maximum size: 1 m^2
thickness: 40 to 150 mm

'L'-shaped worktops normally have straight butt joints so the grain of each leg will be at right angles to one another. Diagonal joints are possible but more expensive as one leg will have to be longer and care must be taken to provide good support at the outside corner. Worktops are joined together using biscuits and bolts let into the underside.

Where timber worktops abut an Aga type range cooker, a *cross band* must be fixed to the end of the worktop to protect the end grain from the constant heat.

Front edges can be profiled as desired and holes cut for sinks, taps and hobs.

Draining grooves can be inserted next to sinks.
Stainless steel rods can be inserted slightly upstanding next to hobs as a rest area for hot pans.

If matching upstands at the back of the worktop are provided, then these must be fixed to the wall, NOT to the worktop to allow for differential movement.

Timber will always move in seasonal changes of humidity, so fixing hardwood worktops must allow for this. If possible arrange for the fixing to be done by the supplier.

The recommended finish is two or three coats of *Danish oil.* This oil is made up basically of Tung oil, some finishing oil and 2% urethane which provides the necessary water resistance. It is not a good idea to use polyurethane as a finish because if the surface is scored, moisture will penetrate the surface and lift the varnish. The oil also allows for the timber to move naturally.

Hardwood worktops should be re-oiled at regular intervals to keep them moisture resistant. When new, some areas may feel a little rough in the first few weeks of use as the grain lifts from the application of the oil. This can be made smooth with fine sand paper.

Source: Woodentops

Solid surface worktops

There are a range of man-made materials which resemble natural stones such as granite and limestone. They are made up of a composite of small chips of quartz, granite or aluminium trihydrate which is bound with pigments and resin or polyester resins.

The advantage of solid surface worktops over real stone is the possibility of having a large jointless surface of uniform colour and texture. They are said to be waterproof, hygienic, stable, durable, very hard, heat resistant to 180°C, stain resistant, colourfast indoors with a wide range of colours and patterns.

Very hot pans will scorch and bleach the surface. The marks can be removed once or twice with scouring powder. Undiluted bleach should not be left on the surface. Serious holes can be replaced with inserts to match by the fabricator.

Sheets suitable for kitchen worktops are generally 12–13 mm thick, bonded on to a substrate of MDF or plywood with the composite sheet covering the front edge which can be made to various profiles. Joints are solvent welded on site. Upstands at the back can be provided and some manufacturers make sink bowls which can be almost seamlessly welded to the worktop.

maximum length:	3.6 m
maximum width:	900 mm
thickness:	12 to 13 mm
weight:	24 kg/m^2

Cost is about 85% that of natural stone worktops.

Solid surface worktops are easy to wipe clean.
Fine scratches can be smoothed with scouring powder or fine wet-and-dry sandpaper.