

## Slatwall Panel Installation Instructions



### Delivery

**Slatwall panels are normally delivered via common carrier/semi-truck** on a banded skid that is slightly larger than the panels. Slatwall panels are heavy, each approximately 85 pounds for a 4' x 8' panel without any aluminum groove treatments. The drivers are not required to help unload the panels, so make sure you have enough help to unload. A pair of tinsnips will come in handy to cut the metal banding.

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**Check the panels for any damage from transit.** If damage has occurred, note it on the delivery paperwork and call our customer service department. Keep in mind that minor damage to any “stacking” lip can usually be concealed in the groove. Also, in a normal installation there are usually a few panels that have to be cut shorter than their original length - so consider using any damaged panels for cutting to size.

**Stack the panels** on top of at least 3 equal thickness boards/spacers, or back onto the skid they were delivered on. Do not stack panels directly onto a concrete floor. It is good to let the panels equalize in temperature and humidity with the space they will be installed in. Note: it is normal for slatwall panels to take on a slight warp since they are laminated one side, and the process of grooving relieves some internal stress in the boards.

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## Planning (getting ready)

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**Suggested tools.** Make sure you have the right tools for the job. Minimally, you will need a 24" level, tape measure, pencil, a circular saw for cutting any panels to size, and a good cordless or corded drill to use as a power screwdriver. **Optional tools** might be a professional laser level, drywall square, chalk line, and a power saber saw for cutting out electrical outlets.

**Supplies.** 1 ½" to 2" drywall, or other equivalent screws. Tan deck screws are a good color match to MDF, or Anchor™ Core. Use round head (pan head) screws on panels with metal inserts. Make sure the fasteners have heads that will easily fit into the groove (less than a 3/8" in diameter).

**Safety First.** Wear safety glasses when using any power tool and hearing protection when using any noisy piece of equipment. Remember, slatwall panels are heavy. Do not try to install slatwall panels by yourself.

**Working with Metal Studs.** Metal studs do not have as much screw holding power as wooden studs. It is best to use some wooden blocking in some strategic places. The more blocking the better in most cases.

**Installing slatwall panels with metal inserts** works basically the same as those with raw grooves. #6 self-tapping pan head screws of the proper length work well for this application. If using a standard screw (not self-tapping) you may want to pre-drill the metal using an 1/8" drill bit. Install the screws into each stud, every other groove – as with raw grooved panels, and always use a bit that is long enough to seat the screws without damaging the groove lips.

**Block or Concrete Walls.** Install vertical or horizontally oriented furring strips onto the walls first using concrete fasteners. It's not recommended, and difficult to install slatwall directly onto a concrete or block wall.

**Insulation and vapor barrier.** Now is the time to properly insulate any exterior walls for energy efficiency. Use a proper vapor barrier over the insulation.

**Electrical.** Additional electrical work must be done before you close up the wall. In a remodel, now is the time to make any changes or add new outlets and switches. Again, check your local building codes. Electrical boxes must extend an additional ¾" to accommodate the thickness of

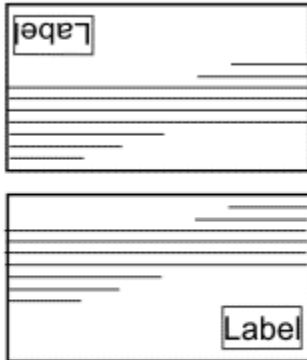
the slatwall. This is easily accomplished in new construction, but a little more difficult with existing electrical work.

**Where to start.** Take the time to do a little planning. If you are doing an entire wall it might be better to start off with a smaller panel. Let's say you had a 25 ft. wall of slatwall to install. A better looking slatwall installation would be to start and end the wall with a 4 1/2-foot piece rather than ending the wall with a 1-foot piece. Either way you need to cut into the 4th piece of slatwall, you might as well make it look nice. See slatwall cutting instructions below. Once you have determined the height above the floor to start, chalk a level line on the wall. It will also help if you put a mark on the floor and ceiling where each stud is. This will help in determining where to put the fasteners. If going over drywall, a panel/construction adhesive can be used along with the screws through the grooves to more permanently fix slatwall to the wall. Typically, the adhesive bead is put onto the backs of the panels with an up and down pattern starting on one side and moving across to the other with an approximate 16" spacing between the beads, somewhat mirroring the studwall construction.

