

Counter Top Forms

Instructions



Necessary Tools

- 3/4" Plywood decking (area of surface)
- Painters masking tape
- 5-Gallon buckets
- 2 mil plastic (area of surface)
- 2" Dry wall screws
- #3 Rebar
- Finishing Trowel

Optional Tools

- Staple gun
- Level
- Sealer

Coverage

Coverage: 44 lineal ft. (13.4 m)

Forming Counter Tops

1. Install 3/4" plywood decking to the top of cabinets. Recess the decking making it flush with the stile of cabinets.
2. Tape cabinet fronts with blue masking tape to prevent form adhesive from pulling finish off of cabinets.
3. Apply Styrofoam cantilever forms to front of cabinets. After form is set, level a mark back to wall from the form and snap a chalk line to work to for elevation.
4. Mark out necessary areas for sinks, cook tops, etc. on plywood deck.
5. Apply 2 mil plastic, covering the top of the plywood deck to prevent leakage, extending the edges of the plastic up on the cantilever form about 1 inch.
6. Using a staple gun, staple the plastic down to the plywood deck, periodically keeping the plastic tight.
7. Tape edges of plastic at cantilever forms, to the form using masking tape.
8. Install 2" drywall screws at edges of counter tops, approximately 8" apart for steel rebar, then screw them in approx. 3/4 inch.
9. Form out sink cutouts using 2 1/2" Styrofoam taping it to plywood deck using double face tape. If faucets are deck mounted, position PVC pipe of desired diameter, hold in place by drilling a hole in plywood of same diameter as PVC pipe.
10. Cover walls using 2 mil plastic lapping it down over plastic on plywood deck and tape seams together. Protect floors to prevent scratching.
11. Using #3 rebar, cut desired lengths and wire them to the drywall screws, lifting them approx. 1" off plywood deck.
12. Cut 6x6x10x10 wire mesh and install on counter top surface area.

Pouring Counter Top

1. Using a cement mixer, dump in five (5) five gallon buckets of rock and sand to one bag of cement. (each bucket is 42 lbs. of concrete sand and 25 lbs. of 3/8" minus pea gravel for a total weight of 67 lbs. per five gallon bucket). Apply water and desired color and 32 oz. of antihydro (if an accelerant is needed) to mix and bring to correct consistency, preferably on the dry side. This mix equals one batch. You will get approx. 16 sq. ft of counter top 2 1/2" thick per batch.
2. Dump mix into wheel barrow from mixer and bring into area to be used. Shovel material onto counter tops.
3. As you fill counter tops, lift wire mesh approx. 1" off of plywood deck and vibrate Styrofoam forms using a tapping motion with hammer.
4. After counter tops have been filled, using a level, screed off concrete to a perfectly flat surface.
5. After screeding is complete, float surface using a magnesium float getting surface as flat as possible.

6. Edge cantilever form using a 1/2" radius edger.
7. With left over material, add more water to it and sift through window screen saving it to be used in a later process.
8. Continue to work concrete surface to get it set up.
9. At this time, the construction joints are put in at the needed areas, such as the sink corners, cook top corners, and any other 90 degree break or stress point in the counter top.
10. After concrete has set up enough, the cantilever form must be pulled. Be careful not to strip form too early. Be extra careful of area between sink form and outside form, as this area is generally only 2" to 2 1/2" wide.
11. Taking the "slurry" mixture that was screened out earlier, apply small amounts over entire surface and edges of counter tops to a very thin coating. This will enable a very fine finish to the counter top surface.
12. As surface sets up, you continue to trowel the surface until you reach the desired finish.
13. After all finishing is done and counter tops are complete, cleanup is necessary using a sponge and bucket of water cleaning off cabinet faces and other areas that need cleaning. After 3 or 4 days, cut out sink areas and set them.

Sealers

There are several sealers on the market that are safe to use on counter top surfaces. One that we have had success with is called Glaze & Seal. You can find it at tile supply stores. First lightly sand counter tops with a fine grade sand paper and wipe clean with a soft cloth. Apply 2 coats using a paint brush, saturate thoroughly wiping up any excess. Let it dry between coats. After the second coat is applied, let it dry for 24 hours, then apply two coats of paste wax, buffing between each coat. Reapply paste wax every 6 to 8 months as needed.

Notes:

Due to the nature of colored concrete, some mottling may occur and counter tops may not be all one uniform color. In our opinion, we feel that this adds to the uniqueness of the finish.

Other options available are recessed sinks, recessed cutting boards, and inlaid tile or other material to the surface. Also white cement may be used in the place of gray cement to obtain a more true color.

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