

## Installing “All Natural Thin Veneer”

### All Natural Thin Veneer from: Rock-It Natural Stone **1 (800) 371-4219**

Flat and corner pieces are used for most installations. Flats are applied to the flat wall surface and ordered in square feet. Corners are applied to outside corners and are ordered in linear feet. Using corners around window and door openings provides added dimension, depth and enhances the finished design - making it difficult to know if the project is full thickness or thin veneer stone when completed.

#### **Preparing the Surface**

##### ***Over sheetrock, wallboard, paneling, plywood, other rigid wood-related sheathing or rigid insulation board***

Cover the wall surface with a weather-resistive barrier. The barrier shall be equal to that provided for in the U.B.C. Standard No. 14-1 for kraft waterproof building paper of asphalt-saturated rag felt. The building paper or felt shall be applied horizontally with the upper layer lapped over the lower layer not less than 2 inches. Where vertical joints occur, the felt or paper shall be lapped not less than 6 inches.

**Note:**

Do not attempt to apply “thin stone” directly to a surface such as sheetrock. Any surface that you apply “thin stone” to must be capable of supporting the weight of your product and of the masonry materials used. Sheetrock, wallboard and other similar materials, while being structurally sound building products, are too flexible for direct installation. You will need to cover these weaker surfaces with plywood or other approved sturdy backing materials.

Next, install 2.5 lb. (or heavier) diamond mesh expanded metal lath.

**Note:**

Lath is directional. It has a top and bottom side. Use galvanized lath for exterior applications. Black metal lath (non-galvanized) may be used for interior applications.

Overlap lath sides by not less than a ½” and lath ends by not less than 1”. Attach the lath using galvanized nails or staples every 6” on center vertically, and every 16” on center horizontally, penetrating the studs a minimum of 1”. Again, be sure to attach the metal lath with the small cups pointing upwards. Double wrap metal lath a minimum of 16” around all inside and outside corners. Then apply a ½” thick scratch coat of mortar over the metal lath, and allow it to set. Mortar can either be type N or S.

## Preparing the Surface (con't)

### ***Over most clean unpainted, unsealed, untreated brick, block, concrete or other masonry surfaces***

Surface preparation may not be necessary over cast-in-place concrete that has cured. This surface can be roughed or lath can be applied. Keep in mind that applying an uncured masonry adhesive to a cured surface can pose problems. It may be necessary to rough the surface (sandblast, scuff, etc.) or apply lath.

### ***Over painted, sealed or treated brick, block, concrete or other masonry Surfaces:***

The surface must either (a) be cleaned back to the original surface by sandblasting, water blasting, acid etching or wire brushing, or (b) have metal lath attached using corrosion-resistant concrete nails with a scratch coat applied over the metal lath.

## Thin Stone Veneer Installation Recommendations

### Applying the Stone

#### ***Setting the stone***

Using a mason's trowel, apply approx. ½" thick even layer of mortar to the entire back side of the stone. Then press the stone firmly into place on the prepared wall surface, squeezing the mortar out around all edges. Using a gentle wiggling action or tapping of stone will ensure a good bond. For jointless/dry-stacked installations, it's important when setting the stone that the edges of the stone are properly sealed with mortar to ensure satisfactory bond.

If the stone is being installed onto a very dry surface or in a hot/dry climate, the wall surface should be wet to prevent excessive absorption of moisture from the mortar. This can be done by spraying or brushing water onto the wall surface. The wall surface should be allowed to dry for a few minutes after wetting to eliminate excess surface water.

#### ***Grouting the joints***

After the stone has been applied to the wall surface, use a grout bag to fill the joints with mortar, forcing grout into any voids. Any mortar that accidentally gets on the stone should be allowed to set until dry and crumbly, and then brushed off with a dry whisk broom.

#### ***The "Dry stack look"***

We recommend grouting to fill noticeable voids and to conceal cut or broken stone edges. Use approx. ½ the amount of grout as for the "jointed look". The "dry stack" appearance will result from deep striking of the joints. When dry stacking "natural thin stone" consider using thinset. This product will **maximize the mechanical bond**.

#### ***Finishing the joints***

When the mortar joints become firm (normally 30-60 minutes), use a wooden or metal striking tool to rake out the excess mortar to the desired depth while at the same time

## Applying the Stone (con't)

forcing the mortar into the joints so as to thoroughly seal the stone edges. Be careful not to work the joints too soon or the mortar will smear.

After working the joints, use a whisk broom to smooth the joints and clean away any loose mortar from the joints and stone face. Loose mortar and mortar spots which have set for only a few hours clean up easily and should never be allowed to set up overnight.

At this point, it is necessary to recognize the fact that a 3/8" masonry joint represents up to 18% of what the eye sees after completion. If you appreciate the stone selection and want to focus on the natural beauty of "all natural thin stone" we recommend narrow grout joints that are raked or recessed back. This will allow the stone to stand out with its natural beauty.

Note:

It is important to divert water run-off away from stone surfaces by using gutters and flashing. Water run-off combined with severe freeze/thaw conditions can result in damage. Stone should not be used below water level. Do not install while temperatures are below 40° Fahrenheit. Provide supplemental heat if necessary to ensure a minimum temperature of 40° Fahrenheit between installation and mortar drying for approx. 24 hours.

## Preparing the Mortar

**\*\* Rock-It Natural Stone *strongly* recommends the use of a bonding agent in the setting mortar where stone is in precarious positions.**

Mortar should be mixed to a workable consistency.

### Recommended setting mortar:

#### **1. Bonding agent mix**

3 parts type S masonry cement  
7 parts masonry sand and water  
Bonding agent

#### **2. Mortar mix without bonding agent**

Use type N or type S mortar mix as follows:

##### **If you Mix type N mortar -**

2 parts type N masonry cement  
3 to 5 parts masonry sand and water  
- OR -  
1 part Portland cement  
1 part Lime  
3 to 5 parts masonry sand and water

## **Preparing the Mortar (con't)**

### **If you Mix type S mortar -**

- 3 parts type S masonry cement
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- OR -
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- 1 part Lime
- 5 to 7 parts masonry sand and water

### **IMPORTANT:**

Each pallet of “natural thin stone” contains the colors, shapes and stone sizes required to duplicate the stone selection you have chosen. It is always in the best interest to randomly select stone from different pallets during installation. This insures all colors of stone are distributed evenly.

**\*\* Rock-It Natural Stone *always* recommends that you comply with manufacturers directions while using their products and that you comply with all building codes in your community.**

**\*\* We at Rock-It Natural Stone do not claim to be professional masonry instructors. We make suggestions based upon successful installations across the country.**

**\*\* Rock-It Natural Stone accepts no responsibility for poor installation or unusual conditions where any thin stone is applied. These installation techniques are suggestions that tend to work with great success in the field.**