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INSTALLATION INSTRUCTIONS | COMPOSITION MOLDINGS

This instruction sheet provides you with two different methods for applying our composition ornaments. The traditional method for applying “compo” ornamentation is to “steam” it. The steaming method is generally used with large orders, particularly orders involving significant amounts of lineal moldings. For smaller jobs, however, it is possible to simply glue our ornaments with any good wood or construction grade adhesive. General guidelines are provided below:

1.) STEAMING METHOD

To fully understand the application of composition moldings, one must have a basic knowledge of the make-up of the material. The primary raw material within composition is glue. This glue, when activated, will adhere the ornaments to **un-finished** woodwork. To activate the hide glue within the compo, a combination of heat and steam must be applied to the backside of the ornament. The steam will release the glue and the introduction of heat will make the piece flexible, allowing the compo to lay flat or conform to an irregular surface.

4 Basic Items are Required for Steaming Composition

1. A shallow roasting pan, approx. 2” deep, filled with approx. 1” of water
2. A heat source to boil the water to create steam, i.e. two burner camping stove (advantage – portable), a hotplate, kitchen stove
3. A piece of un-primed cotton canvas or similar fabric slightly larger than the roasting pan (rinse to remove residue)
4. A small wooden frame, larger than the roasting pan so the frame will rest on the lip of the roasting pan

Stretch the canvas or fabric over the wooden frame and staple it into place. Heat the water in the pan until a steady amount of steam is achieved. Next, lay the canvas covered frame on top of the pan. Allow steam to moisten the canvas before laying the molding **face up** on top of the canvas. The amount of time it takes to activate the properties of the compo will vary depending on the size and age of the molding.

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Once the backside of the ornament starts to take on the impression of the fabric, gently pick the molding up using a putty knife and place it onto your **un-finished** woodwork. You should have the area where you are applying the compo close at hand. Once the compo is set into place, it will generally stay where you place it. If it is a larger compo piece, right after application, set small finishing nails into the piece to ensure that the ornament will stay in place. After the compo dries you can fill any nail holes with compo residue from the canvas, or you can use wood filler.

When applying lineal pieces, special care should be given in order to minimize any joints between the pieces. First and foremost, when applying lineal pieces, **make sure to crowd the ends (i.e. press the new piece being mounted into the previously mounted lineal piece)**. Second, it may be helpful to dip one end of the lineal piece into your hot water just before placing it on the steam tank. This will make the dipped end extra soft so that when you butt the dipped end into the previously mounted lineal piece you can achieve a “fusing” of the end joints. Both of these procedures will help insure that the joints remain tight and do not open up after the compo dries.

Once the compo is dry, it will accept either paint or stain. Keep in mind that compo will take longer to stain because it is less absorbent than wood. Apply several light coats of oil or water based stain to achieve darker tones. Be sure to allow each coat to dry before applying additional coats.

* **NOTE:** Scrape canvas occasionally to remove excess compo residue and water.

2.) NON-STEAMING METHOD

It is possible, particularly with small jobs that do not involve lineal moldings, to apply our ornamentation without steaming. Steaming is the only method that activates the glue in our material. Therefore, if you do not steam the ornaments you will need to apply your own adhesive to our ornaments. Any good quality adhesive can be used including but not limited to wood glues, silicones and even caulking adhesives. DAP Kwik Seal Caulking Adhesive is one specific option. Being a water based product, Kwik Seal is particularly easy to clean up. Excess glue can be peeled away and any remaining residue wiped away with water.

If it is necessary to bend or shape any pieces, dry heat from a strong hair dryer or heat gun can be used. Dry heat will not activate the glue but it will usually soften the material enough to allow bending or shaping. Heavy pieces should be secured utilizing both adhesives and finishing nails. If dry heat was used and the ornament is still soft, finishing nails can be set without pre-drilling. However, items should be pre-drilled if they have not been softened.

Time Considerations

To ensure a trouble free and successful installation, we recommend that the composition moldings be installed as soon after receipt from the factory as possible. *Application within two (2) weeks of receipt is best.* However, that time can be extended by keeping the material wrapped in its original box and stored in a cool, dry location.

Should you have any questions on your way to Compo Perfection, please feel free to contact a Brockwell sales consultant.

