

# Apollo Slab Tech Worktops

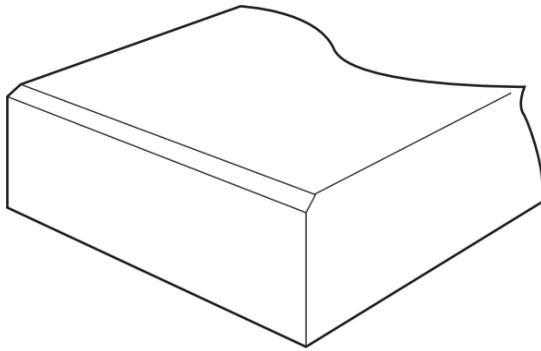
## Installation & Care Instructions

# ASTLE01

### Important Notes:

Ensure packaging is disposed of in a safe environmentally friendly way

**Please read the instructions carefully before starting the worktop installation and follow the important health and safety information**

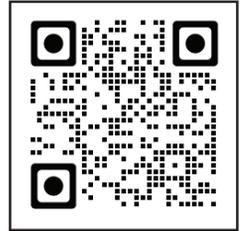


### Features:

- 20mm solid worktop material
- Easily trimmed to size and refinished
- A profiled edge (as shown) can easily be applied using a router
- Excellent impact resistance
- Scratches and marks can be polished out



Scan the QR code with your smart device to access an installation video



Installation Guide

## Health & safety information



**Caution: This is a heavy item and should be lifted by two persons**



Mask



Eye Protection



Ear Protection



Clamps



HD Gloves



Ventilation



Child Safety

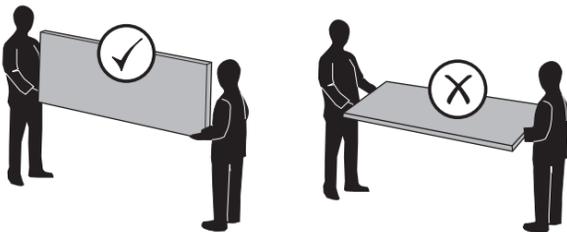


Product weight

- Ensure that worktops are clean and free of dust, dirt etc.
- Use polythene sheets and dust covers to protect all appropriate areas.
- Work outside on worktops wherever possible, to limit amount of dust inside building.
- Use Trestles and a Workbench to fully support the Worktops.
- Seal doorways of adjoining rooms when working indoors.
- Screen off the cutting area with plastic sheeting.

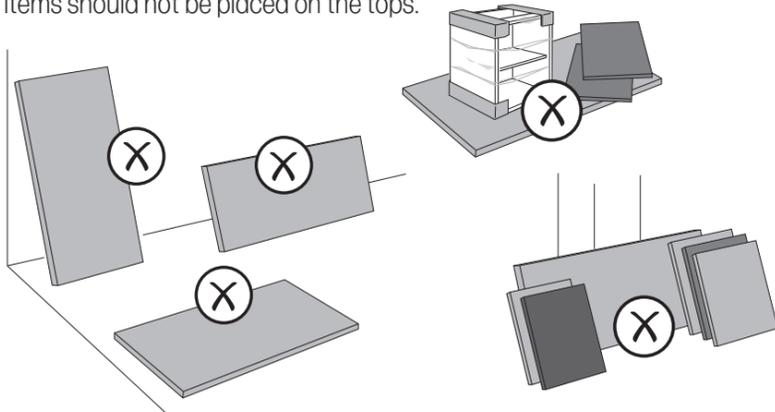
## Handling & storage

- Worktops should be carried by two people & should always be carried on their edge. **Note:** Please check the yellow label on the product.



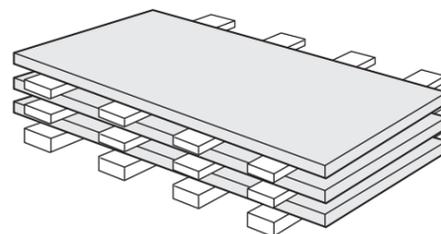
- Handle the worktops as little as possible, as they are very heavy and the edges can be easily damaged by their own weight. Some decors are also prone to showing impact marks.

- Do not store vertically, on edges or directly on the floor. Other furniture items should not be placed on the tops.



- Prepare the storage area for your delivery, it should be a dry room at normal room temperature (18 - 20°C), away from direct heat sources and damp floors or walls.

- Store worktops flat on at least four equal thickness support bearers, lower one edge carefully onto the bearers and then let down the other edge flat onto the bearers.



x4 Wooden bearers  
x4 Dividing wooden strips  
(when stacking multiple tops)

- Acclimatise the worktops to their installed room 24 - 48 hours before installation - move the worktops into (or next to) the installation site and unpack. Store flat on the floor as before but with dividing bearers between each worktop to allow good air circulation.

- Avoid installation in any room that is freshly plastered, has any residual damp or that is unheated.

- Avoid installation in any newly built unoccupied property unless it is properly heated and ventilated.

