

FAQ

DISCLAIMER:

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WHO IS BEAUTY CRAFT LIMITED?

Beauty Craft Surfaces Limited is one of New Zealand's largest independent manufacturers of quality tops and surfaces for domestic and commercial applications.

Beauty Craft originated from a small joinery business that operated in the 1970's and began specialising in High Pressure Laminate (HPL) benchtop fabrication in the early 1980's.

With over 30 years of industry experience Beauty Craft has grown through its own success and is now a leader in (HPL) benchtop manufacture in New Zealand throughout many regions of the North Island.

As a specialist in high pressure laminate products Beauty Craft can offer you an affordable high quality solution to your home or commercial bench top needs.

WHAT IS LAMINATE?

The manufacture of laminate consists of two processes. One is the manufacture of a decorative surface of the product and the other is the core material. These two materials come together at a press to bond the melamine treated decorative paper to the phenolic resin treated kraft paper base. This bonding together forms the laminate sheet that we use on a MDF core to make your unique bench top.

Laminate thickness and type varies so not all laminates are the same and accordingly many types have use and post forming radius tightness restrictions. Laminates in New Zealand vary considerably and thicknesses have been known to vary from 0.58mm to 1.0mm.

Thinner laminates can sometimes bend to tighter radius but the thinness is a trade off with finish quality as thickness can also highlight telegraphing and board imperfections.

HOW CAN DESIGN AFFECT A LAMINATE TOP?

Laminate tops are very versatile and can be manufactured in many shapes and sizes.

Benchtop thickness does not have a major impact on price.

Waterfall ends add expense especially mitred ends that cannot be shipped flat. Butt ends or negative detail ends will be shipped flat. Standard waterfall leg end laminate inside wrap is 100 | 300 mm.

Laminate tight formability differs across décor and brands. Generally gloss and specialty laminates cannot be tightformed. However, many exceptions exist among the standard decors.

Common features like up stands help bring additional versatility to your kitchen but during the design stage join complexity should be considered.

Generally complex joins (those involving two or more features) should be factory joins and only undertaken on site by competent installers. Good examples of complex joins are joins through two rolls or joins in tops with up stands. Joins through three features (e.g. roll – cove – roll top up stand) should be only attempted by a qualified installer.

Joins near sinks should be avoided for the obvious reason of risking water seepage into the join and join swelling.

At the design stage consideration should be given to join placement to assist with installation around walls, cabinets and windows as well as access for the bench elements to the kitchen.

Directional laminates require special joins to help match grain and this will add to cost as additional laminate is required compared to non-directional decors. Grain match is not guaranteed and the effect is only minimized.

CAN LAMINATE TOLERATE DIRECT HEAT?

Not – Not in any circumstance.

Protect your surface from direct heat as hot items can quickly damage your bench. Use a wooden board, placemat or trivet between the bench top and hot pots and pans.

Reflective heat from woks can also damage your surface.

WILL LAMINATE SCRATCH?

Laminate like many other bench products is susceptible to scratching. Dark colours will show scratches more readily than lighter colours and be careful as many items when slid on a laminate bench can scratch your top.

Do not cut directly on your laminate bench as this will cut/scratch your laminate surface.

WILL LAMINATE SUN FADE?

Laminate like many other bench products when exposed to UV light can suffer fade and discolouration over time.

CAN LAMINATE COLOUR & FINISH VARY?

Please note that laminate colours can vary slightly from samples in both Texture and Colour. It is important to note that with under-mount bowls some bowl rim telegraphing will be visible and with GLOSS laminates a “sand ripple” appearance maybe visible in certain lights.

IMPERFECTIONS AND UNDULATIONS?

Many gloss laminates will highlight natural imperfections or machine sanding ripples from the substrates base that it is applied to. This is often due to the thickness of the laminate not being able to hide the substrate variances and as the adhesive dries it applies a surface tension to the base paper of the laminate and “tugs” the paper. The outer paper gloss coating magnifies this affect when light is cast upon the top.

The imperfections can show as a “sand ripple” or “orange peel” effect. Small dimples can also be evident.

It is important to note that with under-mount bowls some bowl rim telegraphing will be noticable.

