

Installation Guide for Pre-Assembled PlasDECK Panels



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Before you start this project;

1. Remove all of the PlasDECK panels from the shipping container and lay them on a flat surface in a warm (over 65°F) environment for at least 24 hours prior to installation. Laying them flat in the sun for a few hours works great as well. This will allow the material to “relax” and lay flat and smooth after being rolled for shipment. Do NOT attempt to unroll material that is cold and stiff as you can damage the panel. Allow cold panels to warm and become flexible before attempting to unroll.
2. Allow adhesives to warm to at least 65°F prior to use
3. Plan your installation for a window of at least 60°F over 24-48 hours. Cold overnight temperatures can cause the material to move slightly before the adhesive has properly cured and cause misalignment of adjacent panels.
4. Wash your boat’s deck using a good quality boat soap and brush, then rinse well and let dry completely.
5. Keep in mind that we are always available to answer any questions or concerns you may encounter during the installation. During nights and weekends we forward our office phones to someone’s cell phone that can answer your questions. Do not hesitate to give us a call at **(888) 225-1074**.

Tools and Materials you will need to complete this project;

- Denatured Alcohol- Do not use Acetone or MEK near any PlasDECK product! Denatured Alcohol is safe for use on most boat surfaces including vinyl upholstery. It cleans up the adhesive we use really well and is safe enough to use without gloves but it will dry out your hands.
- Lots of rags
- A hand held flooring roller. Available from us or at Lowe’s/ Home Depot for under \$40



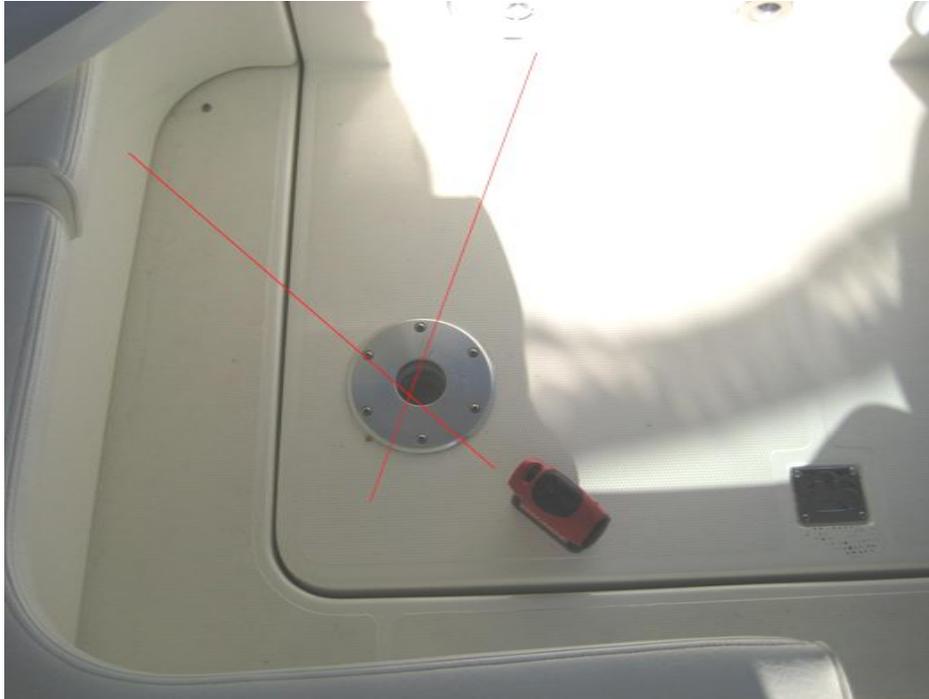
In a pinch, a rolling pin from your kitchen will work for smaller projects.

- Pencil
- Chisel or Scraper for removing old sealants around hardware
- Utility knife and blades
- 40 or 50 Grit Sand paper
- Roll (or more) of blue painters tape. We recommend 3M # 2090 in 1” or ¾” width
- Fiberglass/ Body Filler and spreaders (See Below)
- 1/8” V-Notch Adhesive Spreader (Included with kit)
- 5 Gallon Bucket or Empty box to use for trash, used rags and used adhesive spreaders
- Appropriate tools to remove any hardware as needed. Drill, screwdrivers, laser, straightedge etc. (see below)
- Nitrile or Latex gloves and knee pads are optional depending on your desired level of cleanliness and comfort.
- Clothing that you won’t mind having ruined

Start by laying out all of the panels on the boat and make sure all sections that you ordered are present and fit correctly. Please notify us immediately of any missing or ill fitting parts at **(888) 225-1074**.

