



INTERIOR SOLUTIONS

## INSTALLATION INSTRUCTIONS for MDC COLORED CORK

### **Installing:**

Beginning the installation is an implied acceptance of site conditions and liability for any failure directly related to inadequate site conditions becomes the responsibility of the installer and/or wallcovering contractor.

Areas to receive material should be clean, fully enclosed and weather tight with the permanent HVAC in operation. A minimum temperature 68° F (20° C) should be established at least seven days prior to beginning the installation, maintained during the installation, and for at least seven days following the installation. The installation should not begin until the work of all other trades has been completed, especially overhead trades. Any areas to receive material should be adequately lighted to allow for proper inspection of the substrate, installation, seaming and for final inspection.

Colored cork can be successfully installed over a variety of substrates. Regardless of the specific type of substrate that is being installed over, the final determination of suitability for that purpose is the responsibility of the installer and/or installation contractor.

Areas where materials are to be stored should be a stable, conditioned environment as described under the Jobsite Conditions section. All materials and adhesives should be acclimated to these conditions for at least 48 hours prior to the installation. Material should be delivered to the job site in original, unopened packaging, with all labels intact. All rolls should be stored standing upright, labels up, to ensure that the color, roll and batch numbers can be easily read.

Use L 910W cork adhesive.

Use a 1/8"x1/8" x1/16" V Notch Trowel to apply the adhesive. Replace the trowel blade when proper coverage is no longer attainable.

Colored cork must be installed into wet adhesive. Do not spread adhesive in an area larger than can be installed while ensuring 100% wet transfer to the backing of the material.

Remove fresh adhesive residue immediately with a clean white cloth. Dried adhesive can be removed with a clean white cloth and cork Adhesive Remover. If this is not available, a solution of properly diluted neutral pH cleaner may be used. The area should then be rinsed with clean, cool water to remove all residues from the colored cork surfaces.

**NOTE:** Excessive pressure or aggressive cleaning may mar the colored cork surface.

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Edges can be finished by fitting a frame around the edge, beveling the edges, milling or cutting the edge straight. For the best result, always use sharp tools or blades when cutting the material.

Install protective outside corner guards over all outside corners. For inside corners, pattern or direct scribing the material will ensure a tight fit between the sheets.

### **Cutting and Fitting the First Sheet:**

For each wall, cut pieces of colored cork to the required length and width, adding 2" – 3" in each direction to allow for final trimming. It is preferred that the material is cut 24 hours prior to installation.

During storage in roll form, tension develops in colored cork that will cause the ends of pieces cut from the roll to "cup", or not lay flat. This is commonly called end curl. This tension must be relaxed prior to installation so that the material will remain flat and in full contact with the adhesive while the adhesive dries. If installing multiple sheets of colored cork, stack the pre-cut sheets face-to-face and back-to-back to help relieve the end curl and allow material to relax.

In order to ensure continuous contact of the material and adhesive, the natural end curl at the end of each cut must be relaxed, and/or massaged both before and during the installation process to remove the tension caused by being rolled. Relax the end curl by properly massaging at time of installation into adhesive.

Plan the layout to allow for a minimum of 1/2" – 3/4" of the factory edge to be trimmed from each side of the material for seaming. The seams should fall a minimum of 6" away from joints in the substrate.

Allowing for trimming, draw a plumb line on the wall where the seam for the first piece will fall.

Using a Seam and Strip Cutter (one is available via Forbo) or a straight edge and knife, trim a minimum of 1/2" – 3/4" from the seam edge of the first piece. Angle the knife slightly to create an undercut.

Trim the sheet and "dry" fit it to the wall section, making sure that the seam edge will align with the plumb line on the wall. Traditional scribing methods generally produce the best results. Establish "set marks" on both the material and the wall to aid in positioning the sheet during installation.



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### **Cutting and Fitting Second Sheet:**

Before adhering the first sheet, prepare seams for all adjacent sheets on a clean flat surface. Cutting seams on the wall can be difficult.

Position the second sheet adjacent to the first sheet, overlapping the second sheet on the first sheet a minimum of 1/2" – 3/4" at the seam. NOTE: Do not reverse the sheets. Install all colored cork sheets in the same direction.

Trace cut the seam using a cork Seam and Strip Cutter (one version is available via Forbo.) Apply masking tape at several locations as set marks to aid in properly aligning sheets.

Once the first sheet is installed on the wall, dry fit the next sheet and direct scribe along the ceiling and floor. Repeat this process for all adjacent sheets.

### **Adhesive Application:**

Starting from the corner, spread adhesive in the area where the first piece will be installed. The plumb line is the boundary for the side opposite the corner. Depending on conditions, it may not be possible to spread adhesive in the entire area without the adhesive becoming too dry before the material is placed.

If necessary, only spread adhesive a short distance from the starting point and stop the adhesive spread along a straight vertical line. Do not spread more adhesive than can be covered while the adhesive is still sufficiently wet to achieve 100% wet transfer to the material backing.

