

Measuring and marking ~ If your new laminate worktop is to replace an old worktop which is a good fit and can be removed intact, this can be used as a template. If the old worktop is not a good fit or the layout is being changed, then accurately measure the spaces for length and width using a steel tape measure. Since rooms are seldom perfectly square, carefully check any angles making a cardboard template if necessary. Transfer your new measurements to your new worktop using a soft pencil and double check before cutting.

Hand sawing ~ Using a fine toothed (10-12 per inch) saw, cut along the waste side of the line commencing at the radiused front edge with the face side uppermost. Hold the saw almost vertical (70°) until past the radius then lower the cutting angle to 20°-30° for a straighter cut with less chipping. Apply pressure only on the downward stroke to avoid lifting the decorative surface.

Power sawing ~ As with hand sawing, begin at the radiused front edge using a jig saw or a powered circular saw. However the cutting action of these two saws dictates that cuts should be made with the decorative face down to prevent chipping.

Cut outs to receive sinks and hobs ~ It is important that the internal corners of all cut outs are smoothly radiused to a minimum of 6mm (¼") to prevent stress cracking. This is particularly important in the case of hobs and hot-plates. A clearance of at least 3mm should exist all round between the edge of the hole and the appliance - see manufacturer's instructions.

Square or rectangular cut outs ~ Mark the position of the cut out and bore a clean 12mm (½") hole in each corner. Connect these holes with saw cuts using a pad saw to start and finish with a hand saw. Alternatively use a power jig saw with the worktop face down. Do not allow the saw to over run the holes in the corners or stress cracking may result.

Circular or oval cuts ~ Mark out using the manufacturer's template supplied, drill a clean hole to start the cut and use a pad saw or power jig saw.

Sealing ~ The reverse side of your laminate worktop is factory sealed with a moisture resistant* backing and front edge seal. Certain additional protection must be provided by the installer to joints and cuts.

Under the front edge ~ The underside front edge of your laminate worktop is factory sealed to protect against ingress of moisture* into the core. Whilst this affords perfectly adequate protection against accidental spillage of liquids, it is recommended that additional protection is provided by the installer in vulnerable areas. These include areas such as above dishwashers, washing machines, dryers and ovens. Protection in these areas is best provided by a metal plate fixed and sealed to the underside of the top. The underside front edge adjacent to sinks should also have additional sealant protection approximately 20mm in from the edge.

Hob cut outs ~ In addition to protection from the ingress of moisture*, the edge of hob cut outs should be protected from radiant heat by the addition of a reflective aluminium tape. No hot metal parts must be allowed to touch the decorative surface. Use a rubber gasket if provided.

Sinks ~ These should be sealed to the worktop with either the rubber gasket or sealing compounds supplied.

Sealing cut edges ~ All cut edges, unless lipped with laminate should be protected from the ingress of moisture* by sealing with a coat of silicone sealant, polyurethane varnish (2 coats) or a coat of contact adhesive before fixing. If tap holes penetrate the worktop surface these should also be sealed.

Jointing ~ Laminate worktops may be jointed at end to end or at right angles. The joints and recesses for the connecting bolts are best prepared professionally. Please note that slight variation in colour and surface finish can occur. Check compatibility before cutting and installation.

Installation ~ Laminate worktops should be fixed to level and secure units/cabinets with a slight fall, max 2°, away from the wall to prevent the accumulation of spilt liquids

along the back edge. Secure the top to the units using standard metal brackets, K D blocks or timber battens.

Final touches ~ If tiles or other finishes are to be used above the worktop these are best added after fixing as they can cover the joint at wall intersections. Seal the worktop to the wall with a silicone sealant or proprietary plastic section.

After care tips for your worktops

Heat ~ Boiling water and hot cooking splashes will do no harm. Do not place cooking utensils, taken straight from a hot oven or hob, directly on the surface. Always use suitable protection against direct contact with excessive heat.

Scratching ~ Crockery and normal kitchen utensils sliding around will do no harm. The surface can be damaged by scratching or cutting with knives or other sharp utensils. It is recommended that a protective mat or chopping board be used.

Staining ~ Laminate worktops resist most household chemicals, including alcohol and cosmetics, but some chemicals and strong dyes can cause damage and discolouration. If spillage occurs of such things as beetroot juice, concentrated fruit juices, dyes, chemicals, descaling solutions or sanitary cleaners, wipe off immediately and rinse area thoroughly.

Cleaning ~ Laminate worktops should be maintained by cleaning with water and detergent. Persistent marks can be removed by using a suitable cream cleaner, but harsh scouring powders and abrasive pads should be avoided. Stubborn stains in deep textured surfaces can be removed by using household bleach. A nylon bristle handbrush is also effective in removing persistent marks from textured and dimensional finishes.

* Moisture ~ Water will not harm the surface in any way, but excess water may effect the adhesive and core material underneath - so do not allow to lie on the surface where it may seep into joints.