Preparing the Deck

1. Remove carpet snaps and any hardware that will be re-mounted over the top of your new decking like table bases, cleats, etc. For hardware that is through bolted you will be able to drill through the new decking from below the fiberglass once the decking is installed. Make sure you check for proper clearance under the deck to accomplish this. For hardware that is not through bolted you will have to make reference marks to find the correct alignment after the deck is installed. Here's how we do it;
 - Use a straight edge or a laser to draw TWO reference lines across the hardware to the nearest vertical surface. Use a pencil to mark the lines across the top of the hardware piece and a few inches above the deck on the vertical surface.



Be careful not to remove these marks as you clean the deck or wipe them off the hardware as you handle it! It helps to lay some tape across the hardware piece and the vertical surface and mark your lines on the tape. It also helps to mark the orientation of the hardware piece. We use a "B" to signify the edge facing the bow of the boat.

- Remove the hardware and use a chisel or scraper to remove as much of the adhesive/ sealant as possible from the deck and the underside of the hardware piece. Be careful not to wipe off your reference marks!
2. Fill any deep gaps between the non-skid sections to bring them level and flush with the rest of the non-skid. Sometimes these gaps are relatively shallow and require no filling or they can simply be filled with some of the installation adhesive. For deeper gaps ($1/16''$ or more) we prefer to use good quality fiberglass or body filler. Bondo™ works fine in a cockpit and is pretty inexpensive but do not use it on a swim platform, especially a hydraulic version that completely submerges. We prefer **Formula 27 by Evercoat** for most applications. It's readily available at any chandlery including West Marine. It cures quickly and doesn't contain as much Talc as Bondo. Here's how we do it;
 - Wipe the channel with denatured alcohol to remove any wax or grease

- Scuff the channel with coarse grit sandpaper making sure not to mar the fiberglass outside of the channel itself.
- Remove dust and wash again with denatured alcohol
- Tape the ends of the channel to prevent filler from extending past the edges of the non-skid
- Follow manufacturer's direction for mixing filler. Try and keep your batches small as it usually has a pretty short working time once mixed.
- Using a flat plastic spreader, fill the channels to a height level with the non-skid and remove the tape barriers at the end of the channels before the filler is completely cured.



- After the filler has cured to manufacturer's specifications sand out any imperfections so that the surface is smooth and flush with the existing deck.
3. Once all of the hardware is removed and the gaps filled, wipe the deck thoroughly with denatured alcohol to remove any wax, oil or grease. Make sure to wipe in alternating directions in order to get between any diamond or square patterned non-skid textures. This step is crucial to proper adhesion so take your time and do a good job. Just beware that as denatured alcohol evaporates it does create some noxious fumes so keep the area well ventilated as you work
 4. Lay out the panels on the boat deck and position them so that all of the caulking lines are lined up correctly and gaps around the panels are spaced evenly. Trace the edges of the panels onto the deck using a pencil.
 5. Remove the panels from the boat and lay them face down on a flat surface. Wipe the underside of all panels with denatured alcohol to remove any debris and/or contaminants.

Installation

The actual installation process is not difficult but you want to take your time and do it correctly. The **Three Keys to Success** are;

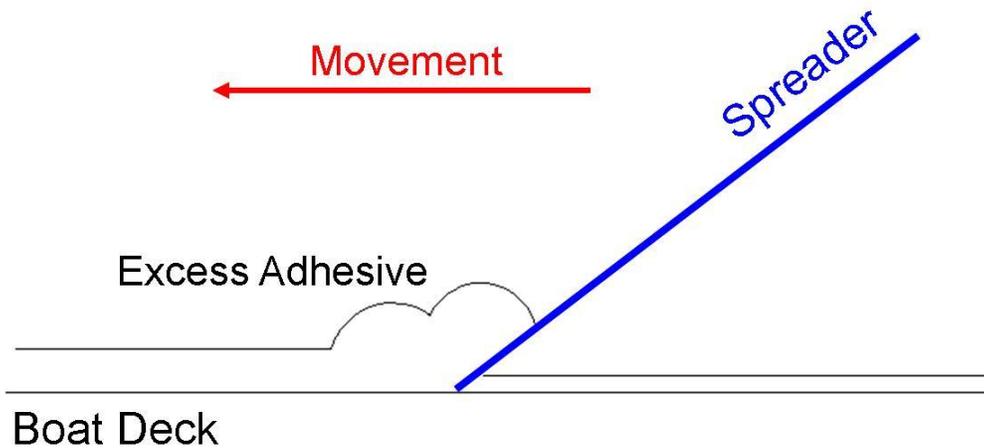
- **Do not spread too much adhesive at once.** No more than half of a sausage until you get used to how the adhesive is reacting given your weather and temperatures. Once you are comfortable with how the adhesive is behaving spread no more than one sausage at a time.
- **Less Adhesive is More!** You really just want enough adhesive to fill the small channels between the non-skid pattern (if you have them) and leave a fine film on top of the non-skid. A thick layer of adhesive does not help the material bond to the deck any better. It just wastes adhesive and makes more of a mess. As you roll out the material to remove any air bubbles, excess adhesive will squeeze out the sides and create more work at clean up. Remember PlasDECK does not have grooves on the bottom of the material. The smoother embossed surface of PlasDECK means you can get an incredibly strong bond using far less adhesive.
- **Plan your attack.** The most crucial part of a synthetic teak install is to get all of the caulking lines to align correctly from section to section and run straight from fore-to-aft. Your eye will pick up any “waviness” in the lines if you stand back a step or two. Try and start your installation with a panel that lies across the centerline of the boat. Our panels are manufactured from the centerline outward so that the teak planks are symmetrical from side to side. Starting with a panel that lies across the centerline will help you align the subsequent panels correctly. We also try and work from the bow of the boat aft so that we are working our way off the boat and not walking on any panels that are still wet.

