



## Syn-Mar Shower Kit Installation Instructions

**WARNING: It is imperative you follow the instructions in this manual. Damage caused by improper handling, storage, or installation procedures will void the product warranty.**

### Inspecting your Shower Walls:

Visually inspect your shower walls immediately to ensure they are the correct size, color, and damage free. This is a gravity cast product that expands and contracts during the cure time. Therefore, all lengths and widths maintain a ¼" tolerance and wall panel thickness maintain a 1/8" tolerance.

### Storing your Shower Walls:

It is important to store your shower walls appropriately to avoid severely warped wall panels. See two storage options below to mitigate severe warping of your shower wall panels. Warped walls? Warping is still possible under many conditions such as extreme cold, extreme heat, humidity, and prolonged storage. No worries – If your walls do warp, it is possible to get them flat again.

Standing Up – To store your walls standing up, **keep them in the crate**, leaning them up against a sturdy surface in a cool, dry area, making sure they are out of harm's way.

Laying Down (Best Method) – To store your walls laying down, **you MUST first remove the walls from the crate**. Once removed, lay them flat on a cool, dry, clean, level surface, making sure they are out of harm's way. It is okay to stack panels if they do not overhang each other. You can avoid overhanging panels by starting with the largest panel on the bottom or propping up the overhanging area with cardboard.

### Fixing Warped Walls -

Even if you follow our best practices, it is possible for panels to warp under many conditions such as extreme cold, extreme heat, humidity, and prolonged storage. Fixing warped panels is simple but may take 24-72 hours depending on the severity of the warp. Lay individual wall panels flat on a dry, clean, level surface, making sure they are out of harm's way. Apply 50-100 lbs. of weight to the affected areas, doing your best to ensure all areas of the panel are in contact with the level surface it is laying on. Applying indirect heat to the panel will quicken this process. **Note: We recommend bringing all panels to room temperature 24 hours prior to installation.**

### Tools and Materials Needed:

- 2 people.
- Silicone Adhesive.
  - For the best results, use GE Waterproof 100% Silicone #1 Clear (available from Syn-Mar).
  - You will need one tube of adhesive (10.1 oz.) per every 1,000 square inches of wall.
- 1 Tube of translucent or white silicone sealant for visible seams.
  - For the best results, use Nexo Flex ACS-850 (available from Syn-Mar).

- 1 Tube of paintable caulk for the exterior edges of the shower where the Syn-Mar walls meet the sheetrock.
  - For the best results, use DAP Dynaflex 230 – White (available from Syn-Mar).
- Circular saw with either a diamond blade or carbide blade (diamond preferred).
- Belt sander, radial palm sander or grinding wheel with course grit sandpaper.
- Jig Saw with course tooth blade suitable for wood or hard plastics.
- Drill with a ¼” or larger drill bit.
- Hot glue gun.
- Sanding block with course grit sandpaper.
- 1¼” hole saw for shower head hole (if applicable).
- Tape Measure.
- Level.
- Masking Tape.
- Caulking Gun.
- Denatured Alcohol or Acetone.
- Pencil or marking tool.

### **Demolition:**

Completely remove old/existing tub, walls, and base along with any obstructions and unnecessary materials. If the tub or shower base is being reused, clean thoroughly and remove old caulking. Install 2x4 blocking when necessary for Syn-Mar molded corner seat or any grab bars.

### **Unpacking:**

Carefully remove one long side from the crate. If you are leaving the walls in the crate for storage, visually inspect all walls as best as possible.

Carefully lift the shower walls from the crate, one at a time, and confirm they are the correct size, color, finish, and damage free. It may be helpful to leave protective plastic on the face of the panels to prevent scratching during storage and installation.

Once removed from the crate, lay the walls down flat on a cool, dry, clean, level surface to prevent warping, making sure they are out of harm’s way. If a panel has warped, see instructions above for fixing a warp. **Note: We recommend bringing all panels to room temperature at least 24 hours prior to installation.**

### **Installation Order:**

First, install your Syn-Mar ceiling panel if applicable. Then, install your Syn-Mar shower base if applicable. Once your base or tub is installed, you will install your wallboard to a paint-ready finish (All Onyx and Cararra series Syn-Mar colors require 2-3 coats of primer on the wallboard). Next, install your Syn-Mar back wall, followed by your Syn-Mar side walls. Lastly, you will install any accessories, trim, and your finish caulking (DOWSIL).

