



# Windfall Lumber

711 Tumwater Blvd SW, Suite D  
Tumwater, WA 98501  
windfalllumber.com

360-352-2250 p  
360-352-8294 f



## WOOD COUNTERTOP INSTALLATION & CARE INFORMATION

**ATTENTION: FABRICATOR, INSTALLER, or END USER**

**PLEASE READ ENTIRE THIS ENTIRE DOCUMENT PRIOR  
TO INSTALLATION!**

### About solid wood countertops

As with all solid wood products, the ambient (or applied) moisture will cause considerable wood movement. Likewise extreme dryness and heat will also have considerable effect. Thus precautions for moisture protection and installation practices are very important for the success and longevity of the installation. With good care and stable moisture exposure, the countertop should remain in excellent condition. While normal use can impart a patina that is part of the beauty of a wood countertop, periodic sanding and refinishing can remove most of this patina if desired (see long term care below).

**Acclimation of the countertop** to the moisture content of the installed space is critical for proper installation. The process to achieve proper acclimation is as follows:

1. Find a flat and stable space in or close to the final installation space to store countertops during acclimation. This can be a flat floor or plywood set on a cabinet.
2. Using stickers (thin pieces of wood), or any small, long pieces of dry wood, set the countertop(s) on the stickers with a spacing of every 8-12 inches. Be sure to set stickers 3-6 inches from the edge.
3. Multiple countertops can be stickered on top of each other but the stickers need to line up on top of each other.
4. Flip countertops over daily for a 7 day period.

## Installation Recommendations

NOTE: Installation should be performed by an experienced carpenter or countertop installer to ensure a quality long term product.

Typical installation for all wood countertops is with a few tight screws at the back of the cabinet by the wall and fewer loose screws and fender washers in oversize holes at the front edge, depending upon base cabinet construction. This allows for seasonal expansion and contraction of the solid wood, keeping it tight at the backsplash and allowing for movement at the front edge.

Use as few screws as possible to keep the countertop located on the base cabinets. The countertop is heavy and does not need to be tightly attached with lots of screws. Screw holes should be pre-drilled and should not penetrate more than ½” into the countertop. **THIS IS ESPECIALLY IMPORTANT FOR END GRAIN TOPS!**

Number 8 x 1-1/4” washer head or pocket screws (depending upon the base cabinet construction and attachment options) should be used to attach countertop to the cabinet

**Side grain** countertops can be screwed to cabinet tops with typical undercabinet support as they are very strong both horizontally and vertically. Standard overhang over the cabinet face of 1” to 1-1/2” is acceptable. Up to 6” front edge and 12” end overhang does not require support from brackets or posts. For larger overhangs, corbels, brackets, posts, plywood, or a steel plate substrate is recommended.

**End grain** countertops, by nature of the grain direction, do not carry the horizontal strength of side grain countertops, so extra care is required in mounting the end grain product to a cabinet. A very flat mounting surface that includes ample solid support is required. A 3/4” plywood substrate support within the base cabinet is recommended. Smaller sections of 2-3 feet are relatively strong and stable. The larger the single piece the more support is required, and the more overall movement with moisture is to be expected. Any overhang of more than 1.5” will require substantial support of plywood or a steel plate, corbels or posts.

**Seaming** between sections is typically accomplished with a combination of biscuits and mechanical draw tightening hardware. The machining and parts for the biscuits and connectors can be installed by a qualified fabricator/installer allowing for on-site installation.

Keep all sections wrapped and bound until ready to install to keep sections flat.

All seams are cut straight and sanded at pre-assembly. It is recommended to fabricate and site-assemble tops as soon as possible as over time they may change shape with changes in humidity, causing seams to no longer be straight.

**Cutouts and Holes** may be carefully cut into wood countertops. After cutting is complete, please adhere to the following directions to ensure the best performance:

1. To avoid splintering, we recommend applying masking tape over the area that will be cut.
2. Sink installations require particular attention. Edge of cutout must be treated with a durable protecting finish such as hand oil, epoxy, or resin.
3. Apply a flexible caulk such as “LEXEL” clear or a high quality silicone sealer between the fixture and the wood surface. It is very important to finish the countertop (see next section for recommendations) prior to installing the fixture.
4. To fabricate an undermount sink cutouts, we recommend System Three Silver Tip Resin for the edges. The resin is worked into the edges around the sink, and it can be gently sanded prior to finishing. Silver Tip is non-toxic and presents no health hazards when cured.

### **Backsplash Installation**

NOTE: Backsplashes must be installed over the top of the countertop, allowing a 1/4” gap between the back wall and the countertop to allow for movement. Finish with a flexible caulk like Sikaflex to allow for movement of the countertop underneath the backsplash.

### **Finish Recommendations**

NOTE: It is recommended to treat all edges of countertops, including the bottom, with at least 1 coat of finish prior to installation. This is very important to allow for consistent wood movement during seasonal acclimation.

#### **Mineral Oil**

If the countertop is used for food preparation or regular chopping, we recommend mineral oil or walnut oil (can be purchased at any grocery store) be applied to provide water repellency. Periodic (re)treatment of oil is required to prevent the wood from becoming too dry and losing repellency.

#### **Waterborne Varnish**

If the use will not involve direct food preparation and contact, we recommend a low toxicity waterborne varnish finish,. Three to four coats of waterborne varnish for softwoods (Douglas Fir, Red Alder) and two to three coats for hardwoods (Pacific Madrone, Oregon

Myrtle, Western Maple, Black Walnut, African Hardwood blend) are required. Additional coats can be applied as needed to retain protection and water repellency.

### **Osmo “Polyx” Hardwood Oil**

For standard countertop applications, we recommend Osmo “Polyx” hardwax oil, which is an eco-friendly and food-safe finish that offers excellent durability and renewability with a unique matte finish that maintains the natural feel of the wood. It works great in high-humidity environments like kitchens and bathrooms.

Use of polyurethane based finishes, even low toxic products, is not recommended as they are a surface film finish that does not penetrate and care for the wood.

### **Long Term Care**

Light sanding of wear areas or dry spots in the wood is recommended to maintain a fresh surface. Random orbital or hand sanding is best, using 150-grit sand paper to start. If necessary, use a coarser grit of sand paper, then 120, then 150, and finish with a 220-grit sanding. Retreatment of the original finish will be required where sanded and may or may not need to be applied to entire surface.

Depending upon the moisture (or dryness) that the installed counter has experienced, it is possible that a light re-sanding of the entire surface may be desired after equilibrium in its environment has been reached. Typically, this is within a few months or up to a year after installation.

Stains may be removed using either a mild bleach solution or oxalic acid crystals mixed in water. Oxalic acid crystals are available from most hardware stores. Completely sand the stained area prior to applying the solution with a brush or rag. Let the solution stand for a few minutes until the stain is dissipating and wipe up. Reapply if necessary. Apply finish as explained above.

If any gaps in the seams develop over time due to wood movement, colored wax filler is recommended as this will coexist nicely with OSMO finish.

Solid wood countertops will provide long service with exceptional beauty if properly installed and treated with minimum periodic maintenance.

**Windfall cannot be held responsible for products that are installed  
incorrectly or without proper acclimation.**