NOTE- The adhesive used to install PlasDECK is a moisture cure polyurethane adhesive/sealant. Once the PlasDECK panels are set in the adhesive, water will NOT adversely affect the installation. However, water will ruin a project if it gets between the wet adhesive and the PlasDECK panel. If you think it will start to rain halfway through a large panel installation, do not start!

1. Make a slit in one of end of a “sausage” of adhesive with a razor blade and expel a small amount by squeezing the opposite end just as you would a tube of toothpaste. Have a plan for where you are going to set down the remaining sausage of adhesive while you work with what you have put on the deck.

NOTE- We prefer not to use the dedicated “sausage gun” for dispensing adhesive from sausage packs as we find we can work more quickly without having to stop and reload the gun. However they are available through our online store if you would prefer to use one and you can follow the manufacturer’s instructions that come with the unit. .

2. Using the 1/8” notched spreader, trowel the adhesive onto the deck working in a smooth and efficient manner. Stop spreading adhesive about 1/8” from the pencil lines you drew denoting the edge of the panel. Once you have troweled out a 5-6 sq.ft. area go back over the area with the notched spreader at a 45° angle to the deck to remove any excess adhesive. You’ll be amazed at how much adhesive you scrape up doing this! Use the excess adhesive to expand the size of the area being worked until the entire area has been gone over at a 45° angle. Make sure you fill any holes left from removal of carpet snaps with the adhesive.



3. Carefully set the PlasDECK panel in place. If you have worked efficiently spreading the adhesive you will have a few minutes to slide the panel around to position it correctly. If the panel will not slide you may have to peel it up in order to reposition. Note that panels are difficult to slide around on decks that have a sandpaper type (spray on) non-skid texture so try and be precise when laying the panel in the adhesive.
4. Larger panels are going to require that you spread the adhesive in several sections instead of all at once. Try and choose a starting point that will **A)** allow you to align the panel correctly once the first section is set in place and **B)** let you fold the remaining portion of the panel over on top of itself so that you can spread the next section of adhesive. Keep the third **Key to Success** in mind here and **Plan Your Attack** before you begin. **DO NOT** stop halfway through installing a panel. Do not answer the phone, do not go to the bathroom, do not take a smoke break and do not start chatting with your dock mate who wants to know “Whatcha doin’?” Finish the entire panel once you start.
5. After each section of adhesive is spread and the PlasDECK set in place use the flooring roller to roll out any air bubbles that may be trapped under the material. It is important to do this while the adhesive is still wet. Roll the decking with a good amount of pressure and work from edge to edge in **ONE DIRECTION ONLY**. Rolling in different directions will just move an air bubble around without pushing it to the edge. If you are working a large panel by spreading adhesive in multiple sections you need to roll out each section as you place the PlasDECK in the adhesive. Do not wait to roll out the entire panel at one time. Pay special attention to the “seam” where the area of new adhesive meets the previous section of adhesive. It’s common to get excess adhesive here that can cause a ridge in the decking if not rolled out properly.
6. Try not to walk or kneel on panels for 24 hours after installation. If you must, lay a piece of plywood down to spread the load over the surface. A point load on the panel from your bare heel or knee while the adhesive is still wet can cause a dimple in the deck that will be permanent.
7. Wipe up any adhesive that squeezes out the side using a dry rag to start and then a rag and denatured alcohol to finish the clean up. Check your work area after each panel and clean up any errant adhesive with denatured alcohol and a clean rag.

