

Non-Repeating & Directionally-Patterned Laminates

Here's the Skinny:

Directional & non-repeating patterned laminates are all the rage. True. But, they require extra explanation to your homeowner - so they know what to expect at the seams, end caps, end splashes and back splashes – or anywhere laminate is married to laminate. Get the full scoop below for greater explanation.

More on All the Rage!

...Laminates of today are no longer like your Grandmother's. Unless, you really want to go retro – and then, the possibilities with laminate can be, well, retro!

Laminate manufacturing leaders like Formica and Wilsonart, have invested heavily in research and development of granite and stone simulated laminates – creating options for the natural, upscale look, at just a fraction of the price of the real thing. They have also created many unique and trendy laminates offering directional patterns for achieving a rich and/or contemporary look for a kitchen or bath. Some include the look of particulates, shapes or even wood grain.

Here are some samples of directional laminates:



Laminate is made of layers and layers of paper and resin. Large sub-straights – or wooden boards are cut to the right size for the job - either through a post form or custom process. Laminate sheets are cured with heat and then adhered to a sub-straight boards. It's a great marriage!

Sometimes homeowners are surprised with the final reveal of a countertop they've chosen that simulates granite/stone, non-repeating patterned laminates, or one that offers some kind of a directional pattern.



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For example, if a countertop is L-shaped, there will be a seam connecting at the joint of those two pieces (often known as the mitre or butt joint). It's inevitable.

With non-repeating and/or directional patterns in any laminate, the patterns do not "line up" or continue a "flow" like some consumers envision. If you think about it, cutting into a piece of granite or wood and creating a joint for an L-shaped countertop will not offer a continuous flow either. A homeowner may be surprised too, that although accessories such as end splashes, end-caps and backsplashes are cut from the same laminate patterns, most often they do not continue the "flow" from the countertop either.

The natural jogging of pattern's flow that occurs when using laminate doesn't mean that a countertop was not crafted properly or that it is sub-standard. It's just something to be mindful of as you achieve that unique look for your customer and help them appreciate the process behind their new countertop and these beautiful non-repeating or directionally-patterned choices.