



Design studio mind the cork has produced a whole range of cork homeware | Photo source [mind the cork](#)

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CORK HOMEWARE LOOKS GREAT AND HELPS THE ENVIRONMENT



Cork trees absorb up to five times more carbon dioxide when their outer layer of bark is removed to harvest the useful material

Spotted: In a recent [report](#), the World Wildlife Foundation highlighted the biodiversity of cork forests, explaining that, “In cork oak landscapes, plant [diversity](#) can reach a level of 135 species per square metre, and many of these species have aromatic, culinary or medicinal uses.” Cork itself is increasingly being used in the home for much more than wine bottle stoppers. London-based design studio mind the cork creates beautiful homewares from cork.

Working closely with craftspeople and small factories in the UK and Portugal, the company creates small-batch collections that emphasise sustainability. Waste from production is tracked and up cycled wherever possible, and the business is working towards becoming plastic-free. Initially known for its planters, the brand now also offers deskwares and other home accessories – including cardholders, bowls, and pots with colourful lids.

Cork is harvested approximately every 10 years once a tree is 25 years or older. Harvesting entails carefully removing the outer layer of a tree’s bark. The living fibre is not disturbed. And once the outer layer is removed, the tree begins absorbing up to five times the usual amount of carbon dioxide from the atmosphere in order to facilitate regrowth. Responsibly harvesting cork therefore helps improve the environment. And the material forms the basis for incredibly useful, lightweight objects when in the hands of artisans.

Springwise has also spotted cork being used in innovative new designs that include carbon-positive [packaging](#) and environmentally friendly [trainers](#).

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Takeaway:

Scientists have begun urging caution as enthusiasm for tree-planting continues to grow. Tiny seedlings cannot provide the environmental benefits of mature trees, and as tree-planting projects have proliferated, long-term care plans appear to be lacking. Trees need considerable tending for several years, and their role in the local ecosystems needs to be considered as well. Agencies and governments continue to work together and with local communities to encourage sustainable forest governance, and brands play a role in encouraging and supporting responsible forestation and management. The Environmental Investigation Agency highlights the urgency of this work, calling East Asia's rate of [deforestation](#) an 'environmental disaster'. Against this backdrop, responsible cultivation of cork offers many benefits.