

# Installation Instructions for Fortress Fe<sup>26</sup> Traditional Adjustable Panels with Simplified Stair Bracket SSB-04 and Fe<sup>26</sup> Posts

It is the responsibility of the installer to meet all code and safety requirements, and to obtain all required building permits. The deck and railing installer should determine and implement appropriate installation techniques for each installation situation. Fortress Railing Products and its distributors shall not be held liable for improper or unsafe installations.

Fortress Fe<sup>26</sup> Posts must always be secured to the deck framing. Fortress Fe<sup>26</sup> Posts should never be attached to only the deck boards.

## Read Instructions Completely Before Starting Installation

### Note

When cutting Fortress railing, it is very important to complete the following at cut points.

- Remove all metal shavings from the cut area.
- File any sharp edges left by cutting. Thoroughly wipe and remove any filings, grime or dirt from the railing.
- Apply two coats of Fortress zinc-based touch-up paint to the cut area. If touch-up is at rail ends, allow paint to dry before connecting bracket to post.
- Be sure to remove any metal shavings from the surface of the deck, patio or balcony to prevent stains on the surface.

### Torx Safety Tips

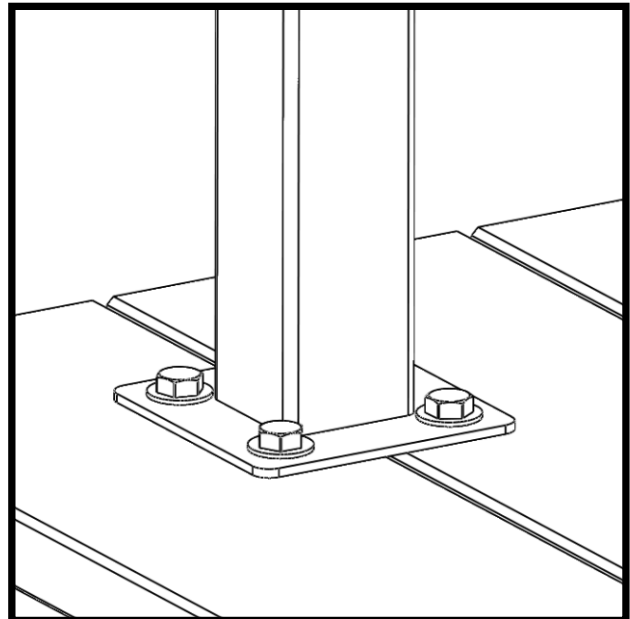
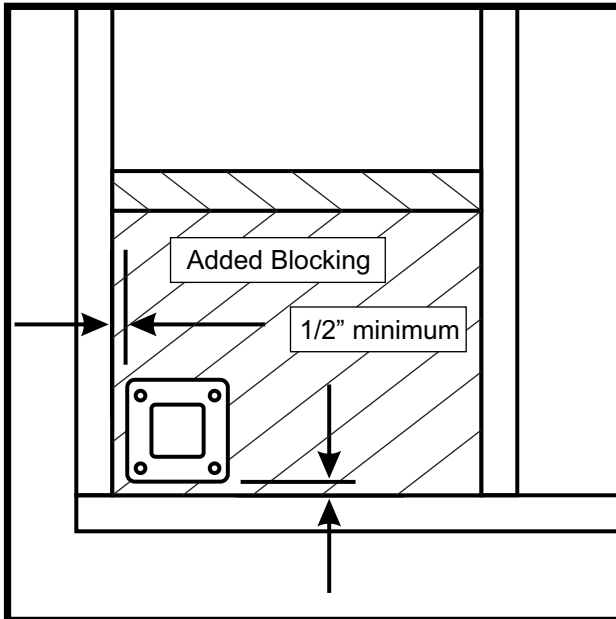
- Always pre-drill holes with a 3/16" drill bit.
- Always use the lowest speed setting on drill.
- To reduce chance of bit breakage, start tightening with drill on low torque setting and work up until screw is secured.

### Required Materials

Miter saw with metal blade or metal cutting reciprocating saw, 3/16" drill bits, T-25 driver bit, driver bit extender, tape measure, socket set, speed square, touch-up paint, 2 Phillips head screwdriver, level, and framing square, and mallet

