

You must read and understand these instructions completely before installing Natural CORK Bamboo flooring.

In the event these instructions leave unanswered questions or if you would like additional information, please contact Natural CORK, Inc. toll free, 800-404-2675 or 706-733-6120 prior to beginning installation. Responsibility for the suitability of Natural CORK Bamboo for each individual installation cannot be assumed by Natural Cork Inc., since Natural Cork Inc., has no influence on the installer's proper application. Should an individual plank be doubtful as to appearance or dimension, the installer should not use this piece. Any defect must be reported directly to Natural CORK, Inc. or to a Natural CORK distributor/dealer immediately. Natural CORK will send a replacement in a timely manner.

ACCLIMATION: As relative humidity varies in different parts of the country, acclimation of the flooring prior to installation is the most important precaution to take in order to insure a successful installation.

Proper acclimation is necessary to adapt the moisture content of the bamboo to the conditions of your environment. Improper acclimation can cause the floor to buckle and/or the boards to shrink or cup after installation.

SUBSTRATE PREPARATION: With a floating floor, the subfloor must be level, dry and free of imperfections. An uneven subfloor will make the floor feel unstable and cause premature damage.

EXPECTATIONS: Bamboo Floating Floors with glue-less locking system are subject to the normal behavior of minor expansion during periods of high humidity and minor contraction during periods of low humidity (usually the heating season). Expansion and contraction are inherent to any wood flooring and are not considered a manufacturing defect. It can be kept to unnoticeable levels by stabilizing the building through temperature and humidity control, allowing for proper acclimatization of the product prior to installation, and providing the recommended expansion space mentioned below.

INSTALLATION ON CONCRETE SUBSTRATE: Bamboo Floating Floors with glue-less locking system can be installed over concrete that is above grade, on grade or below grade. Concrete substrates are required to be sound, smooth and level. Tolerance of level must be within 1/8" in 10'. Check concrete slab for moisture with Calcium Chloride moisture test. Moisture content cannot be more than 3 pounds per 1,000 sq. ft. per 24 hours. Fill any low spots with Portland based leveler and scrape any high spots. Before installing your bamboo Floating Floor, cover concrete floor with 6 mil polyethylene sheets, run up the wall 3", overlap seams 8", and tape the sheets together. Install underlayment over this moisture barrier. We recommend using 1/8" cork underlayment or any

other premium quality underlayment. A 5/8" expansion space should be left around the perimeter. (Typical expansion space is equal to the thickness of the product installed).

INSTALLATION ON UNDERLAYMENT-GRADE PLYWOOD AND MAN-MADE BOARD SUBSTRATES: Subfloor must be clean and level. Fill any low spots with appropriate filler and sand any high spots. Tolerance of level must be within 1/8" in 10'. Subfloor must not exceed 14% moisture content (electrical resistance method). Check basements and under floor crawl spaces to be sure they are dry and well ventilated to avoid damage to planks caused by moisture. For buildings with crawl spaces, 6 mil polyethylene sheeting should be used as ground cover over the earth. US Floors recommend 1/8" cork underlayment to be used loose laid directly over the plywood substrate. 5/8" Expansion space should be left around the perimeter. (Typical expansion space is equal to the thickness of the product installed).

BAMBOO FLOATING FLOORS MUST BE ACCLIMATED: Store flooring material out of the box at job site for a minimum of 72 hours. During storage and installation, maintain temperature and relative humidity to level consistent to the conditions that will prevail when building is occupied. Heating or air conditioning should be used for an appropriate length of time prior and during installation. With improper acclimation, the floor could noticeably expand or contract after installation.

NOTE: Installation of an expansion joint (T-Mold) is necessary when transitioning from one room to another. Color matching trim pieces are available for all floors.

BAMBOO FLOATING FLOORS ARE INSTALLED WITH A BUILT-IN GLUELESS INTERLOCKING SYSTEM: The plank profile has a milled tongue and groove to interlock the adjoining boards on the floor.

Start installing the floor in one corner (preferably parallel to the longest wall) following the direction the light falls. Install the floor from left to right. *Always insert the tongue into the groove, not the other way around.*

UNDERLAYMENT: Unroll underlayment, 1 strip at a time, wall to wall. Run up the wall around the perimeter of the room, trim after floor has been installed. Over concrete slabs, a vapor barrier must be installed.

STRING LINE: Choose the longest wall that will be parallel to the plank floor. Tap a nail 1/2" from the wall at each end of the room. String a line between the nails 3/4" above floor level. Use this string as a guide-line for the first row of planks. The 5/8" space from the wall allows room for expansion. **SHUFFLE FLOORING PLANKS FOR BEST VISUAL MIX.**

FIRST ROW: Facing the guide-line, place the first plank at the left-hand end, tongue side facing wall, starting 1/2" off the wall. It is recommended to remove the tongue from all planks lining the starting wall. Use 1/2" spacers at the end and along the wall (2 to a plank) while keeping the planks aligned with the string. Spacers keep planks from shifting when subsequent rows are added. Lock the narrow side of the next plank using a tapping block and a hammer. Place block flat on floor, and tap gently until the ends of the two planks are firmly joined, with the joint completely closed up. Continue this process until you reach the end wall. Cut the last plank to fit allowing for a 1/2" perimeter expansion space on all sides. NEVER TAP DIRECTLY ON THE SIDE OF THE BOARD AND ALWAYS USE A TAPPING BLOCK.

