

Installation Guidance Note: Covering Desks and Counters with Linoleum

Because of their durability and attractive appearance retention many floor coverings, notably linoleum, can also be used to surface desks, bar tops, counters and check-out points or on walls, or as facing materials.

Linoleum or Vinyl on desk tops or tables

This can be a specialised product, such as Forbo Desk Top Linoleum, where the hessian backing of this plain linoleum has been replaced by an impregnated paper felt to ensure that the surface is totally smooth, or a standard flooring material. Material should be stored vertically in a dry and frost-free environment. Cut the material oversize and lay the panels horizontally for 24 hours at a minimum of 18°C to enable them to acclimatize. If possible, the material, the adhesive and the surface on which the material will be stuck should be acclimatized in the same room. Before sticking, ensure all the materials are perfectly clean and free from dust, oil, grease, stains and any irregularities.

Adhesives

For flat horizontal surfaces Eurocol 414 Euroflex Lino PLus can be used for Desk Top Linoleum or hessian backed linoleums on an absorbent base. For curved surfaces a double stick technique or contact adhesive is recommended. For industrial installation of Desk Top or hessian backed linoleum a spray adhesive such as a PVA used in joinery is recommended. If the furniture manufacturer uses other solvent free systems they will usually prove suitable but should be tested first. Industrially, Desk Top Linoleum can be cold pressed or

hot pressed (up to 70°C) with pressures between 75 and 150 bar. Pressing time will vary between 2 and 15 minutes depending on the type of adhesive.

Backing and Counterbalancing

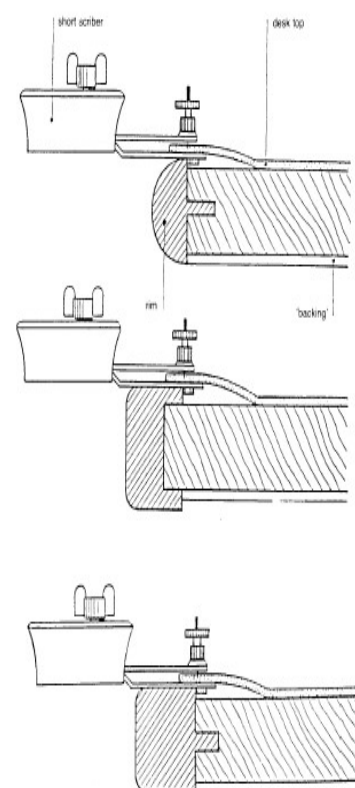
Gluing two different materials together creates tension. To prevent the risk of warping or distortion both sides of the central material should be covered by a material which is subject to the same kind of dimensional change. This is especially important for suspended objects or objects which are not firmly supported. The larger of the surface to be covered the more important the choice of the type of backing (which acts as a counterbalance), the thickness, symmetrical construction and rigidity of the total construction. The best results are achieved when both sides are covered by the same material at the same time, applied in the same direction. A variety of materials can be used as backing if the Desk Top or flooring material is not being used on both surfaces but as individual installations will vary so much the safest solution for any surface considered to present a risk is to do a trial first.

Manual cutting and fitting to a rebated surface

Method 1

1. Cut the surface to size.
2. Fix the rim to the edge of the surface.
3. Sand and lacquer the rim.
4. Cut the acclimatized surfacing material to an oversize of about 2cm.

5. Apply the adhesive with an appropriate toothed spreader. For all except hessian backed linoleums then spread the adhesive out thinly and evenly with a paint roller.
6. Place the material into the wet adhesive with an overlap of 0.5cm or more on all sides.
7. Scribe off excess material with an over-and-under (short) scribe.



8. Cut the material with a slight undercut along the scribe line, using a hooked blade.
9. Press the edges of the material into the adhesive. Note that with ForboFix 696/Eurocol 414 adhesive the maximum time to this stage from spreading the adhesive is 10 minutes.
10. Roll the whole surface thoroughly with a clean hand roller.
11. Remove any fresh adhesive stains with water. Dried stains of Eurocol 414 adhesive can be removed with white spirit.

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N.B. When very long lengths are being fitted, fit the long edges first and stick the material to within 500 cm of the ends. Then scribe, cut and stick the ends. This eliminates any creep in the lengths.

Method 2

1. Cut the acclimatised material with an oversize all round of about 0.5cm.
2. Adhere the material as in 5 above with this slight overlap.
3. Saw, mill or plane this construction to size using sharp tools.
4. Stick the rim on and mill it to the desired height.
5. Before sanding and lacquering the rim, cover the strip of material which is butted to the rim with masking tape. Remove the tape immediately after the lacquer has been applied.
6. When sanding the rim avoid contact between the sandpaper and the Desk Top or flooring material.

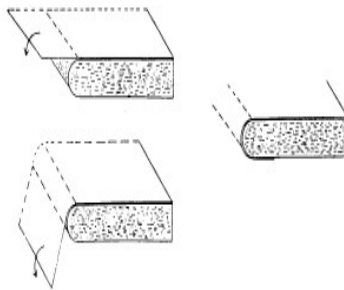
Manual cutting and fitting to a curved surface

Use a double stick acrylic adhesive or a contact adhesive. If Desk Top linoleum or vinyl is to be bent around curved chipboard pre-treat the chipboard the day before with the acrylic used as a primer and lightly sand the dry adhesive.

Desk Top or hessian backed linoleum will bend more easily along the sides of the sheet than across the end of the sheet, e.g. with marbled linoleum it is easier to form it over a butt nosing if the marbling is running along the nosing, not over it.

In this direction 2.5mm marbled linoleums and most vinyl can be bent round a 40mm diameter; Desk Top, 50mm diameter.

Always ensure that the material is properly acclimatised and apply at temperatures of at least 18°C, warmer if possible. Extend the material 3-5cm beyond the end of the curve to ensure it holds and make sure the curve has no sharp edges. Cut the material to shape.



Use a double-stick acrylic or contact adhesive in accordance with the manufacturer's instructions. Apply it first to the surface to which the Desk Top or other material is to be applied. Time the application of the adhesive to the second surface in accordance with the manufacturer's instructions. Bring the two surfaces together. Start with the horizontal area of the surface and gradually work towards the rounded nose. Hand rub the material towards the sides to prevent any bubble entrapment. As the curve is reached it is important to bend and rub bit by bit ensuring that each area is evenly bonded before bending the next bit. If necessary use a hand roller to apply sufficient pressure.

Surface Treatments

Both Desk Top and standard linoleum can be used as facing materials without further treatment.

However, if regular future maintenance cannot be assured and coffee cup rings, etc may not be removed immediately then extra surface protection is recommended. This can be a normal floor covering acrylic or metalised emulsion, applied in two thin coats, or perhaps a polyurethane lacquer. Before applying this, clean the surface of the material and remove any grease from the material with white spirit, neutralizing the surface with water. Furniture manufacturers can apply acid catalyst lacquers to Desk Top or hessian backed linoleums. They should be applied in thin coats - an over-applied thick coat may cause crazing of the lacquer and even of the surface material.

Cleaning and Maintenance

Stains on the material should be removed as soon as possible.

It is recommended to clean horizontal surfaces daily or weekly (depending on intensity of use). Vertical surfaces do not require to be cleaned so often. If the material becomes badly soiled, clean the entire surface.

Use a cloth and water to which some mild household or other neutral cleansing agent has been added. Wipe the surface dry with a well rinsed and wrung out cloth.

To prevent stubborn stains forming use coasters under flower pots and vases, and preferably also under cups and glassware.

Remove ink stains as soon as possible (if necessary use white spirit or methylated spirits – rinsed with clean water after use).