### Mount Fe<sup>26</sup> Posts\*

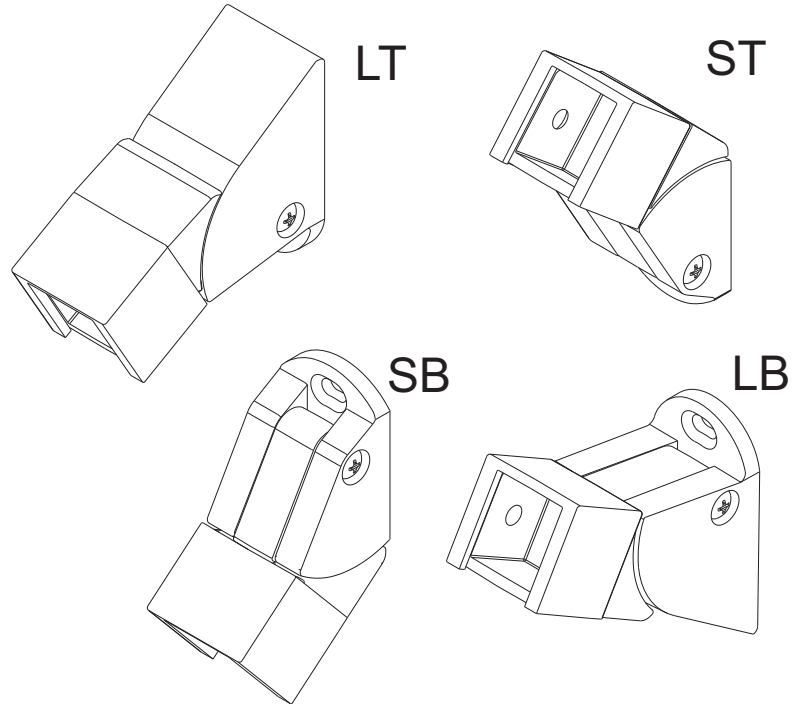
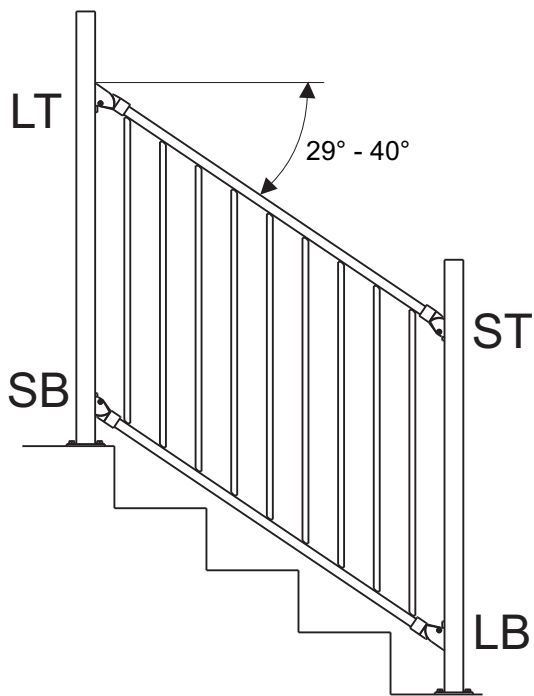
- Wood blocking tied to deck frame must be installed and constructed with treated dimensional lumber with a minimum thickness of 1-1/2".
- Position the edge of Fe<sup>26</sup> Post base plate a minimum of 1/2" from the inside edge of rim joist.
- Mount Fe<sup>26</sup> Posts at appropriate points based on panel length.
- Attach Fe<sup>26</sup> Posts with 3/8" X 3-1/2" hex head galvanized bolts.



\*Reference Fortress Fe<sup>26</sup> Post mounting instructions

## Simplified Stair Brackets SSB-04

- Identify the 4 brackets LT, ST, LB, and SB by the letters stamped in each part.
- The SSB-04 brackets work between the angles of 29°-40°.

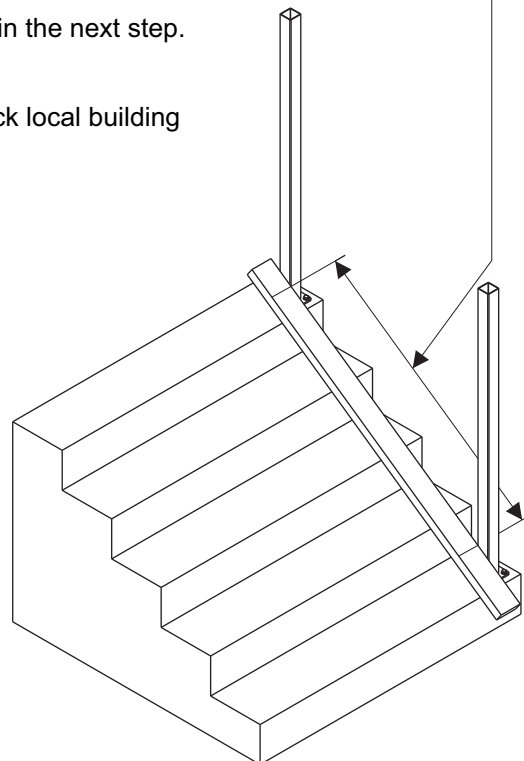
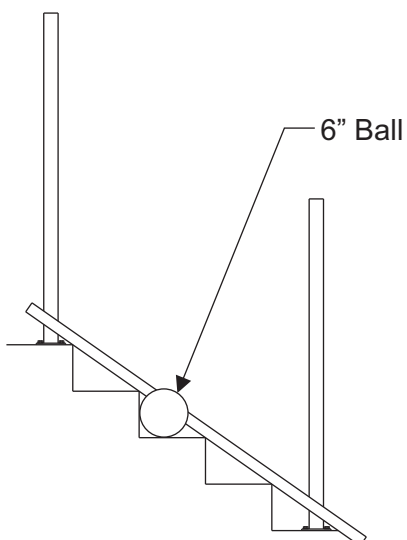


## Locating Posts and Panel Height

- On a long straight 2x4 make 2 marks for the max distance on the inside face of the posts (See table).
- Place the 2x4 on the nose of the stair steps next to the 2 posts.
- Do not attach the post to the step until locations are confirmed in the next step.

\* Top edge of the lumber will be the height of the bottom rail  
 \* Confirm panel lower rail will be less than 6" from the step. Check local building code for the exact spacing required.