## Tools & materials required

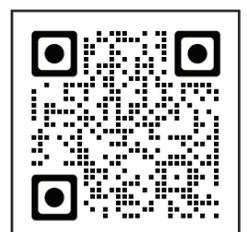
- Random orbital sander plus dust extraction equipment
- Hand router: minimum of 1850W with 1/2"/12.7mm Colet size
- 30mm Guide Bush
- 12.7mm x 40mm TCT Router Cutter
- Straight Trimming Router Cutter (with a guide bearing)
- Drainer groove cutter - if required to make drainer grooves
- Wide Chisel (minimum 1"/25mm)
- Electric saw - with fine tooth blades
- Power planer
- Silicon Gun

### INSTALLATION KIT

- Sanding Discs 100, 150, 220grit
- Self Adhesive Aluminium Heat and Moisture membrane foil
- Heat Reflective Tape
- Fixing Pack of Screws, Washers & Brackets
- Adhesive
- Alcohol Wipes

### Worktop Jigs

- See Howdens worktop jigs available



Installation Kit information

## Planning your worktop layout

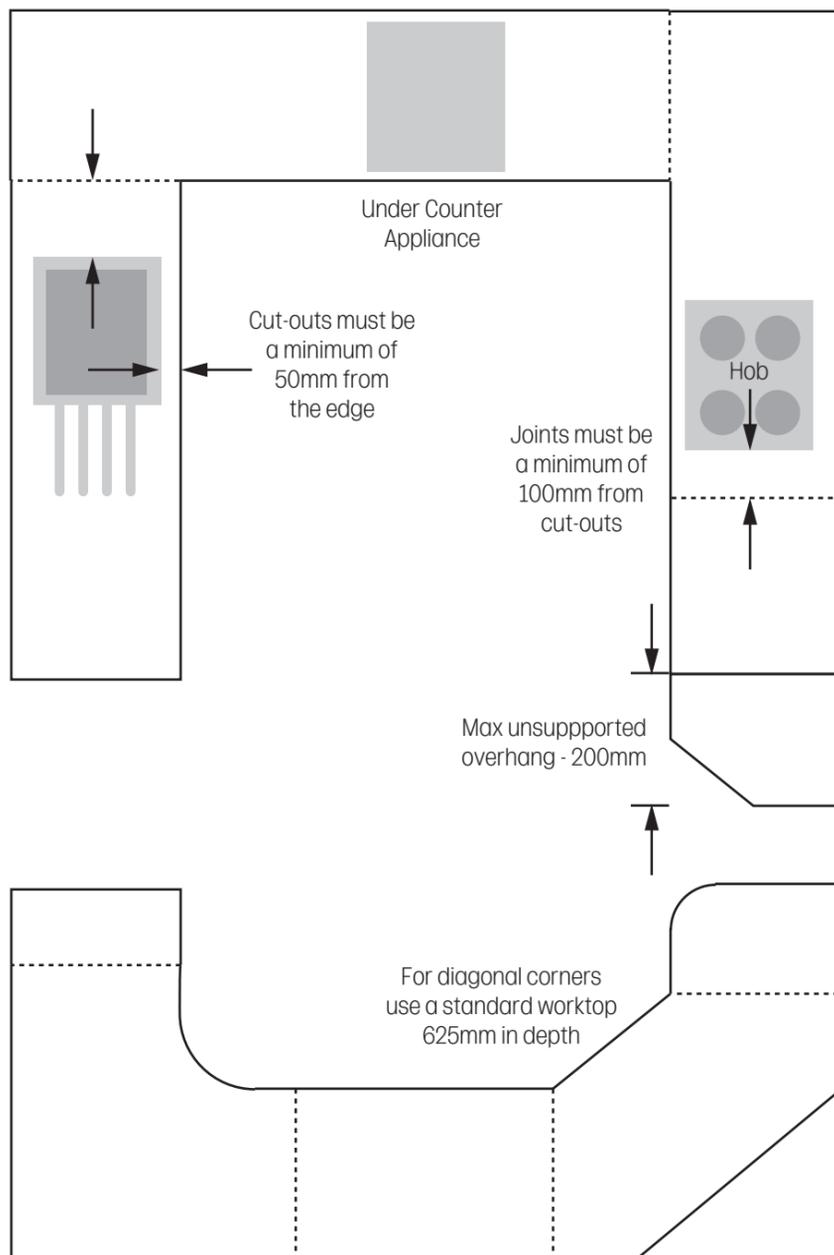
**Note: If fitting a veined worktop, please be aware that joints will be more visible than with other designs. Butt joints should always be used unless a masons mitre is required, for a profiled edge.**

Careful planning is the key to successful installation. If possible begin planning with a pre-site survey.

When designing your worktop layout, you should start by establishing where the sink and other appliances will be installed and then the corner where you will start to install each of the worktops. From this point you can plan where the joints between the worktops should be.