8. Occasionally we will break larger panels in two or more sections to make them more manageable during installation. In this case we will cut the panels along the edge of one of the caulking lines. Start by installing one side of the panel as described above. Use the scraper/ chisel or alcohol and rags to thoroughly remove any excess adhesive along the seam prior to installing the second side of the panel. Spread adhesive along the seam as described above and then lay the second half of the panel about a ½” away from the previous side. Slowly slide the second half to butt firmly against the first. By sliding the second half to the first it will cause some adhesive to be pushed into the seam and will seal the seam and decking together as it cures. Do not attempt to remove any adhesive that squeezed up through the seam at this time. You will have to be careful with the roller so you don't run through the wet adhesive on the top of the decking. Wait about 24 hours and you should be able to pick the excess adhesive off the seam with your fingers. Use coarse sandpaper in the direction of the grain to remove the rest. You'll now have a well sealed, watertight, invisible seam.

9. Do a final check of your work area and clean up any errant adhesive you may find spread about the boat, your face and likely a few other places you never thought adhesive could get into with a clean rag and some alcohol.

At this point you should be ready for your favorite beverage and to accept all of the admiration and applause your dock mates will be showering upon you for a job well done. **You deserve it!** There are a few more things to do but they need to wait until tomorrow.

After 24 hours your deck is fine to walk on and ready to re-install any hardware even though the adhesive won't reach full cure for 48 to 72 hours. To re-install your hardware just reverse the instructions we used to remove it. You can sink screws right through PlasDECK without pre-drilling but do not rely on PlasDECK to hold a screw on its own. Anything mounted on top of PlasDECK must be securely fastened through PlasDECK into the deck below. Note that some hardware may require longer screws to reach through the new decking.



Now is also a good time to consider replacing or upgrading any hardware. We especially like updating old plastic inspection ports. Most boats come from the factory with white inspection ports to match the white gelcoat of the boat. If you are using PlasDECK with black caulking lines consider replacing these ports with a black or stainless steel version.



Be sure to use only a small amount of sealant to re-mount any hardware as you don't want any squeezing out on to your new PlasDECK and creating a mess. Besides, PlasDECK acts like a ¼" thick flexible gasket around everything so water intrusion is not really an issue. Use your best judgment on when and where to use additional sealant.

Finish Trim

If you would like to add another level of elegance consider trimming your panels with corresponding color caulk. It really finishes off the project nicely but it does require some time, patience and a steady hand. See our guide for **Successful Trim Caulking** available for download on our website.



Care and Maintenance of your new PlasDECK

Because PlasDECK is a plastic product, it doesn't require any of the maintenance demanded by teak and it's easy to clean. You never need to apply any protectants, oils, or other products to preserve the finish. Fish blood, food, drinks, and dirt are easily washed away. The manufacturer confidently warrants PlasDECK for 5 years and we warrant the welded seams for life.

Here are some helpful hints for the care and cleaning of PlasDECK:

Power Wash It! A small household power-washer (around 1500 psi) works well to lift debris from the textured surface of PlasDECK.

Soap! Soaps such as boat wash or Simple Green™ can be used to help release the dirt. Food spills, especially oily foods, should be cleaned with a safe degreaser such as dish detergent or Marine Clean™.

Because PlasDECK is a PVC, it is susceptible to oil, gas, diesel, and acetone. If this type of spill occurs, clean immediately and thoroughly with a soapy detergent such as dish soap, boat wash, or Simple Green™.

Brush! A nylon brush is often helpful to release stubborn debris from the surface. If desired, a short bristled wire brush can be used on wet decking with soap and water to help loosen particles. **IMPORTANT:** If you use a wire brush, always move the brush in the direction of the grains in the PlasDECK.

Sanding! For bad scuffs, small cigarette burns, or really stubborn stains that have been left to dry, lightly sand the area with 40 grit sandpaper. Also, if an area is worn smooth for some reason, the texture can be restored by lightly sanding. Make sure you sand in the direction of the grain with short strokes. Use a heat gun or let the sun heat your deck over time to blend tones on any areas that have been lightened during the sanding process. Don't use a power sander on your PlasDECK! It will warp the 'grain' that lends to PlasDECK's teak appearance.

Patch it! A patch can be used to repair any serious damage to the deck. Call us for more information at (888) 225-1074

DON'T bother wearing black-soled shoes on PlasDECK. Black shoes may leave scuffs on any decking surface. Wear boat shoes or no shoes. With PlasDECK's non-skid surface you won't have to worry about the surface being slippery when wet.

DON'T put oil, varnish, paint, sealers or lacquers on your PlasDECK! Isn't that why you chose PlasDECK instead of teak? The PlasDECK doesn't need protectants and doesn't require this maintenance.

OUCH! As with any deck, including teak, don't place hot metals or other hot objects on PlasDECK.

You will find that with a minimum effort your deck will retain its classic look for many years to come.

All of us here at TT Custom Marine, Inc. thank you for the opportunity to earn your business. We'd love to see some pics of your new deck and we're always anxious to hear how the project went and any feedback you care to share. Thank you again and Happy Boating!!