Installation and Maintenance

Storage of Tops and Bases.

All tops and bases should be stored flat. Under no circumstances should components be stored leaning against a wall as this can cause bowing.

Corner protectors are provided to protect tops during transportation and handling. If components are to be stored for any period of time the corner protectors should be removed.

Worktop Supports.

Simmons recommend that continuous rails be provided to the front and rear of worktops. If a section is to be unsupported the span should not exceed 800 mm.

Fume cupboard bases should have continuous support to the perimeter. Any bases longer than 900 mm should also have central supports.

Epoxy Resin Grout.

Grout is supplied as a pack of two components :- resin and hardener. Once mixed the grout has a workable life of approximately 5 minutes. It is therefore essential that only a manageable amount of grout is mixed at one time, and that all preparatory work is done before mixing.

The resin and hardener should be measured out at the ratio stated on the containers onto a mixing board. When ready for use this should be thoroughly mixed using the wooden sticks provided until the two components are homogeneous.

Please note that a minimum room temperature of 5°C is required to initiate the cure cycle for the grout. The useable life of the grout will vary with the ambient temperature. The warmer the room the quicker the reaction.

It is recommended that Latex gloves are worn whilst using epoxy resin grout components and cellulose thinners.

Drilling and Cutting.

Small holes can be drilled in Simmons' epoxy resin tops using masonry or tungsten carbide tipped drills. Larger holes will require the use of diamond plated holesaws.

Small cuts can be made using diamond plated jigsaw blades (which can be purchased from Simmons if necessary). If more substantial amounts of cutting, or cuts with a cosmetic finish are needed, the tops should be returned to Simmons for factory cutting.

Jointing Tops.

List of Tools and Equipment required:-

- Cellulose Thinners
- Clean Cloths / Wipes
- Vinyl Tape
- Long Sash-Clamps
- G-Clamps
- Levelling Blocks
- Sharp Flat Chisel
- Steel Rule
- Latex Gloves

All joints are machined for a biscuited joint. All biscuits and grout for making the joint are supplied with the tops.

Joints should always be cleaned and degreased with cellulose thinners before commencing any work. Vinyl tape should be applied to the top surface adjacent to the joint as close to the edge of the top as possible. The two sections of top should then be carefully lined up and pushed together until there is a gap of approx. 2 - 3 mm.

A mix of grout should then be prepared as described above. When completely mixed this should be applied to the abutting edges of the tops. The tops can then be pulled together with sash-clamps until the grout/joint line is less than 1 mm wide. The narrowest joint is always the strongest joint.

It is recommended that the front edge of the top be carefully levelled off and clamped with levelling blocks and G-clamps either side of the joint. The top must be held together with sash-clamps while the grout goes off. Excess grout squeezed out of the joint should be levelled off to the top of the vinyl tape using a flat / straight edge (e.g. steel rule).

After 5 minutes the vinyl tape can be carefully removed ensuring that the grout in the joint is not damaged. After a further 4 - 5 minutes the grout will become slightly rubbery. The joint should then be wiped down with cellulose thinners with strokes going across the joint (not along it).

Fitting Edging and Upstand.

List of Tools and Equipment required:-

- 80 Grit Sandpaper
- Clean Cloths / Wipes
- Sharp Flat Chisel
- Cellulose Thinners
- G-clamps and protective blocks
- Latex Gloves

All edging and upstand should initially be dry fitted to check for size and fit.

Minor adjustments can be made using 80 grit sandpaper.

The underside of the edging or upstand and the area onto which it is to be fitted must be rubbed down with sandpaper and then with cellulose thinners.

Both components have a coating of release from the casting procedure which will prevent anything bonding to it unless this coating is removed.

A mix of grout should then be prepared as described above. When completely mixed this should be applied in a thin layer to the underside of the edging/ upstand. The edging should then be placed in position and securely clamped down (using blocks to protect the surface of the edging). This will squeeze out any excess grout which should be removed with a sharp flat chisel when it becomes rubbery. After approximately 10 - 15 minutes when the grout has fully hardened the clamps may be removed.

It is important that a radius fillet of grout is applied to the joint between edging and the worktop so as to ensure that there is an easily cleanable and fully sealed joint. A fresh mix of grout should be prepared as described above.

When completely mixed this should be applied along the joint using the wooden sticks provided. A final run around with the radius end of the stick will give a tidy finish. When the excess grout becomes rubbery it should be very carefully removed using a sharp flat chisel. Approximately 1 hour after this the joint can be wiped down with cellulose thinners.

This radius fillet is not required with flat sheet upstands which meet the top at a 90° angle.

Fitting Sinks.

List of Tools and Equipment required:-

- Masonry Drills
- Self-Tapping Screws
- Screwdriver
- Epoxy Resin Grout (if required)
- Silicone Sealant
- Sharp Flat Chisel
- Cellulose Thinners
- Clean Cloths / Wipes
- Latex Gloves

Overhang/Underslung sinks which are supplied loose can be fitted to a worktop with a suitably sized cut out (please ring for recommendation if unsure). Clearance holes for self-tapping screws should be drilled through the sink flange with a masonry drill, and the worktop drilled with a pilot hole to accept same. A layer of silicone sealant should be applied to the flange and the sink should be screwed securely into place. Excess silicone should be removed before it cures.

Drop-on sinks should be fitted into a suitable hole (please ring for recommendation if unsure) with a layer of silicone or epoxy under the flange. Excess material should be removed before cured.

With drop-on sinks it is important that a radius fillet of grout is applied to the joint between sink flange and worktop so as to ensure that there is an easily cleanable and fully sealed joint. If using epoxy grout then a fresh mix of grout should be prepared as described above. When completely mixed this should be applied along the joint using the wooden sticks provided. A final run around with the radius end of the stick should give a tidy finish. When the excess grout becomes rubbery it should be very carefully removed using a sharp flat chisel and wiped down with cellulose thinners.

Drop-in sinks should be fitted into an appropriate rebated cut out and bedded into a layer of silicone or epoxy which should then be smoothed off level with the flange. Excess material should be removed before cured as above.

General Maintenance.

As with all worktops a reasonable standard of laboratory housekeeping will help to keep the worktops in good condition. All spillages should be cleaned up as soon as possible. Staining agents and aggressive chemicals should not be allowed to sit in contact with the tops for a prolonged period of time.

Areas of chemical attack or staining can be removed with a polishing compound or very fine abrasive paper, but it should be stressed that this will alter the finish of the surface. Performance will not be affected.

The use of a wax furniture polish will help to retain the gloss finish.

Components should not be exposed to dry-ice or liquid nitrogen and heat insulation pads should be placed between a top and a steambath or hotplate to prevent thermal stress.