CORIAN® SOLID SURFACE POSITIONING OF SEAMS

Introduction

This bulletin addresses the proper positioning of seams during the fabrication of Corian® Solid Surface.

Overview

Proper selection of seam placement impacts material yield and the durability of the installation. It is important to consider seam placement before quoting a job, as the design may impact the number of sheets required.

A. Examination of Plans

When examining plans of any installation of Corian® Solid Surface, the objectives are:

1. To place seam positions in a manner that minimizes the use of Corian® sheet and accessory material.
2. To place seams in positions that maximize product performance.
3. Minimize seam visibility. These goals may not always be aligned. Veined products may require techniques that increase the amount of sheet required.

Examine plans thoroughly and consider alternative options of designing the installation to best fit the plan, following the objectives listed above. Failure to properly plan seam placement may result in poorly designed installations or poor cost estimates.

Adhering to technical design standards is as important as minimizing material and labor quantities.

B. Selection of Seam Positions

All seams are best butt-seamed; i.e., seams must be placed either perpendicular or parallel to the length of the sheet. All seams in horizontal applications must be reinforced.

To select the best positioning of seams, follow the step-by- step process listed below.

Steps to completion:

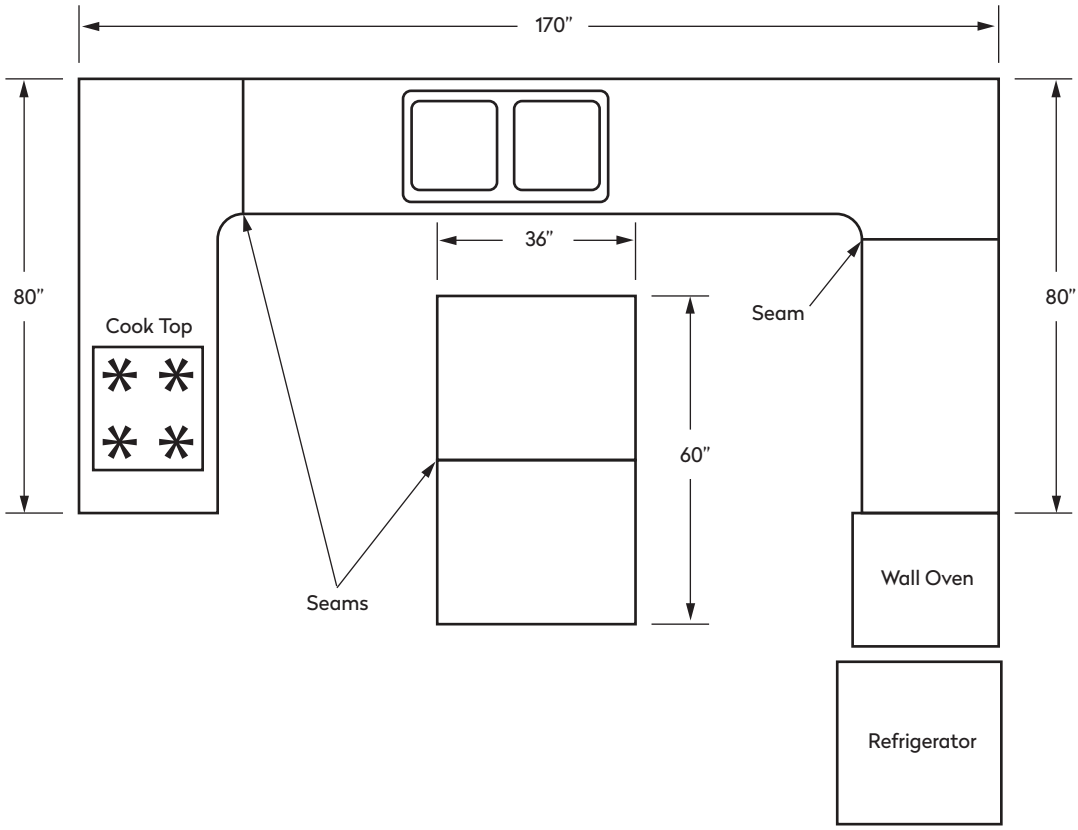
1. Check sheet color to determine if aesthetic warrants change to seam layout.
2. Consider the positions of any cutouts, particularly for cook top or other heat-generating appliances. If the appliance is on an "L" or "U" place the seam on the opposite leg parallel with the front edge of the heat generating appliance if possible. This can be seen in Figure B-1. If parallel positioning is not possible, place seam in the most convenient position.
3. Seams should not be positioned over a dishwasher or other heat generating appliance. If a seam is required over dishwasher or heat generating appliance, the ends of the seam reinforcing strip must be supported by the support structure.
4. Wherever possible allow seams to be offset a minimum of three times the inside corner radius. For example, if inside corner radius is $^1/_2$" (13 mm), offset seam at least $1^1/_2$" (38 mm). If this is not possible, specify a Corner Insert inside corner. See *Corian® Solid Surface Fabrication/Installation Fundamentals – Edge Details and Buildups* (K-25293).
5. Balance fabricating as many of the seams as possible in the shop versus the size and weight of the part to be delivered and installed. Make sure there is a path to the install location along which the part can be transported. Use information from the site inspection to determine the ideal balance of these two conflicting factors.
6. Consider the diagrams illustrated in Figure B-1 as good examples of optimizing the planning of seam positions.