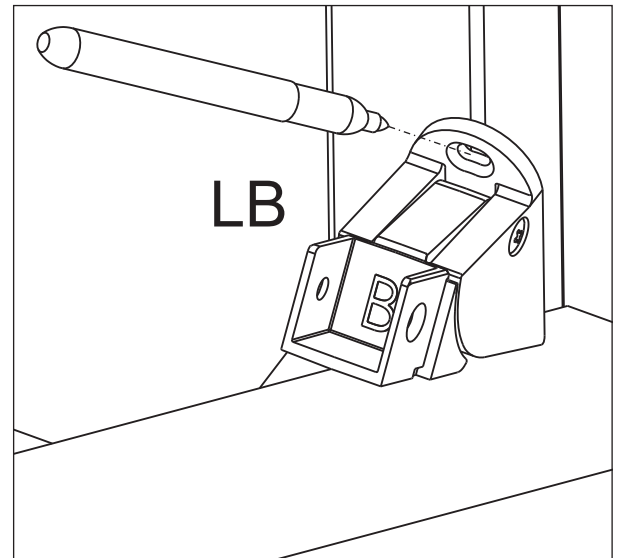
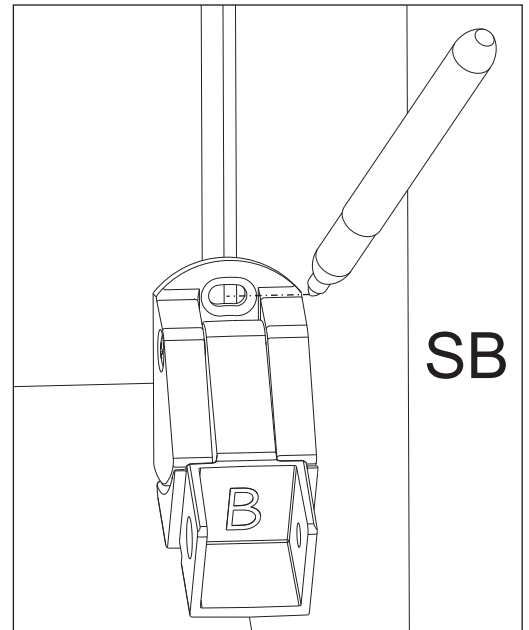
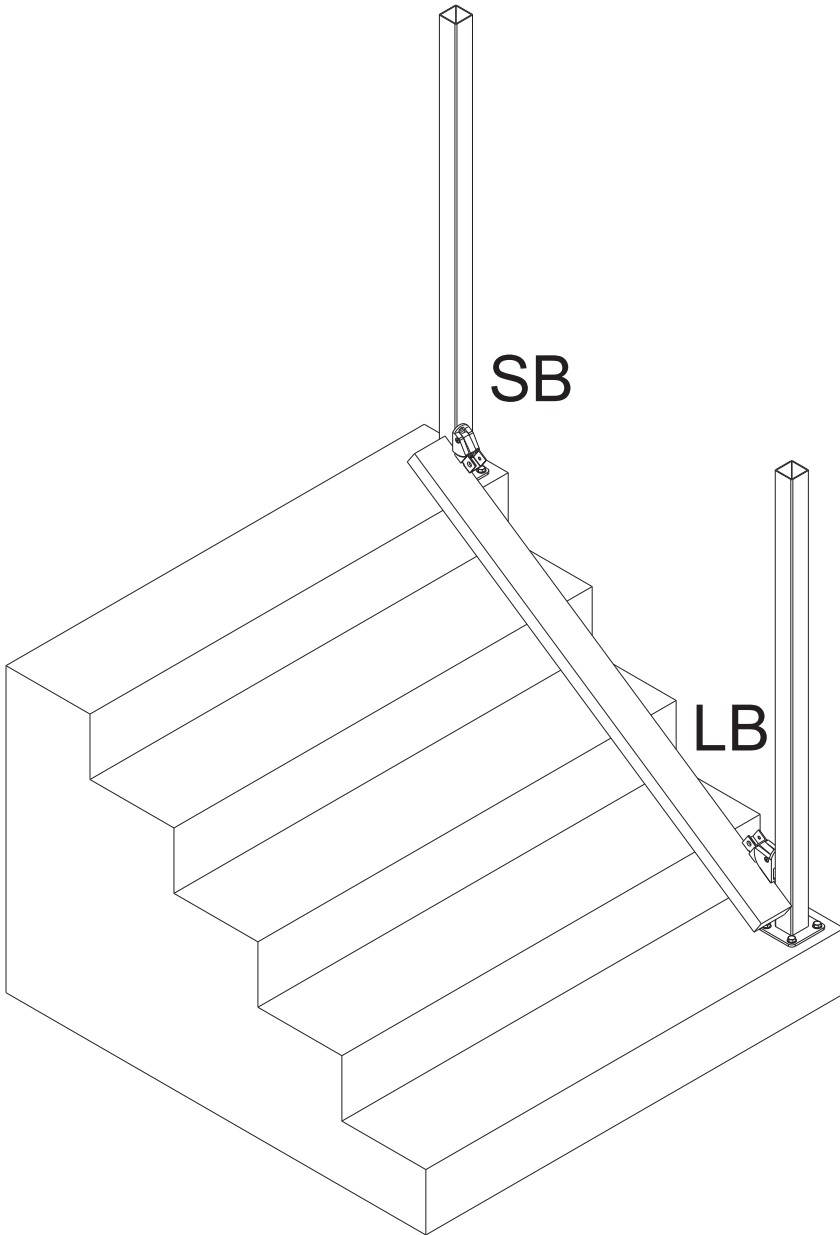
Post Max Distance	
6' panel	76-1/4"
8' panel	95-1/4"



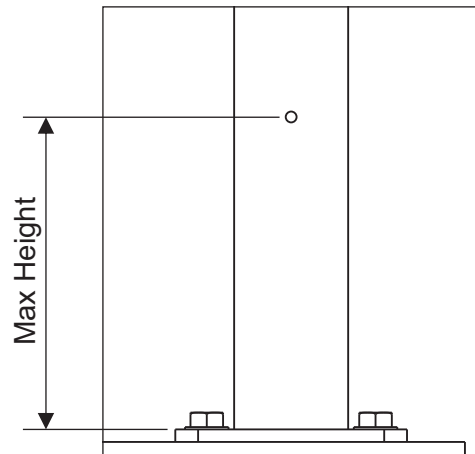
## Locate the Outside Screw for the Bottom Bracket

- Locate the 2 bottom rail brackets, LB and SB.
- Place each bracket on top of the lumber flat against the post.
- Find the center of the post and mark the outside screw location.  
See table below.