### **Shower Base Installation:**

Our shower bases are equipped with a water dam (flange) around the outside edges. This base must be installed with the water dams directly against the wall studs. It is important to install your shower base before you apply the wallboard to the wall studs.

1. Test-fit the shower base to ensure drain location and proper fit before applying thin-set mortar.
2. Remove the base and attach your compression drain to the shower base as instructed (compatible 4Pro brass shower drains available from Syn-Mar).
3. Apply a level layer of thin-set mortar into the entire shower base cavity.
4. Using a ¼" trowel, spread the thin set out to a level surface. Do NOT shim one side only.
5. Carefully place the shower base onto the thin-set and apply body weight to set in place, making sure that the base is level.
6. Allow 24 hours for thin set to dry.

### Prepping the Studs:

1. For ceiling panel, use ½" plywood instead of sheetrock as panel will bond better and will allow screws to fasten the panel to the ceiling.
2. Additional steps are required prior to installing your wallboard if you are installing a left, right, or corner bench seat – further information to follow.
3. For back and side walls, apply ½" moisture resistant sheet rock, cement board, green board or any similar wallboard material to the wall studs. Do **not** complete this step until your shower base is installed.
4. We recommend prepping the wall board to a paint-ready finish to ensure level surfaces and proper bonding for the silicone.
5. **For any Onyx and Cararra Series colors, apply two or three coats of white primer. Onyx and Cararra Series wall panels are translucent and will show any shadows, gaps, nicks, or colored wall board if not coated in white primer.**
6. Leave ¼" gap between the top of the water dams (flanges) and the bottom of the cement board.
7. Make sure that the wallboard is slightly thicker than the water dam so the shower wall can ride past the water dam, directly to the shower base without obstruction.
8. Making note of studs, cut holes in your wallboard for the necessary recessed accessories (cut out dimensions provided by Syn-Mar).
9. **For frameless shower doors:** Make sure to have the necessary framing perpendicular to the shower threshold if you plan on installing a glass shower door. Tip: Frame your shower entry point with a 2x6 board to ensure plenty of room for a frameless glass shower door to be installed.

### Cutting the Shower Panels:

For cutting the panels, we recommend carbide blades or diamond blades (preferred) for finish carpentry. After every cut, we recommend knocking down the sharp edges on the top and bottom of the panel with a sanding block and course grit sandpaper. This will reduce the likelihood of chipping and improve the durability of the material during handling.

**\*\*All cut-outs for notches for recessed accessories must have rounded corners to avoid stress cracks.\*\*** Rounded corners must be made by drilling ¼" or larger holes at the corners of the openings

and then using a jigsaw or circular saw to cut between the holes. **Failure to follow this procedure will void the product warranty.**

Be careful to make cuts from the unfinished edges of the panels only. Keep the smooth, rounded edges (finished edges) in good condition as these will be the visible edges once panels are installed.

To avoid scratching the panels, use the plastic wrap or cardboard as a buffer between the panels and your tools OR make your cuts from the back side of the panels.

### **Ceiling Panel:**

1. Once plywood is installed, measure the length of the back wall.
2. Measure depth from the inside of the shower to your preferred end location of the ceiling panel.
3. Mark and cut panel to the required measurements (be sure to cut the panel on the unfinished edge that will go into the corner).
4. Test-fit the panel to ensure a tight fit against all walls.
5. If there are gaps, scribe the panel with your 100-grit sandpaper until the proper fit is achieved.
6. Repeat steps 4 and 5 until there are no or limited gaps (if you are using corner trim or top trim, the gaps can be larger because they will be covered).
7. Remove ceiling panel and measure for light fixture location if applicable.
8. Mark these positions and cut a hole with a jigsaw, being sure to keep all inside corners round.
9. Test-fit the panel to ensure proper fit.
10. Drill 2-4 pilot holes into your panel for your stainless-steel screws. 2 screws, one on each side is usually substantial. Consider using 3 or 4 screws for very large ceilings.
11. Note: the ceiling panel is the only panel that needs to be attached with screws. This is to provide extra holding strength while the silicone sets.
12. Once the panel has a proper fit and pilot holes are drilled, clean the back of the panel with denatured alcohol or acetone to ensure a clean surface.
13. Apply a perimeter of 100% silicone (clear) around the backside of the panel about 2" in from the edge. Then apply evenly spaced golf ball sized dabs, approximately 6-8" apart across the entire panel.
14. Firmly hold panel into position while your partner fastens your stainless-steel screws.
15. Consider purchasing screw caps to hide the screws in your ceiling panel from your local hardware store.
  - a. **Tip: Strategically place screws underneath or behind lighting/fan flange to hide them from sight.**