NEXT ROWS: If the cut-off piece from the previous row is more than 10" long it can be used to start the next row as long as end-joints between adjacent rows are always staggered by at least 10".

a) Position the long side of the plank to be installed at an angle of 20-30° to the plank already installed. Move the plank to be fitted slightly up and down at the same time as exerting forward pressure.

b) To connect the sides, use a number of smaller taps on the short edge with the tapping block, until the planks lock together completely.

c) In some cases, such as under a door frame, the planks cannot be rotated into one another. In these situations, the planks can be fitted horizontally by tapping on the edges using the tapping block. A floor pull bar might be needed for tight spaces and in this case, it is recommended to use a piece of cork underlayment between the pull bar and the plank to protect its surface. In order to cut around pipes, use a drill bit with a diameter similar to the diameter of the pipe + 1/2" for expansion.

LAST ROWS: Usually the last row will require all planks be cut lengthwise. Measure each plank at several places along the length to ensure a proper fit. Remember to allow a 1/2" expansion space along the wall side. Use floor pull bar and mallet, again protecting the surface of the floor using a piece of underlayment or other protective material.

FINISH: One of the major benefits of using the glueless interlocking system is that after installation you can immediately walk on the floor. Remove all spacer blocks. Trim the extended underlayment and polyethylene sheeting. Never attach skirting board to the floor itself, but allow space for the floor to expand and contract underneath it. An expansion space of 5/8" is recommended around the perimeter of your room. In order to fill in the expansion gap around pipes and any other areas not covered by trim, use a flexible caulk.

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NOTE: Natural CORK, Inc. makes no warranty or guarantee of the quality of work performed by a selected installer. Natural CORK, Inc. disclaims all liability for imperfect installation of its product. Natural CORK Bamboo pre-finished flooring is best installed over a wood subfloor using staples/brads or glue. Gluing pre-finished Natural CORK Bamboo directly to a concrete subfloor may be done on or above grade. Do not install Natural CORK Solid Bamboo below grade. Natural CORK Bamboo may be applied over in-floor radiant heating systems. Recommended equipment is the Stanley Bostitch Flooring Nailer. Proper use of this equipment will render good results.

ACCLIMATION: Natural CORK Bamboo flooring must be allowed to acclimate on-site a minimum of 72 hours in advance of installation. Open each box and remove shrink-wrap completely. During the acclimation period it is important that temperature and humidity levels be maintained in accordance with those expected to exist after installation. Optimum installation conditions are 70 degrees Fahrenheit at 30 - 50% humidity.

SUBSTRATE PREPARATION: Underlayment-grade plywood and man-made board substrates must be clean, level, dry, and free of contaminants. Optimum results will be achieved through use of 3/4" CDX plywood substrate. Fill any low spots with appropriate filler and sand any high spots. For buildings with a raised foundation, install ground cover of 6 mil polyethylene sheets over the earth in crawl space.

Concrete Substrate must be on or above grade. Concrete is required to be sound, smooth, level and flat with a maximum variation of 1/8" in 10'. Fill any low spots with appropriate filler and scrape any high spots. Subfloor must be properly cured and tested for moisture content. Slab must be properly cured. Flooring must not be installed if vapor pressure exceeds 3 lbs. per 1000 square feet in 24 hours using calcium chloride test method.

INSTALLATION: Flooring should be square with the space, running parallel to longest room dimension. A 1/2" expansion space must be left around entire perimeter. It is important that the tongue & groove of each plank fit together tightly at all seems and butt joints. Starter row must be held firmly in place using either nails or wedging. Use of proper equipment will improve overall quality of installation.

Nail Down Method: Once starter rows are secure, additional rows should be blind nailed using a professional quality flooring nail gun. Excessive splitting or cracking of plank tongue can result from use of improper equipment or incorrect equipment settings. Holding nail gun at a 45-50 degree angle to face of plank, insert nails directly above tongue. Beginning a minimum of 2 inch from end of first plank, space nails at 8 inch intervals. To prevent splitting, nails should not be placed closer than 2 inch from either end of plank. Two inch long flooring nails (cleats), or 2-inch, 15 gauge flooring staples with a 1/2 inch crown are recommended.

Glue Down Method: Room, flooring material and containers of adhesive should be conditioned at normal room temperature for 72 hours before beginning installation. Use only manufacturer's recommended adhesive. Apply adhesive to substrate with a 1/4" x 3/16" x 5/16" V notch trowel. Immediately and firmly place flooring onto "wet" adhesive.

NOTE: It is important not to allow glue onto plank surface. If glue does spill or leak onto surface of flooring, please consult adhesive manufacturer for appropriate corrective action.

In-floor Radiant Heat: Regardless of season, radiant heat system should be turned on and remain on for five days in advance of installation. A radiant floor should not produce surface temperatures over 85 degrees Fahrenheit. Continue to operate radiant heat system after installation. When choosing an installer for application over radiant heat, look for members of the Radiant Panel Association.

NOTE: Any wood flooring, to include bamboo, will expand and contract in response to changes in temperature and humidity. There should be no more than a 2% maximum difference in moisture content between the subfloor and surface flooring material. The amount of movement varies dependent upon temperature, dimensional stability of the materials involved, and moisture content of both the surface flooring and subfloor. Visible gaps at seems and joints will vary seasonally.