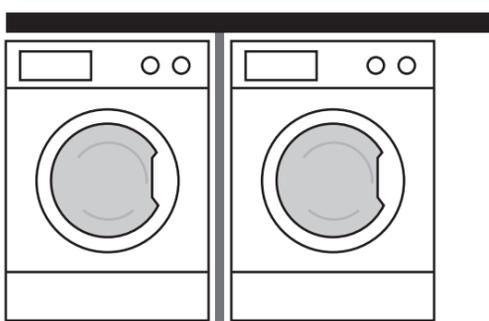
### Example of a kitchen layout

----- Joints

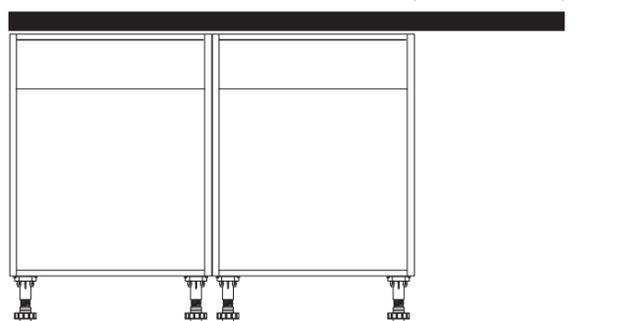


### Key planning elements

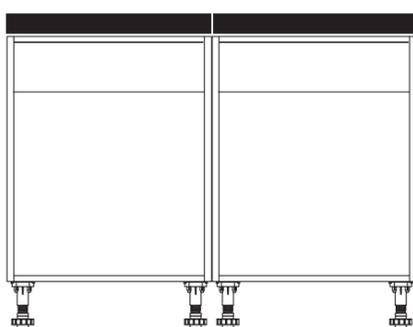
- Ensure joints do not fall on or within 100mm of cut-outs.
- Ensure cut-outs are at least 50mm from worktop edge.
- Each worktop requires an expansion clearance (to the wall) of 1mm for every linear metre of worksurface (i.e. 3mm for a 3 metre length).
- Worktops should not be planned to have overhangs greater than 200mm.
- Allow at least 120mm between heated cut-outs.
- For both Gas and Electric hobs, a minimum of 50mm clearance is required. Please refer to the appliance installation instructions for specific fitting information and fitting legislation requirements.
- All worktops over gaps between floor cabinets (i.e. for appliances) greater than 600mm long, must be supported with suitable wall & support battens for additional support.
- All worktops over spaces unsupported by the floor cabinets greater than 600mm long (i.e. some sink and corner cabinet designs) must have additional support along the walls using suitable wall battens.
- Worktops should not be jointed above appliances or in cut-outs.
- Joints above gaps or spaces are not acceptable.
- Unsupported gaps or overhangs which are more than the specified limits are not advised.
- Always use plain butt jointed corners and add simple edge profiles after the joints are finished.
- If a large or complex edge profile is specified, use a Masons Mitre joint without the loose tongue.
- The worktop has a thickness tolerance of +/- 1mm (2mm overall). Please take this into consideration when dry fitting worktops.



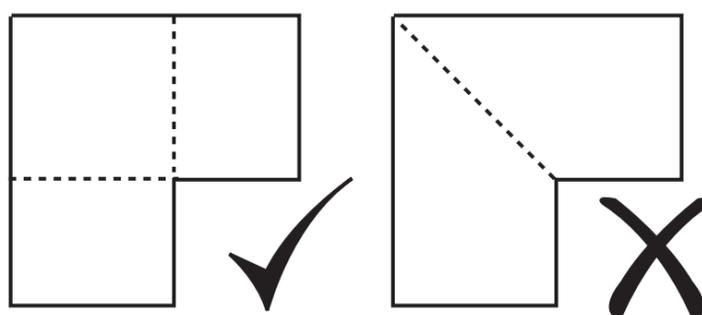
Where two undercounter appliances are next to each other, a decor end should always be used inbetween



Unsupported spans should be a maximum of 200mm



To help support the worktop, ensure any joints are located directly above cabinet joints



Corner joints should never be mitred.

## Before you begin installation

- Unpack worktops immediately before fitting and check all components for damage and colour match before starting installation. This can be easily done by butting the components together and wiping the adjacent areas with a damp cloth.
- Worktops are manufactured to strict tolerances, but some variation in colour and texture will occur with this type of material. Should there be an unacceptable colour variance, please contact the Howdens depot before starting installation. Claims for colour variation cannot be made after installation.
- Plan how you are going to fit each top (see planning guide on previous page) and the resulting joints.
- Level all base cabinets and decor end panels front to back, along the length and around corners before any measuring or installation.
- Check the site conditions and, where required, fit support battens to the walls along all gaps between base cabinets, unsupported lengths greater than 600mm (i.e. behind corner and double floor cabinets) and along the walls in spaces for appliances between the base cabinets.
- Ensure that you have the correct colour co-ordinated glue for all joints and edging. This is supplied separately in 100ml Glue Cartridges, sufficient for two full worktop joints or 12 metres of Upstand.
- Ensure that you have sufficient sheets of moisture and heat resistant aluminium membrane (supplied in the Installation Kit) to be fitted to the worktop underside above any appliance (i.e. Dishwasher or Washing Machine) or moisture and/or heat emitting objects (i.e. radiators). Claims cannot be made for swollen, cracked or distorted worktops above appliances that have not had this membrane fitted.

## Cutting to size



**Always leave 2mm of material on your desired final cut dimension. This will allow for a final skim giving a good finished edge.**

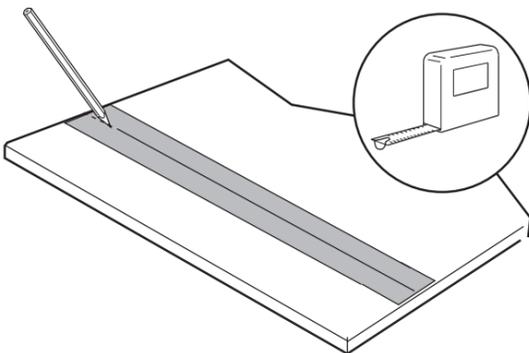
**Mask off the section of worktop to be cut and mark the cutline on the masking tape.**

Cut the blank to size squaring ends, using an electric circular saw with a fine toothed blade and straight edge. A router fitted with sharp, double-fluted tungsten carbide straight cutter can also be used. **Note:** When routing through the thickness of the worktop, to ensure a clean cut, make 2 or 3 passes along the cut increasing the depth of cut by 6mm with each pass until the complete thickness is cut through. Curved corners can be achieved using the router as above.