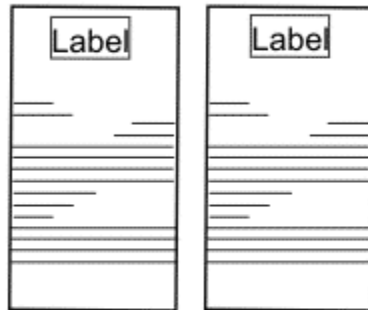
## Installing Slatwall Panels

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### Stock cut panels



### Vertical cut panels



***For best groove alignment  
install panels with labels as shown.***

**Alignment -** Each of our slatwall

panels comes with an installation label on the back side that will help you determine the best "factory edge." If you are stacking slatwall higher than 4-foot make sure the edges line-up for best groove and panel alignment.

**First panel.** Spread some (optional) panel adhesive vertically on the back of the panel.

Typically one panel uses a half-tube of adhesive. Follow the manufacturer's directions on the

adhesive. Raise the first panel up to the level line and put one fastener (screw) through a top full groove into the studs near one of the corners. You can use an upside down slatwall shelf bracket in a groove to help lift the panel.



Double check with your level and install second fastener in opposite corner. It is very important that the first panel is level. Using the drywall square draw light vertical lines with a pencil where the center of each stud is. This pencil line can be easily removed with a solvent later. Now install fasteners into each stud, and every other, or every third groove. Installing slatwall panels with metal inserts works basically the same as those with raw grooves. A number 6, self-tapping pan head screw, of the proper length, works well for this application. If using a standard screw (not self-tapping) you may want to pre-drill the metal using an 1/8" drill bit. Install the screws into each stud, every other groove, as with raw grooved panels, and always use a bit that is long enough to seat the screws without damaging the groove lips. Screws should go into the wall stud at a one inch depth.

**Remaining Panels.** Repeat the process on the remaining panels making sure you line up the grooves from panel to panel. On installations where there is no drywall backing, such as a garage, makes sure the end of each panel comes out in the middle of a stud. It is very difficult to match up cut ends of panels that are trimmed to length in the field. With proper planning, any "cuts" made in the slatwall panels should end up in a corner, or in a place where it can be trimmed out. The upper row of slatwall panels (if going higher than 4 ft.) installs just like the bottom. This can be done as you go along, or after you get the entire bottom row installed. Make sure the factory edges mate with the bottom row factory edge.

**Cutting Slatwall Panels.** Always cut panels with the saw blade enter the face of the panel first. Never try to "freehand" cut with a portable circular saw, as it is not very accurate, and extremely

unsafe. Set up a good guide for the edge of the saw to follow. Always wear hearing protection when cutting slatwall panels.

**Cutting slatwall with aluminum insert.** It is not necessary to take the aluminum out of the grooves before cutting. In fact it is easier to cut the panel with the aluminum in the grooves. Do this only with a sharp carbide tipped blade. Run a piece of wide masking tape over the inserts parallel to the groove. This will help keep the aluminum from shifting during your cut.



**Cutting for electrical boxes.** This is probably the most challenging part of a slatwall installation. The most important rule is “measure twice, cut once” because you typically do not get a second chance to get the hole in the right place.

Do all your measurements and layout on either the front or backside of the panel. If you do it on the front side, make sure that you use a sharp, fine tooth blade on your reciprocating saw to avoid chipping of the face material.



Drill a hole large enough to fit the saw blade in one of the corners.

Carefully cut the material for the box opening, then test fit the panel before applying adhesive to the back.

**NOTE:** If your panels have metal (aluminum) inserts, use a jig saw with a fine tooth metal blade to cut through the metal. If you leave the metal in the panel to make the cut, make sure it is held down tightly with tape.

**Clean Up.** Remove any adhesive that might have gotten on the face of the panels with some solvent such as lacquer thinner. Do the same with the pencil lines you drew to help locate the studs. Clean the panels with a mild household cleaner and soft cloth.