An inconspicuous seam is achievable between two sheets by using appropriate techniques with Corian® Joint Adhesive.

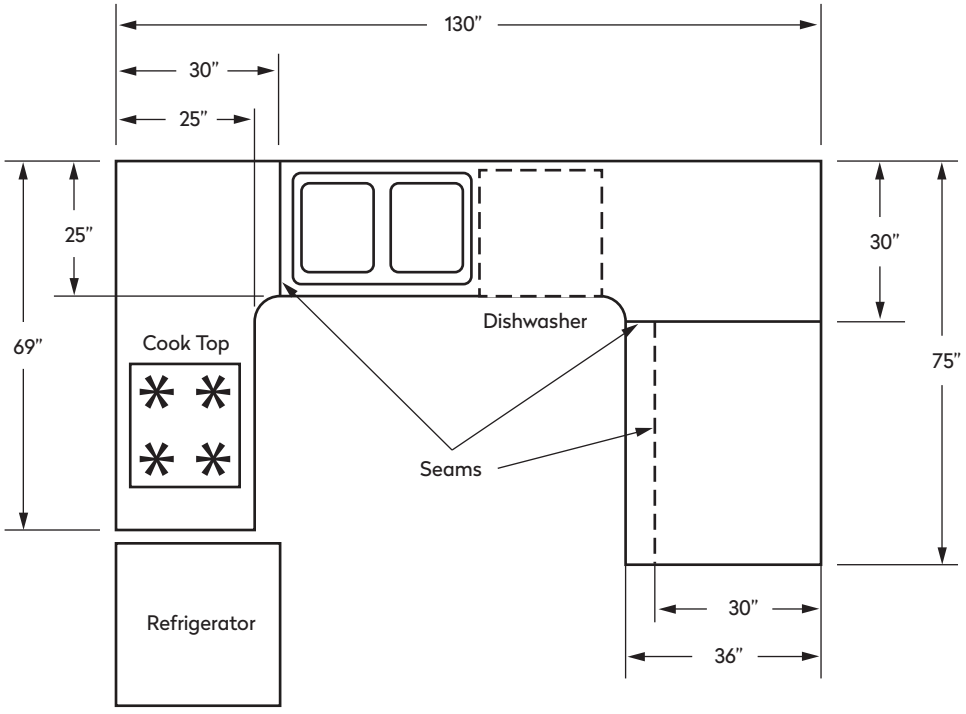
C. Positioning Seams to Optimize Appearance

In some cases, changing the position, angle or shape of a seam can enhance appearance. This is common for veined colors, particularly as the veins become stronger in contrast or more directional. While a fabricator cannot get veining on either size of a seam to match, there are ways to make the seam less noticeable.

