



Installation Guidelines for Non-Combustible Balmer Gypsum Mantels

Tools and Materials Required:

1. Power Drill
2. Shims to level components
3. 2"x 4" x 48" wood blocking to support larger mantel shelves
4. Measuring Tape
5. Fine-tooth hand saw
6. Bracing material
7. Level
8. Screws to attach the wood blocking
9. High-strength non-water-based construction adhesive
10. 3"-long wood screws

Balmer Gypsum Mantel material meets the requirements for non-combustibility when tested in accordance to ASTM E-136.

Please refer to the respective Balmer Mantel Fact Sheet accessible from our website at www.balmer.com for component dimensions.

Overview

Components for a typical installation may include: Balmer Gypsum Mantel surround components (legs and shelf), non-combustible surround filler panels (header and legs) and a hearth.

Handle products with care to avoid damage to ornamental surfaces and fracturing of components. Avoid unnecessary contact of exposed faces of components with objects that may scratch or scuff surfaces. Carry components on edge and store in original packaging at room temperature.

Mantel components are ideally applied to solid, stable, flat and level substrates such as plaster or drywall. Wood surfaces are typically not stable and may cause cracks in components or filled joints.

Important: Layout and dry fitting of entire mantel is recommended before any adhesive is applied.

Components may be secured using a high-strength non-water-based construction adhesive that is suitable for plaster or masonry material and potentially high temperature application.

Use bracing to secure components tight to the wall until the adhesive sets. Avoid adhesive on exposed component surfaces. Use a finishing nail or a small piece of plastic (shaped like a 'V') to remove excess adhesive at joints. Clean off excess adhesive immediately as required by adhesive manufacturer instructions.

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Hearth and Surround Filler Panels Installation

1. Install the hearth first, centered on the firebox opening and set tight to the wall.
2. Install surround filler panels.
Note: Balmer Gypsum Mantels are designed with a ¾"-wide x 1"-deep rabbet along the firebox side of the mantel components. This recessed area may:
 - a) accept marble, stone, tile, or other filler material; or
 - b) be filled-in with a non-shrinking, non-combustible, sandable wallboard compound, if the recessed area is not required.Use pencil lines to outline the inside edges of the mantel shelf and legs.
Balmer Gypsum Mantels require surround filler panels to be sized and cut to extend within the ¾"-wide rabbet along the inside edges of the mantel components.
Note: Layout and dry fit the filler panels before applying adhesive to ensure filler panels extend within the ¾" x 1" rabbet along the firebox side of the Balmer Gypsum Mantel.

Mantel Installation

1. Install mantel legs. **Note:** The mantel legs can be cut at the base to adjust the overall height of the mantel. Install so that each mantel leg overlaps its respective surround filler panel. When set in place, the level height of each mantel leg must be identical to provide for a level mantel shelf. Use shims to level the mantel legs. Apply a generous and continuous bead of adhesive to ensure continuous contact between wall and bedding surface of the mantel legs. Brace mantel legs securely until the adhesive sets.
2. Install mantel shelf. **Note:** **Larger mantel shelves** are cast with a cavity in the back to accommodate wood blocking for support. Locate the wood blocking position by offsetting the material thickness at the top of the shelf from a pencil line indicating the top edge of the mantel shelf when set on the mantel legs. Screw wood blocking with wood screws into wall studs for greatest support. Apply a generous amount of adhesive to the bedding surfaces of the mantel shelf and the top of the wood blocking to ensure continuous contact with the wall. Pile adhesive on top of the wood blocking and continuously along its length so that the mantel shelf will settle into the adhesive as it is lowered onto the mantel legs. Use bracing to secure the mantel shelf tight to the wall until the adhesive sets.
Note: Avoid adhesive on exposed component surfaces. Use a finishing nail or a small piece of plastic (shaped like a 'V') to remove excess adhesive at joints. Clean off excess adhesive immediately as required by adhesive manufacturer instructions.

For additional security on larger mantel shelves, install two (2) – 3"-long wood screws into the top of the mantel shelf and into the wood blocking below. Locate screw holes approx 1" from the wall and 18" on either side of the mantel centerline. Drill pilot holes first and countersink so that screw heads are located below the surface of the mantel shelf. Fill screw holes with paintable latex caulk, or non-shrinking compound and tool to a smooth finish.

Finishing

Fill joints between components and any gaps around the mantel with a paintable latex caulk and tool to a smooth finish.

Balmer Gypsum Mantels will accept lacquers, stains, oil-based or acrylic paints. Apply a drywall primer first, then apply finish in thin coats to avoid filling-up the design details. For best results, use flat or eggshell finishes.

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