### **Back/Side Walls:**

1. The back wall goes in first!
2. Measure the length and height needed for your walls, starting with the back wall.
3. Mark a line on the panel to make your cut. Cut the panel using a circular saw being careful not to scratch the surface of the panel.

4. Test-fit the panel and ensure there are no large gaps on the floor, sides, or ceiling. For the back wall, 1/8" clearance on each side will allow for expansion. This clearance will be covered by the side panels. Scribe the panel with your 100-grit belt sander until a proper fit is achieved.
5. Repeat steps 3 and 4 until there are no or limited gaps (if you are using corner trim or top trim, the gaps can be larger because they will be covered).
6. Remove the wall and measure for desired recessed accessory location, diverter holes, etc. and mark the four corners. Make sure accessory location will not conflict with wall studs.
7. Using 1/4" or larger drill bit, drill the four corners.
8. Use the jig saw to cut out your accessory or diverter hole.
9. Once the panel has a proper fit and accessory cut-outs are made, clean the back of the panel with denatured alcohol or acetone to ensure a clean surface.
10. Apply a perimeter of 100% silicone (clear) around the back side of the panel about 1" in from the edge. Then apply evenly spaced golf ball sized dabs, approximately 6-8" apart across the entire panel.
11. Firmly press panel into position, making sure all areas contact the wall. The panel should be secured to the wall without needing support if you have used 100% Silicone 1.
12. The use of braces is recommended for extra-large wall panels, warped walls, or other unique circumstances that may be present on the jobsite.
13. Repeat steps 2-10 for each side wall.

**Custom Style Shower Base:** When using a custom style shower base, you will have to notch the side walls around the shower base threshold. When notching side walls around the shower base, be sure to round the inside corners of the notch by using a 1/4" or larger drill bit.

**Steam Shower:** Steam showers require the use of a 3/4" thick escutcheon plate surrounding the steam head (color matched options provided by Syn-Mar). Failure to use an escutcheon plate will void the product warranty.

**Subway Tile:** For all subway tile wall panels, Syn-Mar includes optional white schluter trim for all exterior finished edges. Cut the schluter trim to the correct length and install with lip under the wall with bead of silicone.

- Lining up grout lines – When installing subway tile wall panels, make sure to line up your grout lines at eye level.

### **Left, Right, and Corner Bench Seat Installation:**

Left and right bench seat shower kits include a shower base that is shorter than the overall length of the shower, equivalent to the size of the bench. This is because the bench seat will need to be framed using 2x4 construction outside of the shower base itself. For bench seat installation, repeat the above steps to install the shower base. Prior to installing your wall board, frame out the appropriately sized bench for your bench seat using 2x4 construction. Once framed, install your wallboard, Syn-Mar back wall, and side wall across from your bench seat. For the bench wall you will cut your interior bench face out of the side wall to the desired height of your bench seat. Repeat the necessary steps from above to install your interior bench face, your 3/4" thick bench top, the remainder of the side wall, as well as the exterior bench face in that order. **For corner bench seat installation, follow the same procedure as above, but install your 2x4 bench seat in the open area in the corner of the shower base.**

## Recessed Accessory Installation:

Note: Holes for recessed accessories may be cut into the sheet rock and the wall panel before the wall panel is installed. Make sure accessories will not conflict with wall studs.

1. Test-fit recessed accessory. Additional scribing may be necessary on the shower wall or the accessory itself to insert without gaps.
2. Apply a generous bead of 100% silicone (clear) to the lip on the back side of the accessory.
3. Before inserting, apply a few dabs of hot glue to the lip on the back side of the accessory to secure the accessory while the silicone sets.
4. Quickly, before the hot glue hardens, press accessory into its hole and use a level to ensure linearity.