Once the cut is made, use a router to skim the edge by 2mm.

**1**

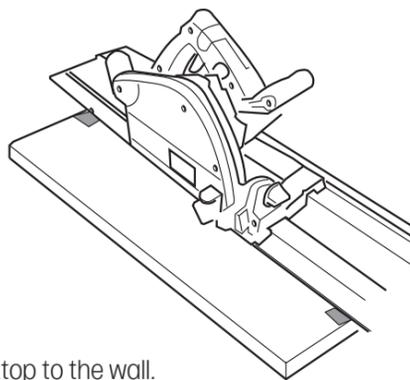
Mask, measure and mark for cutting.  
**IMPORTANT:** Check measurements.



**Note:** In some applications it may be required to scribe the worktop to the wall.

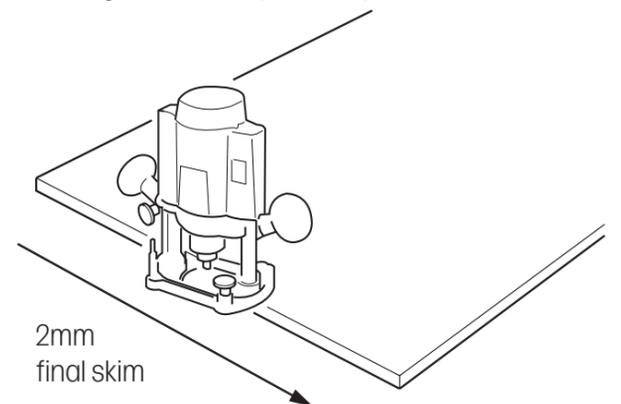
**2**

Cut with router or circular saw.  
We recommend a 2 or 3 pass cut.



**3**

Finish edge with router (final skim).



Dry fit the worktop once all pieces have been prepared, to ensure no chips or gaps can be seen between joints

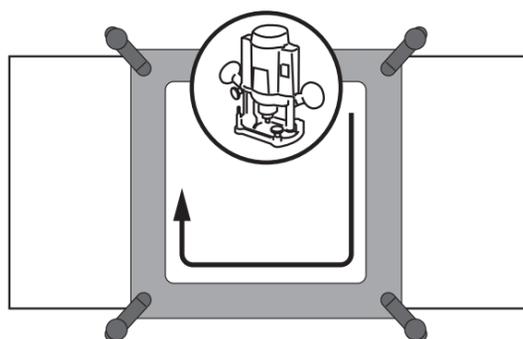
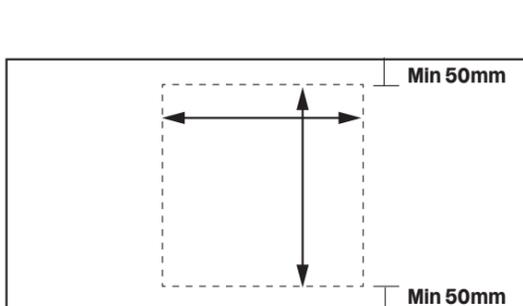
## Hob & inset cut-outs

**Always use the information supplied with your hob or sink for dimensions/template to be used. We recommend a jig is created using a piece of MDF, clamped to the worktop to achieve the best cut-out. For best results, cut-outs should be machined using a router with a bit and a 30mm guide bush. A jig saw can be used for unseen cut-outs, such as for an inset Hob or sink as shown below.**

### Cutting

Use measurements supplied with your product to make a jig. Clamp this to the worktop.

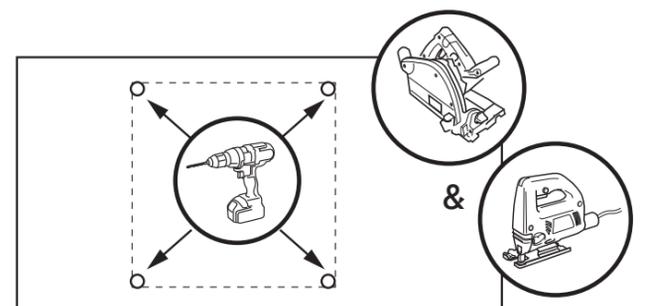
**Note:** The distance between the cut-out and adjacent worktop joint must be a minimum of 100mm and 50mm minimum from the front of the worktop. If cutting for a hob, make sure the back dimension is in line with the hob instructions



**Note:** Remove any splintered edges with 180 grit sandpaper. Before installing any sink or hob, ensure the top face of the worktop is clean and dust free.

### Alternative method

For 'non visible' cut-outs, such as inset sink or hob, drill corners of the template then use circular saw & track to complete straight cuts. 2/3 pass cut recommended. Use Jigsaw around corners.

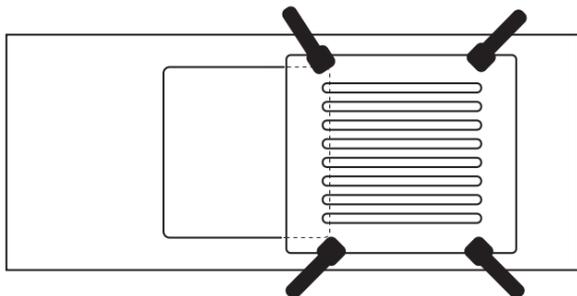


**Note:** Heat reflective tape should be used around the inside edge of a hob cut out. Please see the instructions supplied with your hob for further information.

