3SPARKDesign

FOR DESIGNERS, CONTRACTORS & INSTALLERS

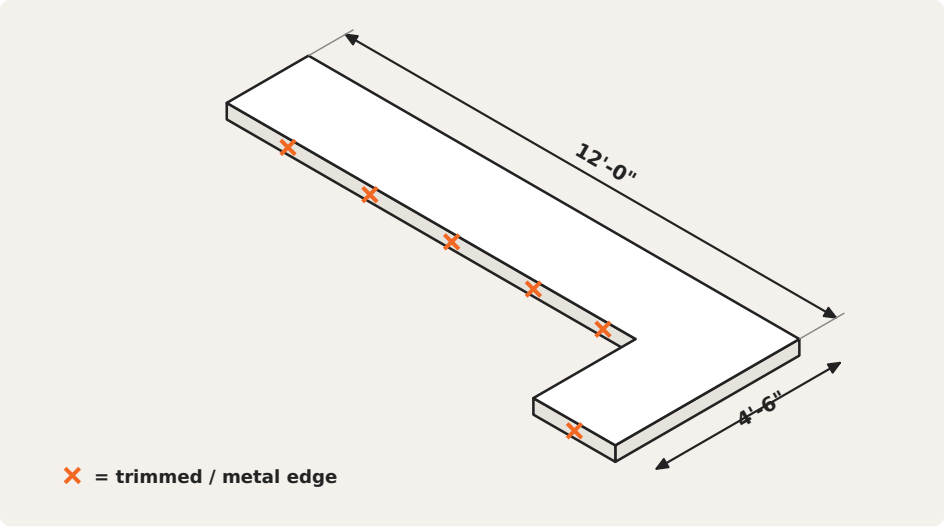
Templating Guide

When do you need a template?

Templates matter most when a complicated shape or curve is already built on site, is fixed and known, and won't change before install.

If the finishes aren't complete yet, or the space is still being built out, a template isn't the answer. We can add a little extra to the top, and it can be trimmed on site with a jigsaw or circular saw. **Trimming does not void the 3 Spark warranty.**

So only send a template for complex shapes or edges that are fixed, known and won't change before install.



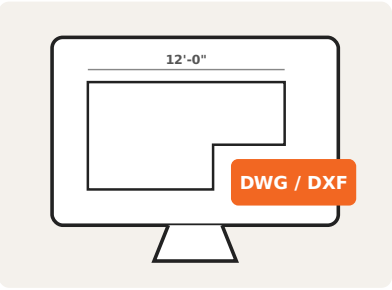
For designers, contractors and installers: how to give us a template we can build from.

We build every top to fit. The best way to get that fit is a good CAD file. When a space is too unusual to draw well, a hard template is the next best thing. This guide shows you how to make one, mark it, and get it to us in the same shape you made it.

CAD first, always

Send us a CAD file before anything else. It's the fastest, most accurate way to start.

- **Files we like:** DWG, DXF, Rhino or STEP, or a fully dimensioned drawing (PDF is fine).
- **What it should show:** overall lengths and depths, radii, cutouts, columns, walls, and where the finished edges and trim go. See our Drawing Guide for the details.



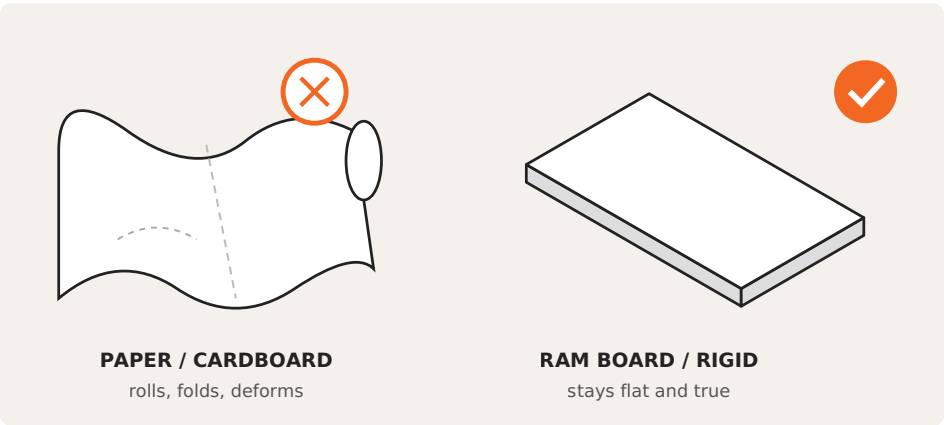
If you're not sure a template is needed, send the drawing and photos first. We'll tell you.