**Note: Do not exceed the max height for the outside screw.**



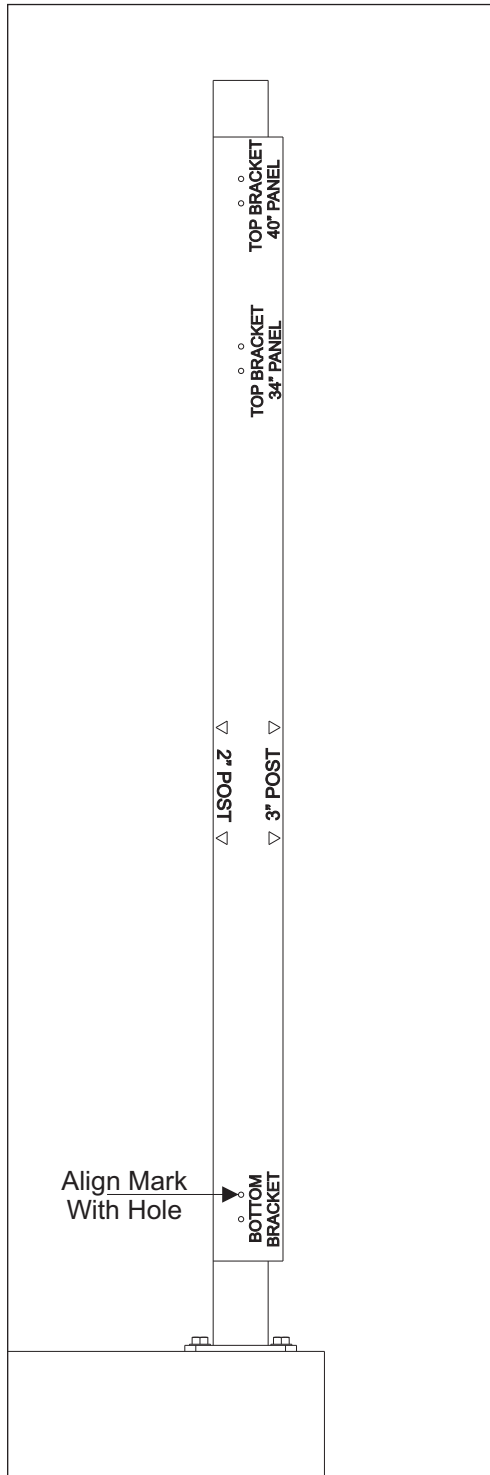
34" Panel 39.5" Post Max Height		34" Panel 45.5" Post Max Height		40" Panel 45.5" Post Max Height	
Top post	5-1/4"	Top post	11-1/4"	Top post	5-1/4"
Bottom post	5-7/8"	Bottom post	11-7/8"	Bottom post	5-7/8"



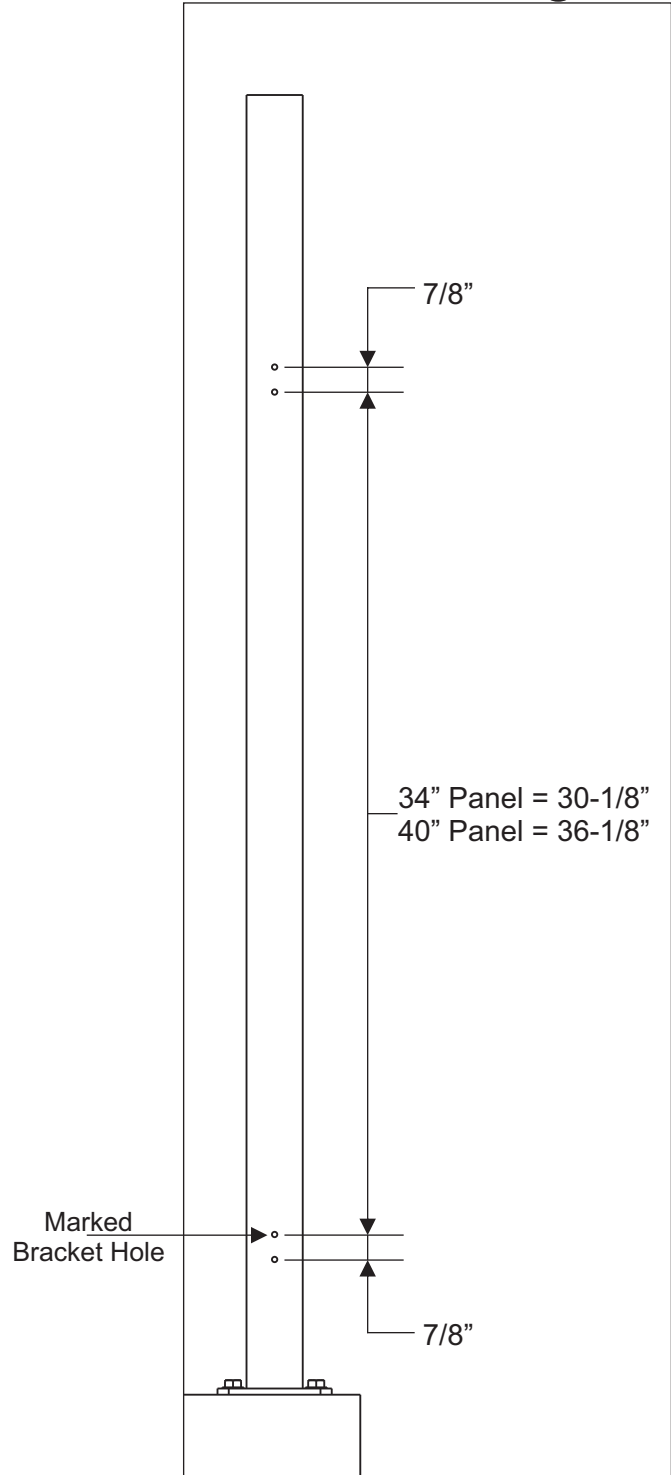
## Locate All Screw Holes

- Using the provided paper template align the top hole for the bottom bracket on the template.
- Align the edge of the template to the side of the post.
- Mark all the hole locations for the brackets. There will be 4 holes total on each post.
- Alternatively, hole spacing is  $7/8$ " between the bracket holes and  $30-1/8$ " for 34" panels and  $36-1/8$ " for 40" panels.