Veining is random, so the method to get the best appearance can change from color to color and even be based on the individual sheets used in the project. The approaches below, singularly or combined can help improve seam appearance.



Corian® Countertop



Corian® Countertop

Having either physical samples or digital examples can help discuss options with customers. Note that the options below can require more sheet as well as the need to build support for the seam into the cabinetry. Make sure this is accounted for in quotes.

C.1. CHANGES IN COUNTERTOP DIRECTION

Except for colors with low contrast veining, a countertop with a change in direction such as an L-shaped top may not be attractive with a butt seam and a change in sheet direction. If the short leg of the L is less than 76 cm (30") then having the short section with the same orientation will allow both sections to have the same seam direction.

For tops where both legs of an L are longer than 76 cm (30") then a mitered seam will allow the vein pattern to flow around the corner. A mitered seam will increase sheet usage and should be accounted for in quoting. Support for the seam may have to be built into the cabinet.

C.2. END-TO END BUTT SEAMS

When the countertop is longer than the sheet, having a seam through more intensely veined sections can make the seam more visible due to the increased contrast on opposite sides of the seam. Sometimes shifting the seam slightly can improve the appearance. If the seam is moved so it is no longer supported by the cabinet, then seam support should be built into the cabinet.

C.3. BUTT SEAMS ALONG LENGTH OF SHEET

When the countertop or island is wider than 76 cm (30") several options can improve appearance. If the top is less than 152 cm (60") then removing equal amounts of material from the inner portion of the sections to be joined can improve pattern and gauge match. This also helps move the seam away from any overhangs.

Another option, particularly for 152 cm (60") wide tops is to reverse one of the sheets so that the same side of the sheet as manufactured is seamed together. This can improve both pattern and gauge match.

For all options, build seam support into the cabinet if not present at the location of the seam.

C.4. CHANGING THE SHAPE OF THE SEAM (ARCS AND SERPENTINE SEAMS)

A linear seam can make pattern changes more visible. Changing the shape of the seam can sometimes break up the discontinuities in the patterns and make the seam less visible. Examples of non-linear seams include arcs (most often as an alternative to a miter) and serpentine seams. The wavy nature of the serpentine seam can disguise the breaks in seam patterns, especially if the shape of the seam is custom designed for the pattern of the individual sheets. Remember to build in support for the seam when the location is not directly over existing support from the cabinet.

Where possible, minimize on-site seaming. Place seams away from appliances and where proper clamping is possible.

D. Types of Seams

There are two recommended types of horizontal seams for Corian® Solid Surface:

1. "Hard" standard seams made with Corian® Joint Adhesive.

All standard seams must have support from the cabinet directly underneath the seam. More details are available in *Corian® Solid Surface Fabrication/Installation Fundamentals – Seaming* (K-25292).

2. "Soft" silicone seams

Silicone seams are recommended when there is a need to accommodate expansion and contraction or to minimize stress. For example, when there are two sections of horizontal surfaces connected by a narrow strip it is recommended that the strip be a separate piece attached with silicone, particularly if the strip is behind a heat generating appliance. Soft seams require support from the support structure under the seam.

E. Referenced Documents

Corian® Solid Surface Fabrication/Installation Fundamentals – Edge Details and Buildups (K-25293).

Corian® Solid Surface Fabrication/Installation Fundamentals – Seaming (K-25292).

PLEASE VISIT OUR WEB SITE: WWW.CORIAN.COM OR CONTACT YOUR CORIAN® REPRESENTATIVE FOR MORE INFORMATION ABOUT CORIAN® SOLID SURFACE