When a template is a good idea

Use a template when these conditions are already built, fixed and final on site:

- Walls that are out of square or out of plumb
- Curves and free-form shapes
- Columns, posts or pilasters the top wraps around
- Tops that need to scribe tight to a finished wall
- Tricky cutouts: sinks, taps, wells, inserts or equipment already set in place

Our firm rule: no paper templates

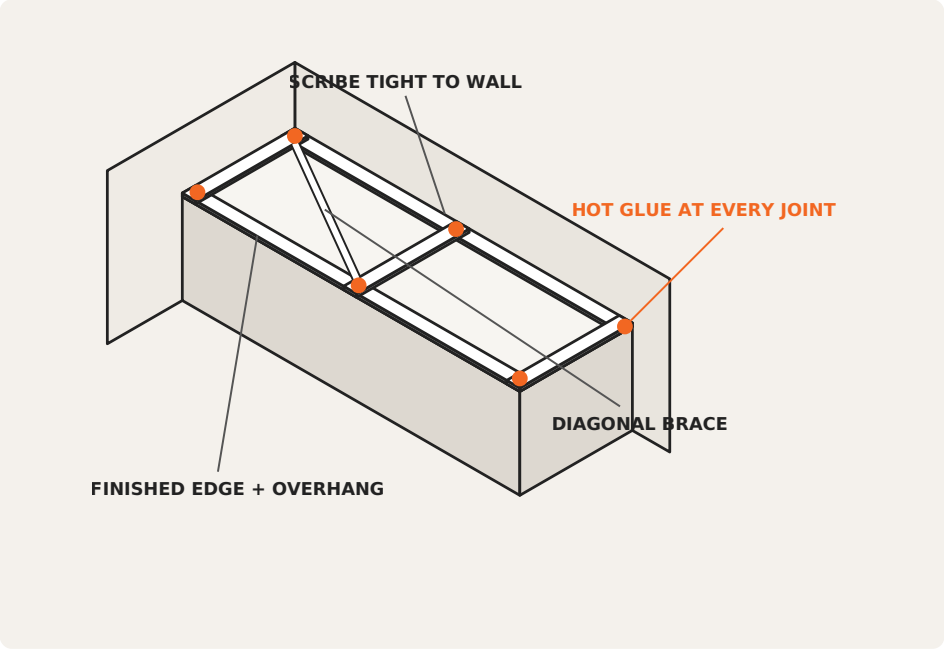


We do not accept paper or cardboard templates. Once paper is folded or rolled, it deforms, and a template that has changed shape defeats the whole purpose. A paper template will be sent back, and we'll ask for a new one.

Use a hard, rigid material:

- Ram Board or a similar hard template board
- Luan or thin plywood strips
- Coroplast (corrugated plastic sheet)
- Strip templates: thin rigid strips joined with hot glue