**Fit sinks and hobs following the instructions provided with the product.**

## Drainer grooves

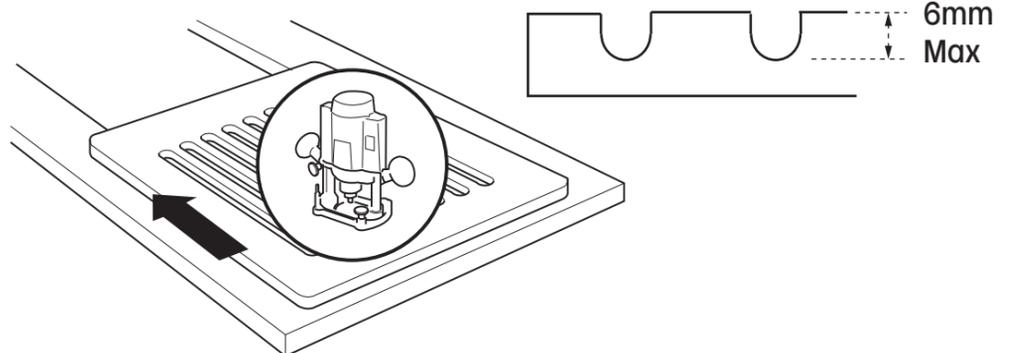
Secure a drainer groove jig (TLS0669) to the worktop using clamps. Use a router to machine the grooves. (30mm guide bush and 10mm radius (20mm diameter) cutter. Set the plunge depth to 3mm at the end of the jig. This depth will increase as you router towards the sink bowl.



**Always process drainer grooves after any radius profile has been applied to the inner edge of the sink cut-out.**

**Note: Smooth use of the router will minimise hand sanding when finishing. We recommend 2/3 passes keeping the router moving at a moderate pace to avoid burning.**

Use a drainer groove sanding block for finishing the grooves (see sanding & finishing).



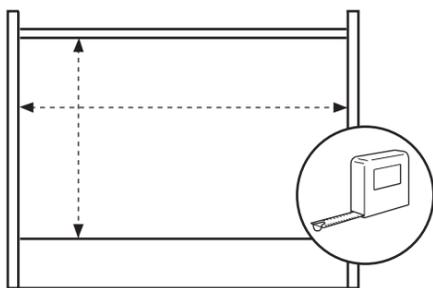
## Undermount sinks

Follow the information in the cut-out section of this leaflet. We recommend that a cradle method of supporting an undermount sink is used following the information below. Sinks should be sealed/secured to the underside of the worktop with silicone.

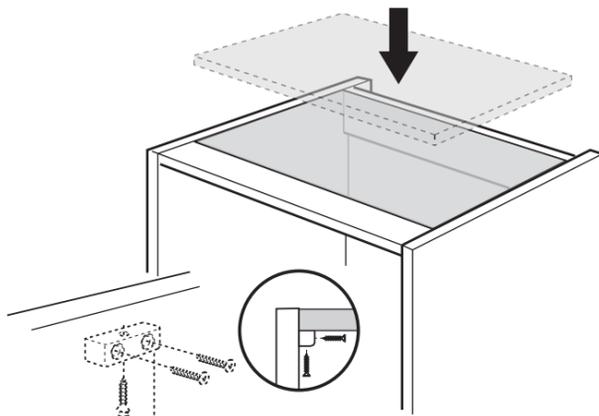
**If you are using screws to secure into the underside of the worktop, a full depth pilot hole should be drilled first. This should be no more than 1mm in difference between the hole and the screw diameter. i.e 3mm hole for a 4mm screw thread. Screw hole depth should be 3mm longer than the screw.**

**Note:** The cradle method is common where worktop materials dictate sink clip fixings cannot be used or are not supplied. Follow the information below for how to create a support cradle using a piece of MDF (or similar). In some applications, the cabinet side panels (top edges) can be rebated to support the sink.

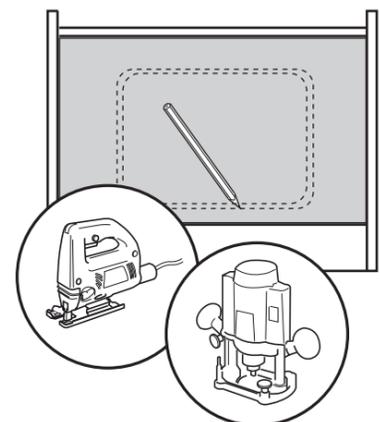
- 1** Measure the cabinet internal aperture, under where the sink cut-out will be positioned



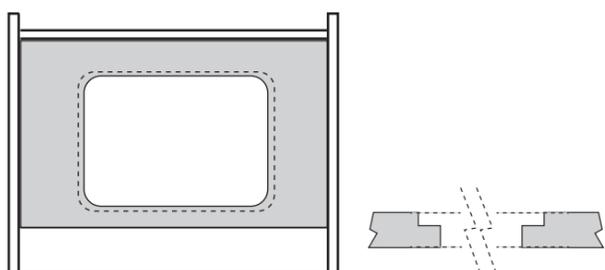
- 2** Cut MDF and secure to base



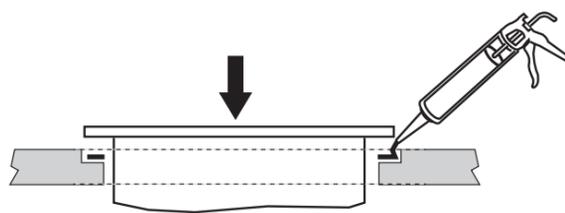
- 3** Use the sink template & cut-out for the sink aperture