## Template

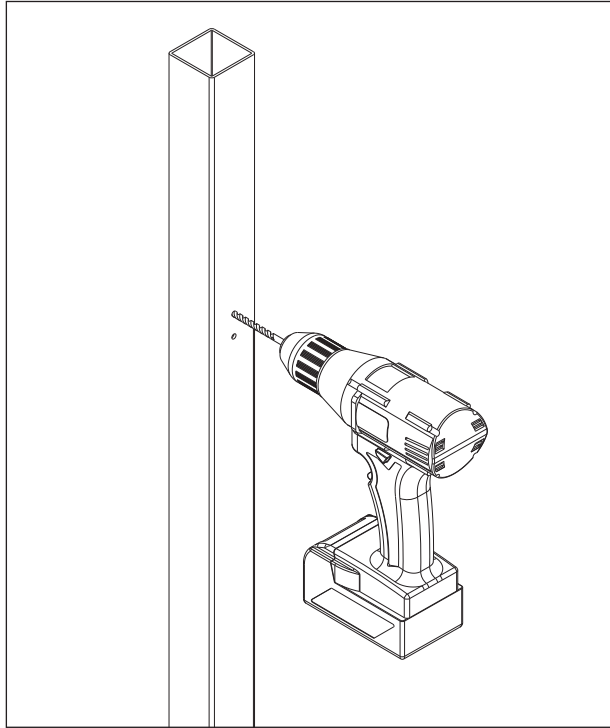


## Measuring

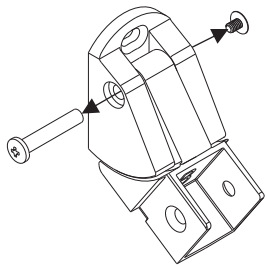


## Drill Holes to Mount the SSB-04 & Mount With Screws

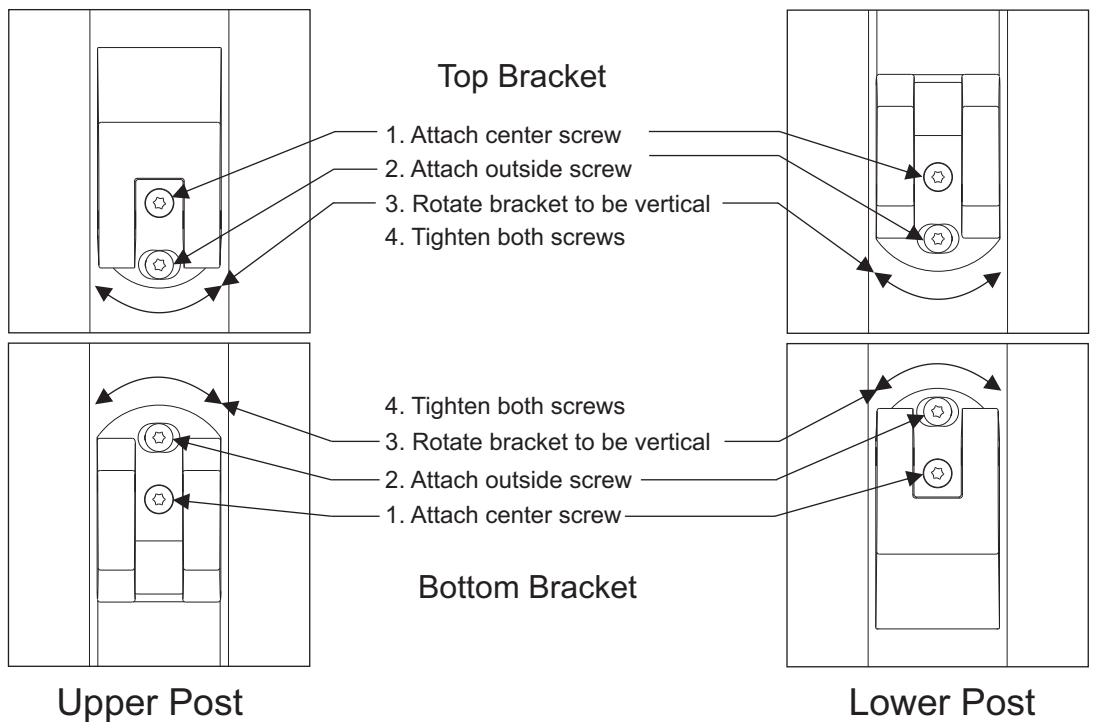
- Drill out all 4 holes using a 3/16" drill bit.
- Remove metal shavings.



- Disassemble the brackets by removing the barrel and screw.
- Attach each bracket using the T-25 screws provided. Attach the brackets to the post by the center (smaller) hole first.
- The outside hole is slotted to allow for movement to make the bracket vertical. Once both screws are in place and the bracket is vertical, tighten the bracket to the post. Check vertical position with level.