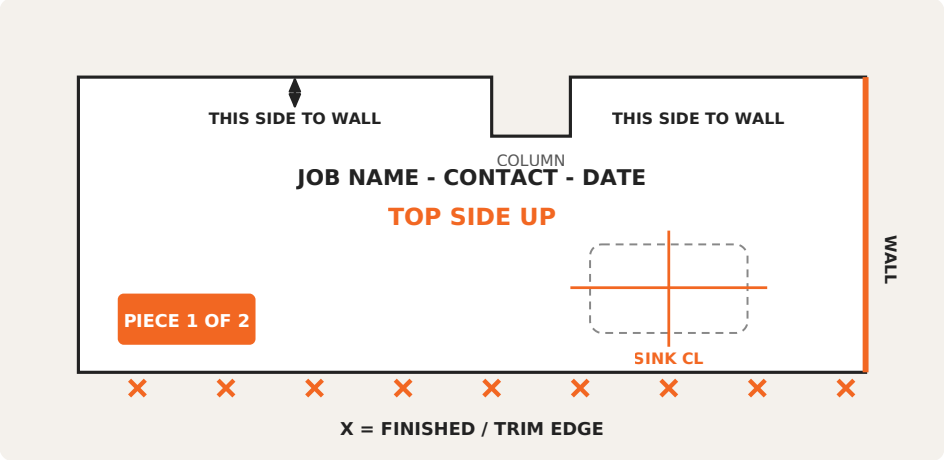
How to make a strip template



1. **Clean and check the base.** Make sure cabinets or the bar die are set, level and final. A template is only as good as what it sits on.
2. **Cut your strips.** Rip luan, thin plywood or rigid board into strips about 2 in. to 3 in. wide.
3. **Run the perimeter.** Lay strips along every wall and every finished edge. Scribe the wall strips tight to the wall, gaps and all.
4. **Set the finished edges.** Place the front strips exactly where you want the finished edge, overhang included.
5. **Join with hot glue.** Glue every joint. Add cross braces and diagonals so the template can't rack or twist.
6. **Add cutouts and columns.** Outline each sink, insert or column with strips, and mark each centerline.
7. **Mark everything.** Use a marker that won't smear (see below).

8. **Check it.** Lift it, set it back, and make sure it drops right into place. Measure it once more and write down the overall size.
9. **Photograph it.** Take photos in place before you pick it up.

Mark everything



If it isn't written on the template, we can't know it. Mark it clearly:

- **Job name**, your name and phone number, and the date
- **Top / up side**, written plainly on the face
- **"This side to wall" arrows** on every wall edge
- **Finished edges vs. walls**: label each edge
- **Trim / metal edges:** mark with an **X** every edge that gets the metal edge or trim
- **Overhangs**: size and direction
- **Sink and cutout centerlines**, with the make and model if known
- **Columns and posts**, with their sizes
- **Appliance and equipment locations** (and any clearance they need)
- **Seam preference**, only if one is required. Otherwise leave seams to us.
- **Piece numbers** ("1 of 3") if the template comes in more than one piece

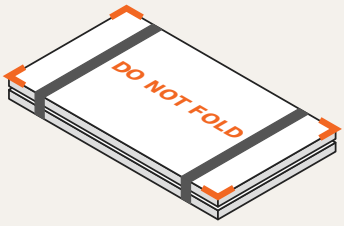
Photos and measurements to send

- Photos of the template in place, from each end and from above
- Close-ups of every corner, column and cutout
- Overall length and depth, measured on the template and on site
- Any diagonals you took to check square
- Notes on anything the template can't show: heights, edge profile, floor and access

If the top uses our large edge, it's 4 in. (3.94 in.) unless you tell us otherwise.

Shipping and handling

- **Keep it flat.** Never fold or roll a template.
- **Protect the corners** and edges with cardboard corners or foam.
- **Pack it between two rigid sheets** (plywood or hard board) and strap or tape them together.
- **Label the outside** with the job name and "DO NOT FOLD."



RIGID SHEET - TEMPLATE - RIGID SHEET, STRAPPED, CORNERS PROTECTED

Before you ship anything, contact your 3 Spark rep or email the quote team. We'll confirm what we need and where it goes. If a mailing address is needed:

> 3 Spark Design
> 905 US Hwy 321 NW, Suite 372
> Hickory, NC 28601

Would you rather we do it?

3 Spark can arrange templating for your project. Ask us.

Checklist before you send

- ☐ CAD file or dimensioned drawing sent (or we've agreed a template is needed)
- ☐ Template made of Ram Board or another hard, rigid material. No paper or cardboard.
- ☐ Braced so it can't twist or rack
- ☐ Job name, top side and "this side to wall" arrows marked
- ☐ Finished edges and trim/metal edges (X) marked
- ☐ Overhangs, cutout centerlines, columns and appliances marked
- ☐ Photos and overall measurements taken
- ☐ Packed flat, corners protected, labeled "DO NOT FOLD"
- ☐ Contacted your 3 Spark rep or the quote team before shipping

Questions?

Email us at **info@3sparkdesign.com**, call or text 828.838.3134, or reach out to your 3 Spark rep.