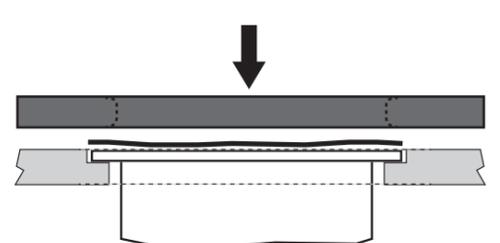
- 4** Router a rebate around the top of the cut out suitable to hold the rim of the sink



- 5** Use silicone in the rebate and fit the sink



- 6** Silicone around the rim of the sink and fit the worktop



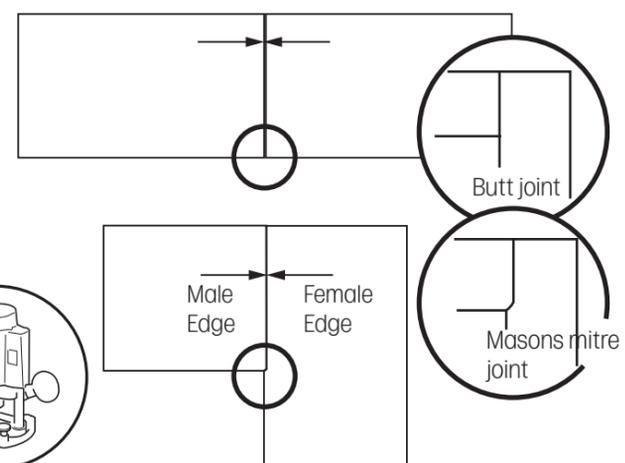
## Preparing the joint

Worktops should be fitted with a plain Butt joint. Ensure the two adjoining faces of the worktop are flat and square.

A Butt Joint is made up of two parts with flat faces that press up against each other, these can be a joint in a corner or to extend the length of a worktop by joining two worktops end to end. Using the specified coloured adhesive, an unobtrusive and visually seamless joint can easily be achieved with basic laminate worktop jointing experience.

The mating faces of the two worktops to be jointed need to be prepared, using a router fitted with a standard straight Tungsten Carbide cutter and a long Straight Edge. Position the straight edge so that the router cutter will skim off about 0.5 mm from the faces of the joint cleanly with no missed or inset parts of the faces.

It is not an issue if you need to remove more material to achieve a clean joint face, providing the joint face of the mating piece matches it. If you create an inset or "female" joint face on the front edge of the worktop in a corner joint (masons mitre), allow the other worktop being joined to it, to be correspondingly longer to maintain the required overall length of the jointed pieces. If this occurs the front edge of the jointed end may need to be slightly mitred into the inset front edge.



Skim edges with router

## Joining the worktops



**Dry fit all worktop sections before final fitting to ensure correct with no gapping along the join.**

The key to making a good seamless joint is to ensure that both sides of the joint are perfectly mirror matched. Assemble the joint dry (without adhesive) and check that the seams are parallel, with no gaps showing and that the two surfaces are not stepped when brought together (adjust to square edge with hand router if necessary).

Apply timber blocks to either side of the seam using hot melt glue, and use G-clamps to bring them together.

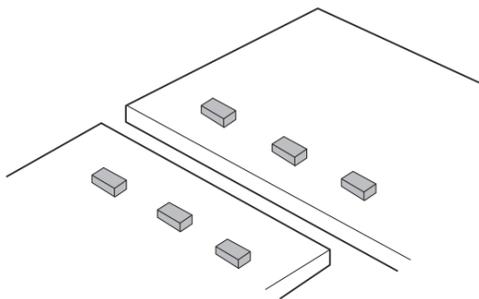
**Note:** Do not use hot melt glue on the end grain of the timber blocks as this makes the blocks difficult to remove. Alternatively, suction clamps can be used to bring the joint together.

If it is unavoidable that a joint falls over a void or over the centre of a base cabinet, extra support must be provided under the joint line, i.e. an additional batten fitted into the base cabinet between the front and back rail.

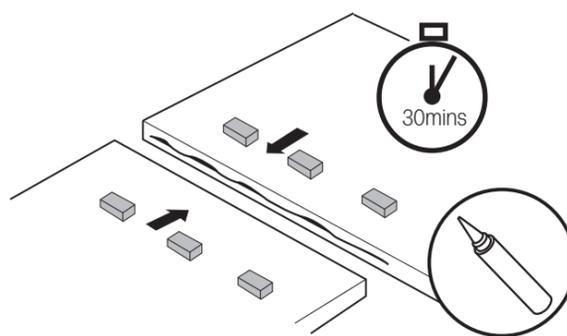
Before bonding the joints, it is important to ensure that the seam is free from any contamination. Before applying the adhesive, ensure both faces of the joint are cleaned with an alcohol wipe (included in the Installation Kit). Allow to dry.