In many commercial applications where screwing of substrates is required the filled screw holes (although sanded smooth) create a different surface tension that can cause a dimple affect relative to the unfilled area of the substrate. Crystal or textured finishes tend to disguise imperfections better.

It pays to remember that your laminate top is formed from paper and is not the same as polished stone particulary when choosing gloss laminates.

CAN BOWL CHOICE AFFECT MY LAMINATE TOP QUALITY?

In general almost any bowl type can be used with a laminate top.

However, when considering an under-mount bowl solution you need to choose a bowl with a flat and even flange. Uneven flange/rim bowls will cause that undulation to be transmitted into the laminate edge.

This effect is called telegraphing. With poorer quality bowls telegraphing can be minimized but the trade off is a thick and often uneven silicon glue line bonding the bowl to the laminate.

We do not recommend the under mounting of bowls with laminates less than 0.7mm in thickness as the rim has to support both the bowl and contents. Likewise we do not recommend the under mounting of heavy bowls (for example ceramics & porcelain).

Butlers bowls are fashionable but warranty limitations/exclusions exist around the seal between the bowl and top as pooled water at that point can easily access the timber substrate and cause swelling. Butler bowls need to be fitted on-site by the plumber to ensure adequate seal between top and bowl is in effect.

HOW DO I CARE FOR MY LAMINATE TOP ?

Beauty Craft recommends that to maintain your laminate surface's beauty, cleaning with a solution of warm water and liquid dishwashing detergent is all that should be required.

Prolonged exposure to bleach may cause discoloration and abrasive cleaners should not be used.

Please note many commercially available cleaners contain substances that may damage or discolor your surface and care should always be taken to read product warnings and test products on a small out of the way part of your laminate surface prior to use.

Place hot pans or pots on protective surfaces as excess heat (even reflected heat from gas burners) can cause blisters or burns to your laminate surface. Place hot items away from joins in your top to avoid the heat opening them. Surface water should not be allowed to collect on your laminate top (particularly near joins, taps, laminate edges and bowls) as this can cause with time top damage through water ingress into the substrate below.

Avoid moving sharp or abrasive objects (stones under boxes etc.) over your top as this can cause scratches or leave marks that will dull your surface over time. Please do not cut anything directly on your top but use cutting boards as knife cuts will penetrate your top surface and damage it.

For exactness we recommend that you refer to each specific Laminate manufacturers care recommendations. The Formica care document can be found in a pdf document attached to our website at www.beautycraft.co.nz

WHAT CAN GO WRONG DURING INSTALLATION OR WHILE I AM WAITING FOR MY LAMINATE TOP?

Although great care is taken during manufacture of your top manufacture cannot start until all materials are on hand. Often the waiting for customer supplied bowls can delay manufacture start. During manufacture laminate faults (colour imperfections/scratches etc.) can become evident which can again delay manufacture as we have to wait for suppliers to resend new sheet at their cost. To avoid measurement errors we will send our customers a confirmation drawing of your top that will go into manufacture. At that stage we require that you check details to ensure that both of us have correctly specified the top.

During installation accidents can happen and if that occurs we may be able to assist you over the phone provided that you contact us immediately. A problem shared can make a big difference to next steps and ensuring that you get your top remedied to the correct standard that you require.

Electric and gas hobs require installation by a qualified fitter onsite. We do not do this.

CAN NATURAL TIMBER SUBSTRATES BE USED WITH LAMINATES?

From time to time we receive enquires with regard to the use of natural timber substrates with laminate.

From experience we have learned that EXOTIC timbers or any timber with a high resin or oil content is not ideal for laminate adhesion. Likewise the use of timbers with a moisture content outside of the range of 8-12% is likely to cause bonding issues. Wood treatments and preservatives (such as LOSP) can also cause glue failure.

The key areas of concern are bond failure through the glue being denatured by the oils / resins or glue penetration being impaired by high moisture content.

High moisture can also lead to warping/cracking with time if the product subsequently enters a dry (air-conditioned) environment.

Our recommendation to CUSTOMERS is that it is unwise to consider use of natural timber substrates and that their use cannot be guaranteed and that the expectation of product failure is high.