***

Once you have completed one side of the room, apply adhesive to the other side and repeat the process.

## **V. UNICORK Lacquer**

Although the tile is provided with two coats of lacquer applied at the factory, **an additional two coats must be applied after installing the tile, to seal both the surface and the beveled edges against dirt and liquid.** Lacquer should be applied at a rate of .9 quart or 1 liter to 100 square feet.

Before applying lacquer, make sure the floor is completely free from dirt and debris, and all excess adhesive has been removed. Vacuum well. Trim the edges of your roller to ensure that no excess fluff remains. This will ensure a good lacquer finish.

Affix a broom handle to the roller, so that lacquer can be applied from a standing position to ensure complete floor coverage. *Don't pour the lacquer directly onto the floor use the lacquer bucket from the fitting kit.* Spread evenly and don't leave any pools. For the best results, don't let the wet edge of the lacquer dry. It is essential that you apply all the lacquer recommended and supplied. Divide the floor into smaller sections and work at a steady pace. **Allow lacquer to dry for 6 to 8 hours between coats.** Lacquer must be worked into all the grooves. The edges are vulnerable if not properly sealed. If beveled tile, points between the tiles must be fully sealed with plenty of lacquer. It is always better to over lacquer than under lacquer.

For lacquer to dry properly:

- Apply at room temperature (65+ Fahrenheit).
- Do not apply in high humidity (below 80% humidity).
- Ensure adequate ventilation (but not a strong draught).
- Do not apply too thinly or too thickly (spread rate = .9 quart or 1 liter per 100 sq ft).
- Allow sufficient drying time between coats (6 to 8 hours)

### **Total cure time of the lacquer: 1-2 weeks.**

During cure time avoid excessive water spillage and placing heavy objects on the floor; always wait 2 weeks before laying rugs. (Use only cloth-backed rugs).

## **VI. UNICORK Polymer Finish**

Allow at least 24 hours for lacquer to dry before applying polymer finish. Apply polymer (undiluted) with a damp lint free cloth. Cover the entire surface and into the beveled edges if applicable. Apply one coat and allow drying 1 hour before allowing traffic on the floor.

***Caution: Do not under any circumstances seal the edges with silicon. If needed use only an acrylic sealer. Do not use silicon products on or near Unicork.***

## **VII. UNICORK Cleaning & Maintenance**

- Unicork must be cleaned and maintained on a regular basis.
- Do not use abrasive or high PH detergents, bleach-based cleaners or abrasive cleaning pads.
- Using clean warm water and neutral PH cleanser, ring mop until damp and mop floor to remove any dirt or debris collected on floor.

### **Unicork Remover**

- The *polymer* finish must be stripped off and re-applied once a year.
- Use remover in a solution of 1:10 parts water and scrub lightly to remove engrained dirt.
- Make sure all dirt and cleaning residue is removed.
- Apply polymer finish to protect floor.