

# Siding

## GENERAL INFORMATION

On existing construction, siding is the hardest item to match to pattern and size. It is strongly recommended that you bring a sample (even if very weathered or damaged) to obtain the best possible match. Matching older siding is ALWAYS a challenge for us due to the wide range of ages and the varieties manufactured. Masonite Corporation, a very large manufacturer, ceased production more than 15 years ago and therefore ALL their products cannot be matched exactly. A suggestion for siding that cannot be matched exactly would be to move existing siding from a more hidden space (behind bushes, on the back of the house, etc) – use that where it's more exposed and use the new, not-quite-matching in the old less-obvious spot. A more elaborate (and expensive) solution is to replace an entire side or portion of the house with the closest possible “match”.

A brief summary of the types, materials and patterns follows.

## TYPES OF SIDING

Siding comes in two major categories: “lap” and “panel”. “Lap” sidings are in strips or individual board sizes ranging in width from 4” to 16”. This type can include boards in pine, cedar or redwood – all available in knotty and clear grades. Lap siding is very common in the Colorado area in hardboard (or Masonite) in a variety of smooth and textured patterns. Fiber-cement is also available in lap siding patterns; it is being used in the majority of new construction in the past few years. In wood sidings, depending on the type, lap sidings may run from 3’ to 20’ long - you may not have a choice on lengths received.

“Panel” siding refers to sheets (generally 4x8 or 4x9 sizes) in plywood, waferboard, fiber-cement or hardboard versions.

## MATERIALS

Fiber-cement siding is a Portland cement mix, reinforced with fiber strands for added strength, molded into different sizes and patterns. This product is generally primed, ready for installation and final paint covering. Relatively inexpensive and requiring little special tooling other than cutting, it is increasingly the product of choice, due to its

durability, fire-resistance and economical cost. Warranties can be as long as 50 years. Most of these products come with matching trimboards. Many come pre-finished, requiring only touch up painting after installation.

Wood choices will most commonly include pine, cedar and redwood. Cedar and redwood are the best wood options, as they are more rot resistant and more durable. All three species will come in both knotty and clear grades. On clear grades, allow for 2-4 times the cost of knotty varieties. Getting good quality in wood sidings is very important as a low initial cost may not be your best choice. A common example is cedar “channel rustic” which is a knotty shiplap cedar siding. This particular pattern can be obtained for a wide spread of costs; however this cost spread is indicative of “green” (non-dried) lumber versus kiln dried. Thickness also dictates a better quality (and higher price). Green cedar rustic will shrink over time, drying substantially – a recent example we’ve seen is the product shrinking so much that you could see the white Tyvek clearly between pieces of siding. We recommend that all wood sidings are pre-stained to not only save time in sealing the products after installation, but to ensure getting a good seal coat on all the surfaces of the boards. Please see us for more information on this available service. “Normal” boards can be used for trim to get a matching look. Wood sidings always carries a higher maintenance need and cost.

Hardboard sidings are basically a mix of sawdust and resins/epoxies to obtain a particle type of board. These are molded to meet a particular pattern and are generally always primed at least on the exposed side. Those patterns generally mimic what wood boards would look like under the same type of pattern/application. A variety of manufacturers now produce trimboards in normal board sizes for trim that are made of the same types of materials, also all primed. Trimboards generally come in both “4/4” (3/4”) and “5/4” (1”) thicknesses for different applications. The use of the 5/4 trim will give you better definition next to most sidings to accent windows, doors and other trim surfaces.

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## JOINTS

Joint treatment is very important in siding as not only a connection method between panels or laps, but it should also provide a weather-tight seal to protect your house against the elements. The different types of joints are:

**LAP** sidings are simply nailed so that a piece overlaps over the top of the piece below it. Therefore all rain, etc is shed downward and away from the wall.

**TONGUE AND GROOVE (T&G)** patterns are machined in such a fashion that the edge of one board is narrower to fit into a groove/slot of the next. This type of pattern should ALWAYS be used horizontally for exterior applications, with the first board groove side down. Many T&G patterns are milled with a different pattern on opposite sides. Alternatively, they may be rough sawn on one exposure and smooth sawn on the opposite.

**SHIPLAP** sidings are an adapted T&G, except that the machined edge of one piece fits over the machined edge of the next.

**BUTT JOINTS** are generally not an acceptable type of joint except on end-to-end applications where the joint is vertical. Butt joints are the method where the siding stops at trim or corners. On hardboard sidings, it is very common to use specially shaped metal joint covers and corners in installation, we stock a variety of these products.

## PATTERNS/VARIETIES

Probably the best way to look at profiles (patterns) and available “looks” is to access the websites listed at the bottom of this handout.

## HANDLING

All siding should be kept dry prior to installation. Store siding flat and covered to prevent waviness. Wood sidings may require acclimation, see exact installation instructions for details. Keep siding clean and maintain uniform moisture content. Store up off of concrete and covered.

## INSTALLATION

Any installation should be in strict accordance to the manufacturer’s instruction. Please ask us for a copy as necessary. All makes of sidings recommend the use of a quality, hot-dipped galvanized nail. Fasteners must penetrate through sheathing and into studs. We urge you to use a spiral or screw shank nail to reduce the amount of nail popping that may occur over time. We strongly urge the use of a weather-resistant barrier – Tyvek, felt paper, red rosin paper, etc. Not only does it provide a better weather tight seal but slows the energy loss your building may otherwise endure. Siding should be installed a

minimum of 6” above the ground. As with all wood products, siding and trim pieces should not come in direct contact with masonry or concrete. Siding applied to dormers or adjacent to roofs, porches, patios, etc., must have a clearance of at least 1” above any surface where water might collect and be properly flashed. Use drip cap above all openings to ensure a weather-tight installation. Nail at all stud locations, over properly prepared walls with a maximum spacing of 16”. Nails must penetrate framing members at least 1-1/2”. Do NOT overdrive nails. Vertical butt joints must fall on a framing member only. Stagger butt joints on subsequent courses for the best appearance and weather resistance. Nail at least ½” from the edge and 1” or more from ends. Do NOT use staples, t-nails or galvanized finish nails as these may void the warranty – all fasteners should have a trim-type head or larger. Flashings are required over doors and windows, chimneys locations, and any other areas to properly shed any moisture.

## CARE

A high quality, paintable caulk is recommended. Caulking should be applied at all joints. Good quality paint (stain) should be used once installation is complete. Any primed product is just that – primed and it is not intended to be a final coat other than during the construction period. Follow all paint manufacturers’ recommendations. Thoroughly paint all exposed joints, especially the bottom edge of the siding and all cut edges/end. Special care should be taken at the ends next to the roofline. Factory primed sidings should be finish coated as soon as possible. Siding must be re-primed prior to finishing if left unpainted for longer than 180 days (certain manufacturers may dictate less time).

## TRIM

Like siding, virtually any trim you use is a non-structural decorative product. It is intended to be applied to structural framing, sheathing or other similar materials. Most other instructions are similar to those regarding siding.

## FOR MORE INFORMATION...

[www.wwpa.org](http://www.wwpa.org)

[www.azek.com](http://www.azek.com)

[www.temple.com](http://www.temple.com)

[www.jameshardie.com](http://www.jameshardie.com)

<http://lpcorp.com/lpsidingproducts/lpabtsiding/products/products.aspx>

[www.miracetrtrim.com](http://www.miracetrtrim.com)