Using the set marks and plumb line established during fitting, position the material on the wall, starting at the corner. Roll immediately with a three-section wall roller. Roll thoroughly in all directions, first across the width and then along the length, so that the material backing is firmly pressed into the wet adhesive and any trapped air bubbles are released. Clean excess adhesive while it is still wet.

When it is not possible to adhere the entire piece at one time, fold the un-adhered portion of the material back over the adhered portion up to the adhesive spread line. Starting at the spread line, being careful not to overlap the adhesive, continue spreading adhesive toward the plumb line, placing and rolling the material as you go, until the entire piece has been adhered.

Repeat this process for each sheet.

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When installing large pieces of colored cork, it may be necessary to apply a quality contact adhesive to the upper 10" – 12" of the material and wall. This can prevent the sheet from sliding down along the fresh adhesive.

Where inside corners are involved, it is best to work away from the corners where colored cork has already been installed on the adjacent wall.

Colored cork shrinks slightly in the length when installed in wet adhesive. Back rolling the material will minimize shrinkage, but compensation must be made for shrinkage in cuts longer than approximately 20' in length to avoid fitting errors. For longer pieces, only trim to fit at the end where the installation will begin, leaving extra material at the opposite end. Begin adhering the piece at the fitted end and adhere the piece normally, stopping 4' – 5' from the unfitted end; shrinkage will occur as the piece is being installed. Once most of the piece has been adhered, fit the remaining end and adhere normally.

Colored cork sheets may expand slightly in the width when installed in wet adhesive. To compensate for any expansion, make sure that both seam edges are slightly undercut. This will allow the material to fall into place without force or pressure.

The open time and working time of adhesives will vary depending on site conditions such as ambient temperature and humidity, the porosity of the substrate and air circulation. A general indication of proper open time is when a light touch produces transfer of adhesive to the finger, but a firm touch will flatten and "smear" the adhesive. It is the installer's responsibility to make adjustments to specific conditions as may be necessary.

Check for adhesive transfer frequently. There must be 100% wet transfer of adhesive to the material backing in order to achieve a secure bond. 100% wet transfer is a continuous film of adhesive, when wet, on both the backing of the material and the substrate with no trace of trowel marks or ridges.

The material must remain in contact with the adhesive while the adhesive is drying and curing.

Immediately roll the colored cork in all directions using a three-section wall roller to ensure proper adhesive transfer. Additional rolling is required during adhesive setup to ensure that the material is flat and fully adhered.

Proper sheet placement and rolling will result in a complete "explosion" of the trowel ridges, creating a continuous flat film of adhesive. Complete transfer of the sheet backing will appear in the surface of the adhesive.

Remove fresh adhesive residue immediately with a clean white cloth. Dried adhesive can be removed with a clean white cloth and cork Adhesive Remover. If this is not available, a

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solution of properly diluted neutral pH cleaner may be used. The area should then be rinsed with clean, cool water to remove all residues from the material.

NOTE: Aggressive scrubbing may mar the bulletin board surface. The need for aggressive scrubbing can be avoided by taking care to keep the surface clean while handling and adhering the sheets.

### **Backing and Counter-Balancing:**

Colored cork may also be adhered to a backer-board and mounted to the wall. For proper counterbalancing, the back of the board should also be covered with the same material as on the front, in the same direction with the same adhesive and, if possible, at the same time. Depending on the thickness, symmetrical construction and rigidity of the surface (plywood, MDF, etc.), other materials can also be used, such as foils, laminates, impregnated paper or marine lacquers or sprays. It is recommended that a test installation be conducted if you have not worked with the materials before.

### **Drying Room Yellowing / Ambering:**

Colored cork is a linoleum product made from natural materials. During the manufacturing process while the material is maturing in the drying room stoves, the natural occurrence of a yellow cast, termed “drying room yellowing” or “ambering” appears on the surface. This yellow cast is caused by the oxidation of linseed oil, occurring intermittently and with varying intensity.

It is most noticeable on light blues, greys and soft ivory shades of material. The yellow cast is only TEMPORARY. The yellow cast is most noticeable when a new roll or carton of material is opened. It can appear as being off shade from the sample materials.

When the material is exposed to light, the yellow cast will dissipate. The process may take as little as a few hours in bright sunlight or longer with artificial light. Because this is a natural occurrence in the product, there is no set time frame for the yellowing to dissipate. This is not a material defect. Performing floor care procedures, such as applying floor finish to the material, will not prevent the dissipation but may slow the process.

To discover the true color of the colored cork, follow these few simple steps:

1. Take a piece of the material and cover one half with heavy paper or thick surface, such as cardboard or another piece of material.
2. Place these pieces in direct sunlight for approximately 1 hour.
3. After the time has passed, remove the cardboard or heavy material and see the visual difference first hand.