

Native Custom Stone

Installation Instruction Guide

- 1. Surface Preparation** Native Custom Stone can be applied to any structurally sound surface. Due to its light weight, no special foundations or structural alterations are necessary. On clean (unpainted, untreated, unsealed) brick, block, concrete or other masonry surfaces, install scratch coat directly to surface. On all other surfaces, metal lath must be applied first (NCS recommends dimpled lath). Nail or staple the lath approximately every six inches, hitting studs where possible. Lath should overlap approximately 3 inches on all sides. On metal buildings, attach the lath with a drill and self-tapping screws. Be sure to attach the lath with the right side up so the small cups are pointing upward. Outside, on wood surfaces, apply a vapor barrier (two layers) such as black paper or roofing felt before attaching the lath.
- 2. Work Area Preparation** If you are inside or working over a stainable surface, use a non-slippery material to cover the floor or work area, such as black roofing paper or contractor paper. This will keep mortar from sticking to your work area. You are now ready to stock your work area with stone. If you are working with more than one pallet of stone be sure to pull stone from different pallets to give you a good mix of color.
- 3. Mortar Preparation** Use a paddle type mortar mixer to prepare mortar. Use approximately 12 heaping shovels of sand to one (1) bag of Type S Masonry (mortar). It is very important that you not add too much water to your mix, the consistency of your mix should be that of peanut butter. A mix that is too wet will result in stone that slides or does not adhere to the wall, if this is happening add more mortar to your mix until you have reached the desired consistency. A mix that is too dry will not spread evenly it will ball up and/or crumble.
- 4. Mortar Bed** Mortar spreading and stone placement should start at a straight edge, such as window, door, corner, etc. In warm weather masonry surfaces may need to be dampened prior to installing the stone so that the moisture will not be drawn from the mortar too rapidly. Place mortar onto the rock and spread the mortar onto the wall approximately ½ thick. Mortar should then be grooved with a masonry rake or a tile trowel.
- 5. Stone Application** Start about three (3) inches below and over where you want the stone to stop. Press the stone into the mortar with a firm twisting motion and slide it up and over to its final destination, install remaining stones using the same technique. Be careful to keep a tight full, even mortar joint as you proceed. The mortar spreader should not get too far ahead of the stone applicator, because the mortar will dry too soon. If the mortar becomes too hard to press the stone into, scrape the Mortar off and replace it with fresh mortar. If the stone should happen to fall off when released, the surface is not solid enough, the mortar is too dry or wet. Should this happen, scrape off the mortar, replace it with fresh mortar, and reapply the stone.
- 6. Dressing Joints** Dressing the joints is one of the most critical steps in stone application; it's also one of the slowest. If the joints are unattractive, the whole job will look bad. After joints begin to harden, (about 50% dry), fill in the shallow spots and smooth the joints with a metal or wood jointing tool. A 6" x ¾" x ¼" strip from a 1 x 4 piece of lumber makes a simple jointing tool. Be sure to keep the ends squared off by cutting them every-so-often, (this will keep the mortar joints more even and level). If the joint dressing process is done before the joint mortar is

dry enough it will smear and dirty the stone. If this is done when the mortar is too dry it will be very difficult.

7. **Brushing** Brush the mortar joints with a whiskbroom to smooth them and clean away the loose mortar. Clean off any mortar spots from the face of the stone with a wet rag. Loose mortar and mortar spots that have set for only a few hours clean up easily and should never be allowed to setup overnight

8. **Cleanup** Be careful not to leave mortar on any surface. If the surface is properly protected during the application, cleanup will be much easier. After the mortar sets for 24 hours, wash the job with a water hose to eliminate excess dust. If a sealer is to be applied, follow the requirements of the manufacturer. A sealer is recommended if the stone is in regular contact with water. Acid, chemicals, or pressure washing are not recommended for cleaning the stone. If the stone has a mortar film, it can be removed by using a high strength laundry detergent and a nylon bristle brush or bristle brush (DO NOT PRESSURE WASH).