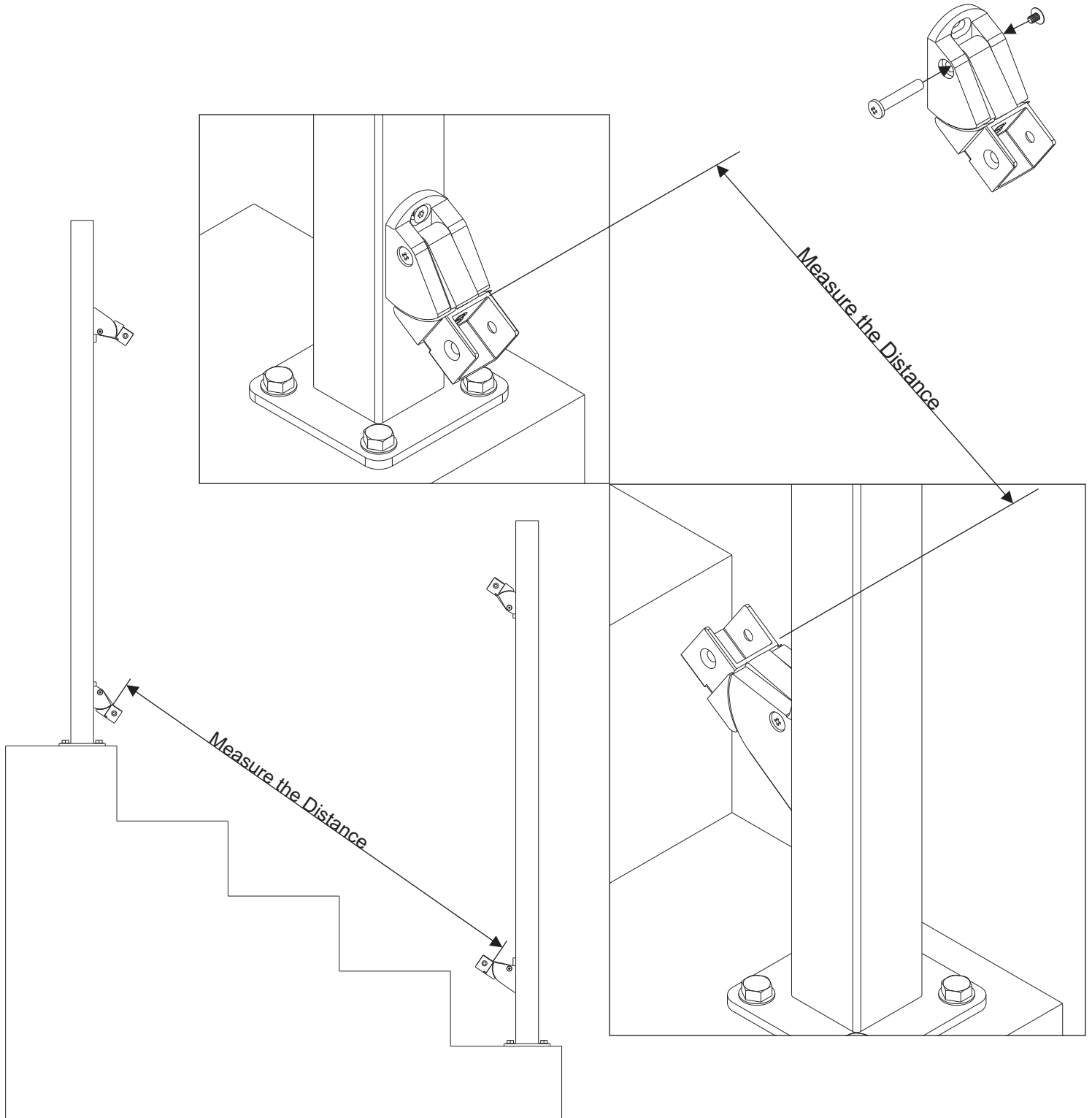


Bracket  
Disassembly



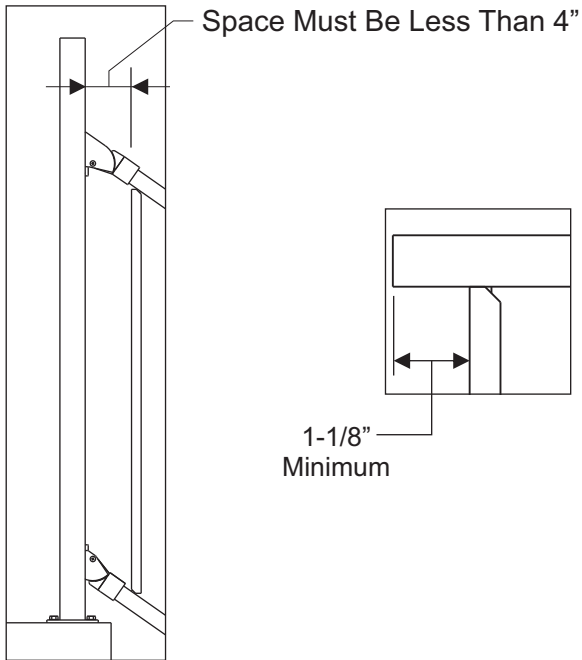
## Measure the Length of the Panel

- Reassemble the SSB-04 bracket.
- Measure the distance from inside edge of the bottom 2 brackets.
- Check that the distance is the same on the top brackets.
- if dimensions are different, check post for squareness and make required adjustments

