

Grass Cloth and Natural Cork Wallcoverings

Installation and Maintenance Guidelines

For Esquire and Premier Grass Cloths and Natural Corks

BEFORE YOU BEGIN

Examine the product carefully to ensure that the material, color, and quality are satisfactory and as ordered. Since our Grass Cloth and Natural Cork wallcoverings are handcrafted from natural products such as sisal, cotton, bamboo, and cork, you should expect to see color variations from panel to panel, as well as within each panel. These variations are not defects and are, in fact, an inherent quality of natural materials. Check that the quantity and dimensions match the required specifications, prior to cutting. *In the event that any discrepancies are found, STOP and contact Wolf-Gordon customer service at 800-347-0550, before proceeding.*

We recommend that Grass Cloths and Natural Corks be acclimated in the installation area for at least 72 hours prior to and after installing, at 60–75°F with relative humidity at 50% or less. Verify that the wall moisture content does not exceed 4% using a reputable moisture meter, and that active moisture infiltration, condensation, and/or accumulation—particularly in warm, humid climates—is not present. If walls show mold, mildew or visible moisture damage, or if moisture content exceeds recommendations, do not proceed with installation until the condition has been fully corrected under the direction of a qualified professional. *Wolf-Gordon will not be responsible for any performance or quality issues if moisture problems are not addressed before or following installation.*

SURFACE PREPARATION

All surfaces must be clean, dry, structurally sound, and free of grease and mildew. Stains such as ink, grease, crayon, or other foreign matter should be spot treated with a stain-killing primer to prevent bleeding through the new material. With all surfaces—once properly prepared—apply a good quality, acrylic or latex wallcovering primer/sealer. If an oil-based primer was used, apply an acrylic or latex primer over it before hanging, to avoid trapping moisture or adhesion problems. If the surface does not have a uniform color, use a pigmented primer.

New drywall should be finished to a Level 4 as per the Gypsum Association guidelines (www.gypsum.org), although a Level 5 is preferred. Follow with a pigmented primer.

Newly plastered walls should completely cure for 60-90 days, and not have excessive quantities of lime or alkali. Follow with an adhesion-promoting primer. An adhesion test should be performed to ensure compatibility of the primer with the adhesive.

Painted surfaces should be tested for moisture resilience. Hold a wet sponge or cloth to the paint surface for 15 seconds, rub the surface vigorously with a cloth, and if little or no paint is removed, the surface should be sound. If a large amount comes off, sand or wash the surface with ammonia and water to remove the paint. Once dry, apply a pigmented, adhesion-promoting primer. Painted walls should also be tested for adhesion.

Existing walls present varied conditions, but essentially, glossy surfaces should be sanded, and mildew should be cleaned from the surface with a solution of two cups household bleach per gallon of water. Unless firmly bonded to the wall, old wallcovering should be scraped and removed. Nicks, gouges, and other surface blemishes must be filled and sanded smooth. Follow with a pigmented, adhesion-promoting primer.

HANGING GUIDELINES

Grass Cloth and Natural Cork wallcoverings are delivered in rolls, and each panel should be cut and installed in the sequence that it comes from each roll. It is recommended that the panels for each wall be of equal widths, without leaving short strips at an end. By measuring the width of your wall first, you can determine how to yield an equal number of panels of the same width. Since Grass Cloths and Corks have variations in shading, it's best to lie out the drops for each wall prior to hanging, and arrange them so as to produce a well-balanced paneling effect. Then, using a black graphite pencil, number the strips in sequence and mark the top and bottom to prepare for hanging. Install the wallcovering under permanent lighting conditions to evaluate color and texture uniformity.



Both types of wallcovering require a straight hang to produce the most uniform appearance. The material should be precut into panels to the height of the wall plus 2-3", to allow for trimming at the ceiling and baseboards. A straightedge and a very sharp blade must be used (#12 razor blades are preferred, as #9 blades can skip across the grass cloth fibers).

If any defect, color variation, or unacceptable pattern effect is noticeable after three panels are cut and hung, STOP and contact Wolf-Gordon immediately. Wolf-Gordon cannot accept any claims on labor or material after more than three lengths have been installed. Upon approval, returns will be subject to a 35% handling and restocking charge. Requests for return authorization must be made within 30 days of ship date.

ADHESIVE APPLICATION

Apply a uniform coat of a heavy duty, clear, premixed wallcovering adhesive to the back of the material, using a short-napped paint roller or stiff bristle brush. (Do *not* use a pasting machine.) Use of a mildew-inhibiting adhesive is recommended. Do not add water to the paste as it may cause the backing paper to pull away from the face.

INSTALLATION

To help prevent the wallcovering from curling up along the edges, brush adhesive on the wall along the top and bottom, letting it tack up before hanging. Hang the first panel from top to bottom—without using a seam roller—laying the leading edge against a plumb line. Use a soft bristle brush or cloth (do not use sharp-edged tools) to ensure that the wallcovering makes contact with the wall. Smooth from the top of the panel down, working out all air bubbles, being careful not to press too harshly. Trim at the ceiling and baseboard with a sharp razor blade. Butt the leading edge of the second strip to the edge of the first—as tightly as possible—without overlapping or leaving gaps at the seams. Low-adhesive painter's tape can be used to keep the face of the seams clean. Before applying the next panel, trim the top and bottom as with the first panel, and proceed in the same manner around the room.

Avoid cutting narrow widths of material for placement above doors and below windows. Vertical joints should not occur less than six inches from inside or outside corners. If you have to hang a partial width (e.g., into a corner), make sure the joint on the flat wall is made with two pre-trimmed edges; never join the middle of a strip to a pre-trimmed edge. When trimming at chair rails and ceilings, always use a broad knife rather than a straightedge.

Take extra care in keeping adhesive off the face of either wallcovering. Should any get on the Grass Cloth surface, remove excess with a dry cloth, and allow the remainder to dry and then flake it off with a brush. Since both paste *and* water could alter the color of the natural fibers, they should be avoided. On Natural Cork, a damp cloth can be used to remove excess adhesive, or use a stiff brush to flake it off once it dries. Adhesive residue can be cleaned off the Cork with a cloth and mineral spirits.

After installation, the walls and wallcovering should be monitored for potential moisture or vapor infiltration, which must be promptly eliminated.

MAINTENANCE

Periodic maintenance for Grass Cloths should include light dusting or use of a vacuum cleaner with a soft brush attachment. If necessary, a slightly damp cloth may be used to remove a stain, but be sure *not* to soak the material. On Cork, normal dirt and fingerprints can be cleaned off using a damp cloth or natural sponge. More stubborn stains can be removed using clear, warm water and a non-abrasive detergent or household cleaner—test first in an inconspicuous area. Do not use solvent-based cleaning agents, lacquer thinners, nail polish remover, pine oil, or cleaning agents containing bleach. Occasional vacuuming will help maintain Cork's fresh look.

Note: The above is intended only as a guideline. Wallcovering installations must conform to current hanging instructions included with each shipment. The installer has final responsibility for proper installation and evaluation of jobsite conditions.