- 1** Apply blocks to the top face (unless suction clamps are being used)

**Place tops in situ leaving a 20mm gap between them. Ensure edges are clean before securing.**

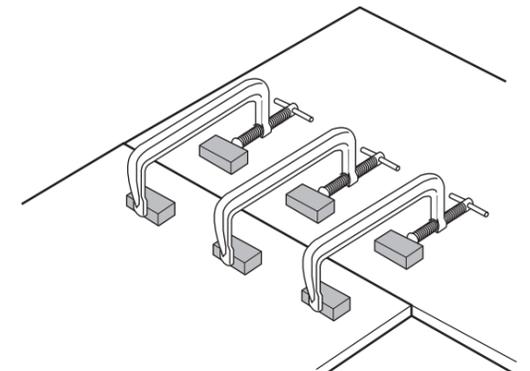


- 2** Apply adhesive to the joining edges. The adhesive will cure in c30-40mins depending on the room temperature. **Follow instructions on adhesive.**



**Note: Always squeeze out the first few pumps from the tube to ensure adhesive is correctly mixed.**

- 3** Clamp worktops together. Check correct alignment of tops. **Note:** Knock joint level where required.



**Once adhesive has set, remove clamps and blocks then clean the joint using sanding pads.**



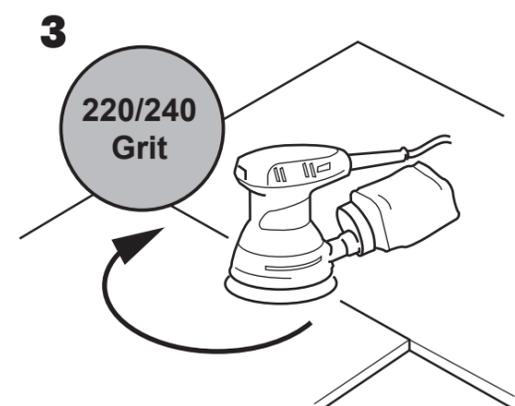
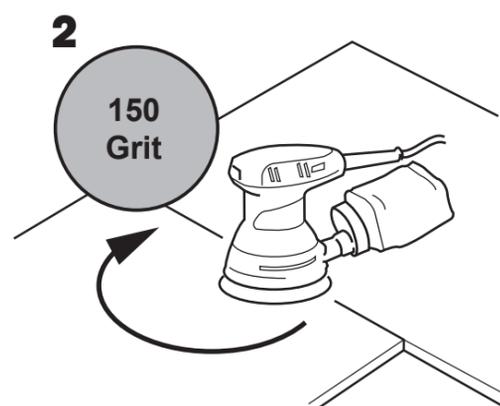
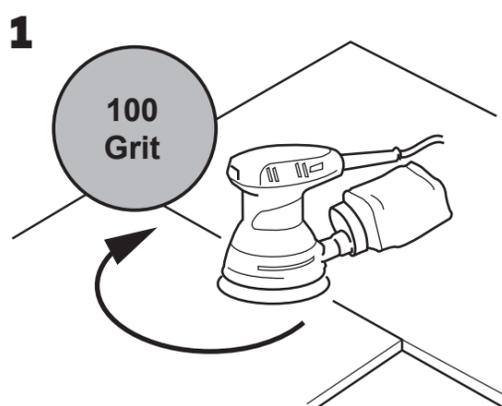
**IMPORTANT:** Remove any excess adhesive from the worktop using sanding pads. Do the same for any hot melt glue deposits from the surface of the worktop (if blocks have been fitted). **DO NOT use a chisel or sharp item to remove excess adhesive.**

## Sanding & finishing

Generally, the use of a Random Orbital Sander will cut faster and more efficiently with a finer finish than other methods, the use of Random Orbital Sander is therefore recommended. Care must be taken to avoid gouging the surface during this process.

Ensure that the sander is kept continually moving to prevent localised dips in the surface due to over sanding. Use the sandpaper pads supplied in the Installation Kit in the correct order of 100grit, 150grit and finally of 220 or 240 grit in order to achieve the same results as the factory finish, blending approximately 600mm beyond the seam area to avoid patchiness. Take care to avoid the sandpaper becoming clogged with sanded material, this can lead to localised scratches which will require more work to remove before final finishing.

**Complete the finishing process using the supplied abrasive pads in the correct order of Maroon Abrasive Pad, Grey Abrasive Pad and finally the white Abrasive Pad, the White Abrasive Pad should be on a dust free surface that has been wetted with the Stone guard Cleaner Spray.**



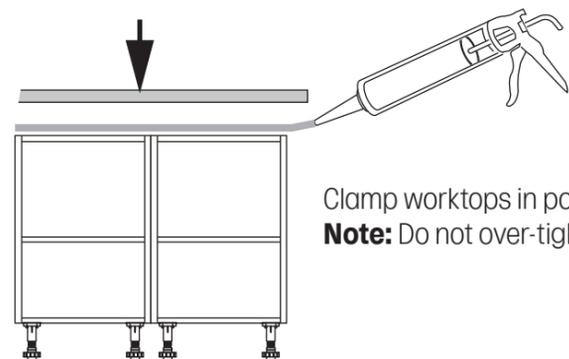
**Note:** Worktops which are black or a dark finish may show slight differences in surface finish when first installed and may be subject to showing scratches and marks in high traffic areas. To avoid this it may be necessary to apply the final finish process (as described above) to the whole worktop, plus ensure regular maintenance of the worktop. See the care and maintenance section of this leaflet.

## Securing the worktops

Worktops must be fixed to base cabinets using sealant on the front rail, top of the back rail and both top edges of the side panels.

