

## **FAQ #7**

### **I Have Questions about Installing the Finish Baseboard**

The timing of the installation of the finished baseboard is a matter for the general contractor or project manager to decide based on all of the factors unique to the job and the type of base being installed. Generally, the finish floor would be installed first, and then the base. But since there are many combinations of materials possible for both the base and the floor, and there are times when the reverse order is more practical (and economical). Let's look at some possible scenarios:

#### **Hardwood Floor with Hardwood Base**

This is a standard case, just like conventional base. The best results will be obtained if the hardwood floor is sanded, and 1 or 2 coats of finish are put on the floor before the wood base is installed. After the base is in, it can be filled and finished and the floor can receive its final coat(s). **See Figure 1**

#### **Hardwood Floor with Metal, Laminate or Other Prefinished Base**

This is very similar to the scenario above. Most of the heavy floor sanding and finishing should be done prior to the base install to minimize possible damage to the finished base. Follow with the final floor finish coat. **See Figure 1**

#### **Tile or Stone Floor with Tile or Stone Base**

This is a standard case, just like conventional base. Set the floor and then install the base. **See Figure 1**

##### **Exception:**

If the floor is a heavily clefted stone or a very pillowy tile, it is more economical to install the base first. This avoids the labor cost of scribing the base to the uneven floor. Base first then floor, being *Careful* to cut floor material uniformly along the base. *Protect the base during the floor install !!* **See Figure 2**

#### **Tile or Stone Floor with Metal, Laminate or Other Prefinished Base**

This is a standard case, just like conventional base. Floor then base. **See Figure 1**

##### **Exception:**

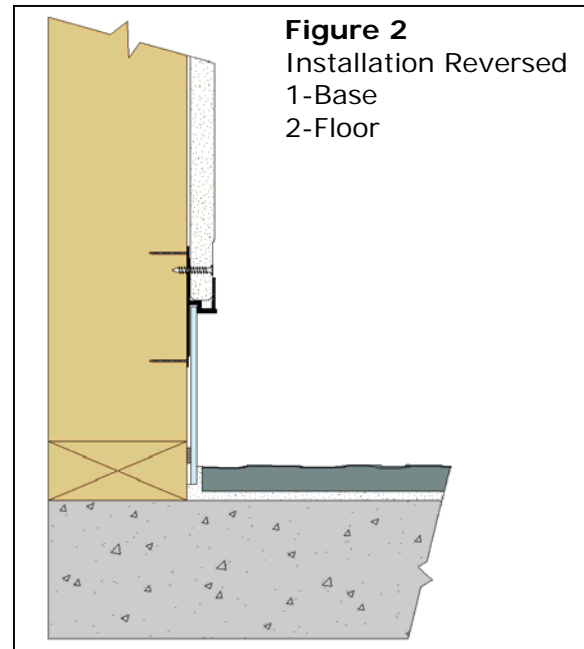
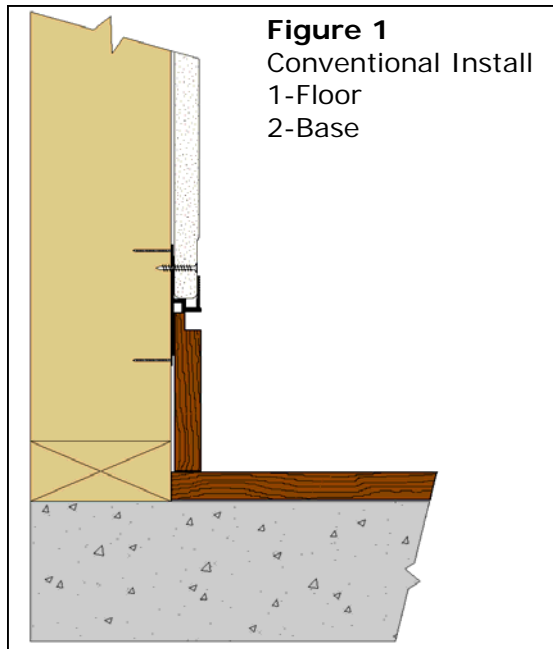
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#### **Other Unique Materials for Base or Floor**

Analyze what procedure and order of construction will produce the best results. The two most important considerations are:

- 1) The possible damage that the installation of one material will have relative to the other.
- 2) The labor economics of the installation. You want to avoid a situations where very skilled (and costly) tradespersons would have to scribe one material to the other.

Do a mockup for review. Go with the best solution using skilled personnel.



### How is the finished base installed?

This should be decided by the general contractor or project manager using their experience and knowledge. The common base materials such as wood and tile or stone can be installed in almost the same fashion as they would be if the base were a conventional type. See the sample details for examples.

### Non-Conventional Base Materials:

We have tested many scenarios using some of the more exotic base materials and can share what we have learned. Exotic base materials can be virtually anything from metal (with any finish) plastics, glass, composites, fiber optic lighting or combinations of any of these. It is possible to describe what should be the principles of a good installation. The choice of the mounting system be it fasteners or adhesives is critical to the quality and longevity of the installation as well as the aesthetics of the finished product. It is essential that the details, procedures and adhesives be chosen based on thorough research and consultation. There is good information available from the manufacturers of not only the adhesives, but also, in the case of radical materials, the manufacturers of the materials themselves. Test the products first. See what works best in terms of productivity, strength, quality and durability.

### An example:

We wanted to install a satin anodized aluminum base over a bamboo floor. For this the aluminum was laid up on  $\frac{1}{4}$ " birch and then glued to the UMB and the framing using 30 second hot melt glue for initial grab and heavy lines of polyurethane to give the assembly long term durability. Testing had shown that the hot melt glue could lose its bond over time, but the polyurethane required a great deal of effort to remove. If we had used just the polyurethane, a massive amount of labor would have been wasted in holding the base in place during the adhesive set time (24-48 hours) with sticks, blocks and tape, since fasteners were not an option.

So, New Materials---New Methods!!