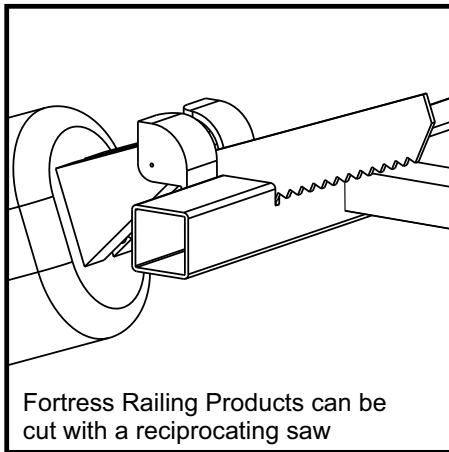
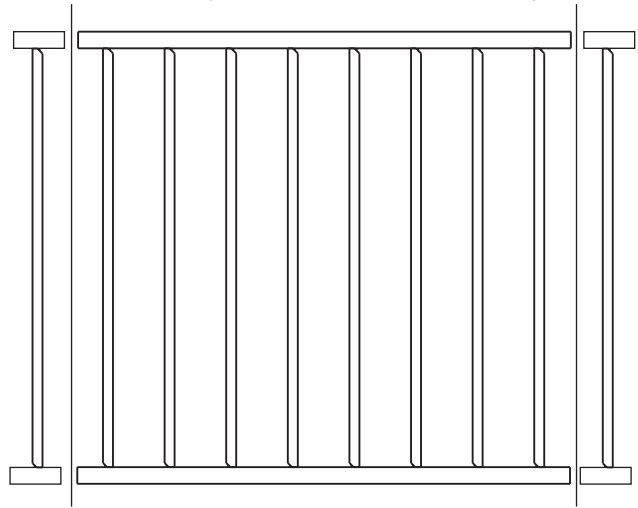


## Cut the Panel

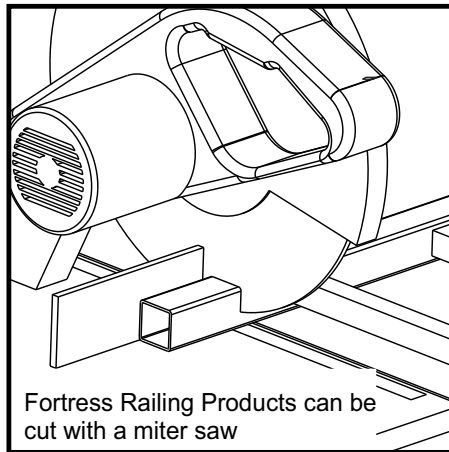
- Cut down the Fortress Railing panel using the measurement from the previous step.
- Rails must extend a minimum of 1-1/8" past the last picket on both ends.
- It is recommended to cut the panel away from the deck area.



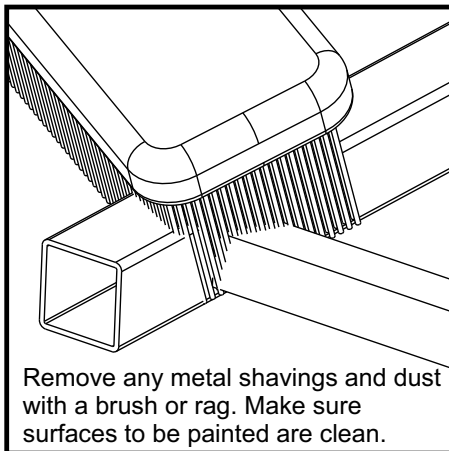
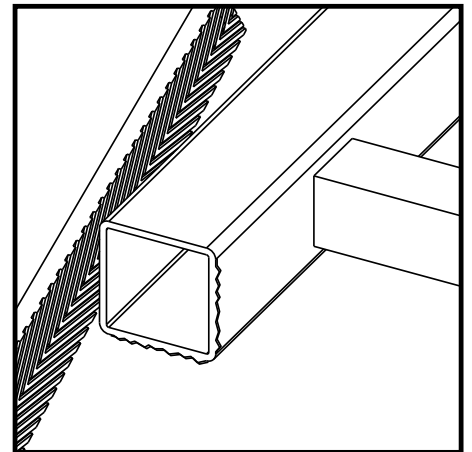
- No angle cuts required. Straight cuts only.
- No rail offset needed. Top and bottom rails should be the same length with the same spacing on each end.



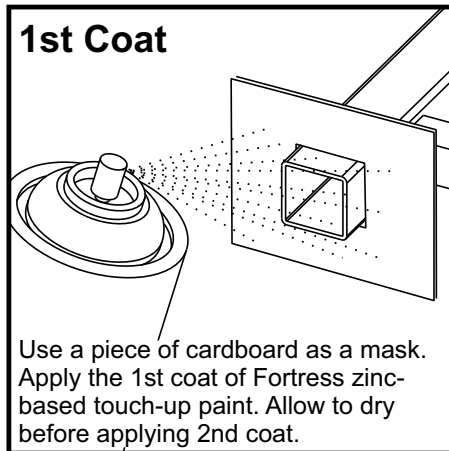
Fortress Railing Products can be cut with a reciprocating saw



Fortress Railing Products can be cut with a miter saw

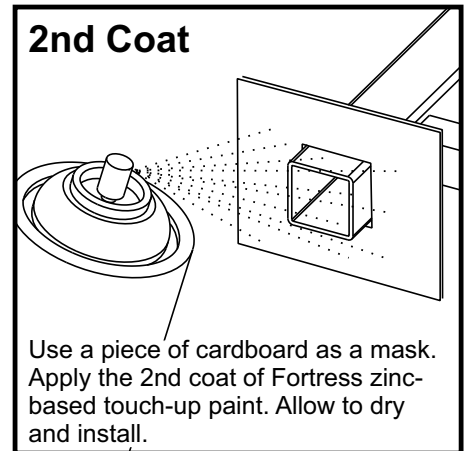


Remove any metal shavings and dust with a brush or rag. Make sure surfaces to be painted are clean.