## Soap and Shampoo Corner Installation:

1. Determine preferred height of the top of the accessory (this is where you will mount the bracket that the accessory will hang from).
2. Starting with 1/8", drill your pilot hole through the corner of the wall panels where you want the bracket to sit.
3. Widen the 1/8" hole to a 1/4" hole.
4. Drill a pilot hole into the center of the provided bracket, making sure that it lines up with the pilot in the walls.
5. Use your 2 1/2" stainless steel screw (provided) to secure the bracket into the corner of the walls.
6. Pre-fit the soap and shampoo corner by hanging it on the bracket to verify good fit and alignment.
7. You may have to scribe the back sides of the accessory to ensure a tight fit.
8. Apply a bead of silicone to the back of the shower caddy and along all surfaces that will touch a wall.
9. Before hanging the accessory, apply a dab of hot glue to the top of the bracket.
10. Quickly hang the accessory on the bracket and gently slide it evenly into the corner against the two walls.
11. Press it into place with uniform pressure hard enough to ensure a good seal all around.

## Corner Molded Seat Installation:

This seat is installed in the corner of a finished shower. The proper 2x4 blocks must be installed behind the cement board prior to installation of the shower walls.

1. Test-fit the corner seat to verify good fit and alignment with wall studs or blocks.
2. You may have to scribe the back sides of the corner seat to ensure proper fit.
3. Drill one pilot hole underneath each side of the seat.
4. Drill one pilot hole in each wall, making sure to align the pilot holes that you have already drilled in the seat.
5. Apply 100% silicone (clear) to the back side of the seat and gently slide into place with the holes aligned.
6. Screw stainless steel lag bolts with rubber washers (provided) into the wood blocks or studs. Do NOT use wallboard anchors.

7. Tighten bolts until snug. Do not overtighten, causing all of the silicone to ooze out.

### **Corner Shelf:**

Corner shelves are installed in the corner of a finished shower. There is no drilling or hardware required.

1. Determine the desired height for the corner shelf.
2. Test fit the corner shelf to verify good fit.
3. You may have to scribe the back sides of the corner shelf to ensure proper fit.
4. Test fit your shelf brackets (provided) to verify good fit.
5. Once desired fit is achieved, apply a generous bead of silicone to the back side of the brackets alongside a few dabs of hot glue to secure the brackets while the silicone sets up.
6. Firmly press the shelf brackets into place.
7. After allowing some time for the silicone to dry, apply silicone to the tops of the brackets and firmly set the shelves into place.

Note: For a cleaner look, execute steps 5-7 without the brackets to install the shelves flush with the wall, eliminating the need for the mounting brackets.

### **Foot Caddy:**

Foot caddies are installed in the corner of a finished shower. There is no drilling or hardware required. Foot caddies consist of one corner shelf and two pieces of  $\frac{3}{4}$ " flat stock (18" x 8").

1. Test-fit each piece of  $\frac{3}{4}$ " flat-stock against adjacent walls.
2. Once proper fit is achieved, apply silicone to the back side of the  $\frac{3}{4}$ " flat-stock and firmly press onto the wall.
3. Test-fit corner shelf on top of  $\frac{3}{4}$ " flat-stock to verify good fit. You may have to scribe the back side of the shelf to achieve desired fit.
4. After allowing some time for the silicone to dry, apply silicone to the tops of the  $\frac{3}{4}$ " flat-stock and firmly set the shelf into place.

### **Trim:**

Measure your corner trim, top trim, or batten strip, cut your material to the size needed and test fit. Clean the backside of the trim piece with denatured alcohol or acetone. Apply a healthy dose of silicone to the back side of the trim and press firmly in place.

### **Seam Fill:**

Use your translucent white, DOWSIL tub, tile, and ceramic silicone; apply a consistent bead to all visible seams between walls, the shower base/tub, accessories and trim. Using your finger, apply consistent pressure to smooth out the bead of silicone. Wipe away any excess silicone using a paper towel and denatured alcohol or acetone.

### **Cleaning/Care:**

You can use virtually any NON-ABRASIVE liquid household cleaner such as Scrubbing Bubbles, Windex, Lysol, Bleach, ETC. For heavy cleaning, use a soft bristled brush. DO NOT use anything abrasive such as Soft Scrub, Brillo pads, Comet, or Magic Eraser.