**Note:** Apply the sealant 10mm away from the front edge of the cabinet.

**Worktops can also be screwed into position through the cabinet rails. For this application, a full depth pilot hole should be drilled first. This should be no more than 1mm in size difference between the hole and the screw diameter. i.e 3mm hole for a 4mm screw thread. Screw hole depth should be 3mm longer than the screw thread.**



Clamp worktops in position. **Note:** Do not over-tighten clamps.

# Apollo Slab Tech Worktop Care & Maintenance



**Please leave this information with the end consumer to ensure the worktop is cared for correctly**

## Care & Maintenance Kit

- Cream Cleaner
- Stone Guard Worksurface Cleaner
- Disposable Gloves
- Sanding Pads
- Microfibre Cloth

Worktops will have an overall satin sheen finish. However, through use, the worksurface acquires a smoother, more silken finish and appearance. Even the cleaning properties will improve with use. Unlike most other worksurfaces of its kind, Slab Tech is 'repairable', so little accidents, stains or scratches can usually be removed with relative ease.

Your Installation & Maintenance Kit contains all of the items required to help keep your new worksurface in perfect condition.

Stone Guard is an anti-bactericidal surface cleaner specially formulated to tackle grease and grime leaving surfaces sparkling clean with a residual antibacterial effect.

Cream Cleaner is a renovating cream cleaner that will remove minor scratches and more stubborn stains from solid surface worktops.

**Important:** Please read and follow instructions carefully when using care & maintenance products. Always wear rubber gloves when using chemicals to prevent any cracking, drying or other reaction to your skin.

## Every day cleaning

Remember, it is always easier to wipe up a spill than to have to deal with a dried-on stain.

Slab tech worktops are impervious to liquids, however it is always best to clean up spills as they occur. Wipe the worksurface, with a damp cloth and the Stone Guard cleaner, (supplied in the Maintenance Kit), to remove any oils and fat. Buff dry with a soft white cloth (also in Kit).

If any stains need further attention, allow the Stone Guard 30 seconds contact time, before wiping and rinsing. If required apply the Cream Cleaner with a damp cloth then the stone guard as above.

If your worksurface has an integrated sink, clean this in the same way as the worksurface. Once a week after cleaning, fill the sink with warm, (not boiling), water; add 1-2 teaspoons (5-10ml), of liquid household bleach and leave to soak for a few hours, or overnight. This will help to maintain a beautiful white clean finish.

Very light imperfections can be hand sanded using a block, as opposed to a power tool/orbital sander.

## Persistent stains

To remove more persistent stains from the worksurface or integrated sink use the Abrasive Pads (White, Grey & Maroon), provided in the Kit.

Always use the least abrasive pad possible to remove marks. Always rub in a circular motion.

Start with the White Pad, rubbing the stain in a circular motion. If this is ineffective, progress to the more abrasive Grey Pad and finally the Maroon Pad.

To remove any abrasion marks and to restore the worksurfaces former luster polish, use progressively less abrasive pads. Always finish by using the White Pad in conjunction with the Cream Cleaner and then the Stone Guard.

If hard water scale has built up around the waste or taps, use a standard household lime-scale remover following the manufacturer's instructions. Try to avoid using an abrasive pad but if this is necessary, rinse well and polish as detailed above to restore the finish.

For the most severe stains and scratches, it may be necessary to use the light grey sanding pad. Remove the scratch then follow the above process to restore the worksurface to its former finish. If this still fails contact us for further advice and assistance.

## Other Spillages

Accidental spills of strong chemicals, (e.g. paint stripper, brush cleaners, metal cleaners, oven cleaners, cleaners containing methylene chloride, acid drain cleaners, acetone based nail varnish removers etc.), should be washed away immediately using plenty of soapy water to avoid damaging the worksurface. For nail varnish spills, non-acetone based remover can be used and then flushed with water. Accidental spills of strong chemicals, (e.g. paint stripper, brush cleaners).

## Damage prevention

**Warning:** NEVER place hot pans, dishes or utensils directly on the worksurface or into an empty sink. Hot items will mark or damage the surface.

Always use a heat protection pad or trivet (with rubber feet) for hot cookware, or leave cookware to cool on the hob first.

Try to leave pans, dishes, or utensils to cool before placing them in the sink. If you must put a hot pan into the sink, always place a damp sponge or cloth underneath, or put a few inches of cool water in the sink before the pan.

Avoid pouring boiling liquids directly into sinks without also turning on the cold tap.

## Hob safety

The Installation & Maintenance Kit contains a heat reflective tape, which the installer should apply around the hob cutout in the worksurface, before fitting the hob. This will prevent any damage to the worksurface. However, extra care should be taken when using the hob. Please follow both the appliance manufacturer's instructions and the advice below:

An overhanging pan can scorch the surrounding worksurface.

Always use the correct size of pan for the burner and ensure that it is placed centrally.

Do not use two burners as one (e.g. for a large griddle).

Take extra care when using a large frying pan or wok.

## Scratches

**Warning:** DO NOT cut or chop directly on the worksurface. Always use a chopping board.

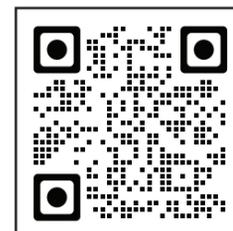
As with all work surfaces Slab Tech worktops will show light abrasion marks in normal daily use.

Darker coloured surfaces are more prone to minor scuffs and scratches than lighter options and will require more care and attention to keep them looking pristine.

Most scratches can be removed with relative ease. Simply follow the same procedure as for removing persistent stains.



**Scan the QR code with your smart device to access care kit information**



Care Kit