### 1st Coat

Use a piece of cardboard as a mask. Apply the 1st coat of Fortress zinc-based touch-up paint. Allow to dry before applying 2nd coat.

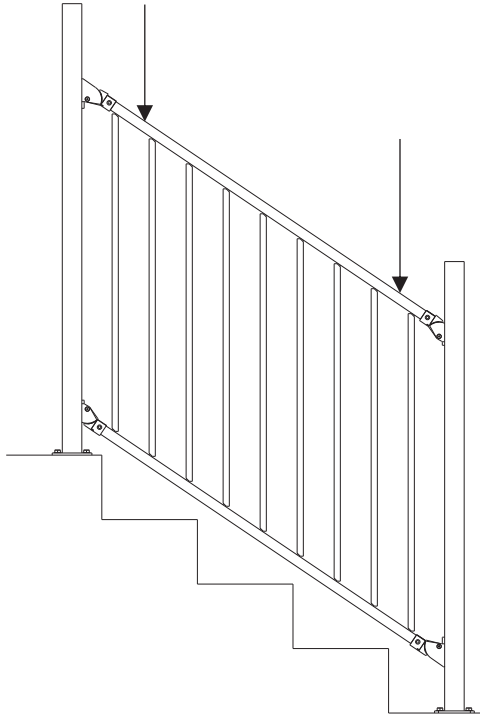


### 2nd Coat

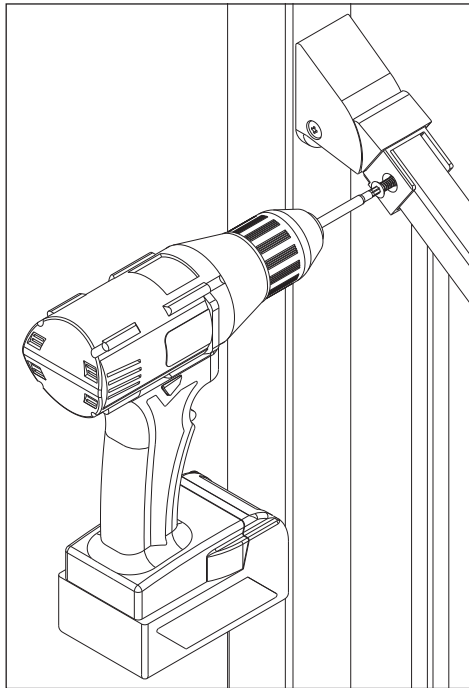
Use a piece of cardboard as a mask. Apply the 2nd coat of Fortress zinc-based touch-up paint. Allow to dry and install.

## Installing the Panel & Bracket Caps

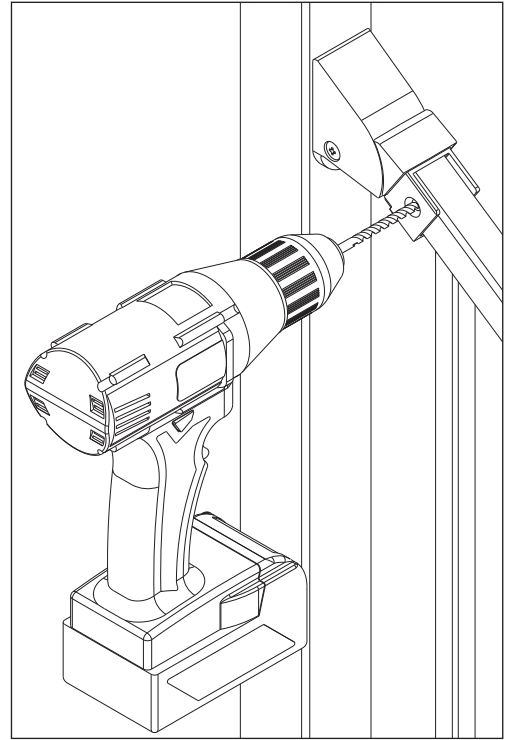
- 1 screw needed in each corner.
- Drill all holes using a 3/16" drill bit.
- Attach the panel using the supplied T-25 screws.
- Snap the SSB-04 bracket cap down in all locations.
- Clean the rail and work area of all metal shavings.



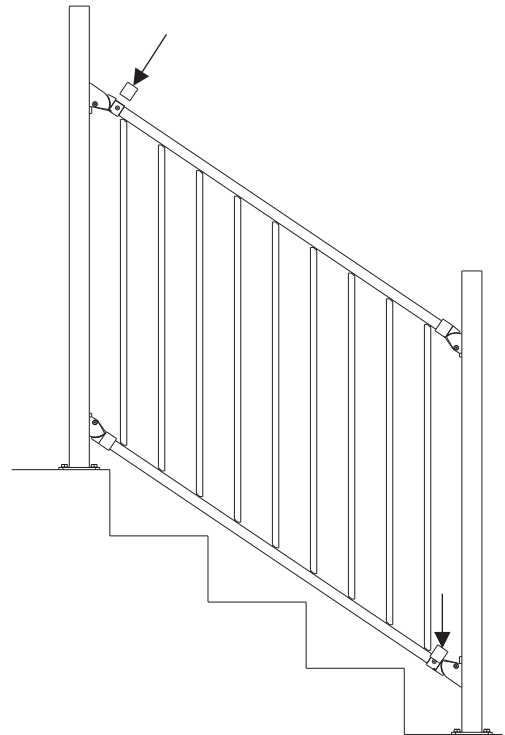
- Install rail panel into the T&B bracket
- Rail must be resting on the bottom edge of the bracket before drilling holes



- Attach the panel to the bracket using the supplied T-25 screw and tighten down



- Using the holes in the bracket as a guide, drill 1 hole in each corner using a 3/16" drill bit



- Snap the bracket covers into place
- A rubber mallet might be needed to snap covers into place