Working with Eastern White Pine Siding & Trim

Application, Priming, Nailing & Pattern Selection
Painted or poly’d, Eastern White Pine (EWP) is an excellent wood for siding and trim, both exterior and interior. It’s easy to work with and readily available from Hancock Lumber thanks to our three fully modern sawmills in Bethel, Casco, and Pittsfield, Maine where we produce more high quality EWP boards than any other company.

Working with any quality material requires some expert knowledge and experience. When you’re working with EWP, there are a few simple steps you should take.

Managing moisture content to ensure a first quality job.

All wood shrinks and swells with changes in moisture content. Even after an Eastern White Pine board has been expertly kiln dried at our sawmill, it continues to be affected by ambient humidity. That’s why it’s very important to minimize any dimensional change after installation by installing siding or trim at a moisture content that matches the local climate as closely as possible.

For example, if the climate in a particular region causes wood to maintain 8% to 13% moisture content annually, the ideal approach is to install the woodwork with moisture content within that range.

Here’s the trick on acclimating Eastern White Pine.

All it takes is a bit of patience and knowing to order materials so they are on-site at least one week before you nail them up.

By storing Eastern White Pine boards for a short period in the right climate, they become “seasoned” and will settle in to the dimension they’ll hold for many decades to come. The boards should be stored, stickered, and protected for one week to ten days prior to application.

Keep in mind that you’re striving for an average moisture content for that region. During extremely dry or wet weather, you may want to wait for a period of average humidity to achieve the desired moisture content.

Priming on all sides and edges is the best approach.

Properly seasoned boards can still pick up moisture after installation and prior to painting. When siding releases this added moisture, joints may open up or buckling may occur.

The best protection against this is to prime or pre-finish the siding on all sides, edges, and ends after it has reached climatic balance and before it is installed. In order to give each board the best protection, it’s important to prime the ends after making fresh cuts during installation. Pre-finishing can also minimize objectionable, unfinished lines where joints open up due to face width shrinkage.

What if the job just won’t wait?

If you have to install unseasoned materials, there are some strategies you can use to allow for or minimize the effects of shrinking and swelling:

- Use as narrow width as possible
- Use patterns that “forgive” some shrinkage such as Board & Batten, Channel Rustic with adequate tongue, Board on Board, Narrow Bevel, etc.
- Let the wood season in-place before applying a finish
- Pre-stain the boards before installation
Patterns and their characteristics.

**WP4/FLAT**
- Tongue and Groove
- Flat Back
- Reversible pattern
- Can be nailed so nail is not visible when put together

**WP2/4 (Pickwick Paneling)**
- Tongue and Groove
- Reversible Pattern with V Joint Back

**DROP SIDING – NOVELTY SIDING**
- Available in Tongue and Groove or Shiplap Joint

**WP18/WP4 (Car Siding)**
- Tongue and Groove
- Reversible Pattern with V Joint Back

**EBCB/WP4 (Edge and Center Bead)**
- Tongue and Groove
- Wp4 V Joint on Back side
- Reversible pattern
- Can be nailed so nail is not visible when put together

**BEVEL (Clapboard, Double Clapboard)**
- Plain bevel may be used with smooth or sawn face exposed
- Recommended 1” minimum overlap on plain bevel siding

**SHIPLAP OR S4S BOARDS**
- Available surfaced or with multiple texture finishes
- Shiplap has 1/2” laps that join as a tight joint
- Widths 8” and over, use two nails 3-4” apart

**2X8 LOG CABIN SIDING**
- Shiplap Joint
- 1 1/2” at thickest point
- Nail 1 1/2” up from lower edge of piece

**CHANNEL RUSTIC (Reverse Board and Batten)**
- Available with a 1/2” or 7/8” Reveal
- May be applied horizontally or vertically
- Widths 8” and over, use two nails 3-4” apart

**NOTES:**
1. Some patterns allow for greater dimensional change than others. Patterns such as Bevel Siding and Channel Rustic have the capability of greater joint movement than patterns such as Tongue & Groove.
2. Apply siding over building paper.
Construction Details

The overall siting and design of a house will affect how well siding performs. There are a number of house construction features that will minimize water damage of outside paint including:

- Wide roof overhang
- Wide flashing under shingles at roof edges
- Effective vapor barriers
- Adequate roof gutters and properly installed downspouts
- Exhaust fans to remove excessive moisture
- Adequate insulation and ventilation of the attic

If these features are lacking in a new house, persistent paint blistering and peeling may occur and the structure then would best be finished with penetrating pigmented stains.

Nails and Nailing

Good nails and nailing practices are a must in proper application of wood siding. Nail locations are included under individual patterns. However, the following data about nails will be very helpful in the selection and use of the right nail for the right use.

Requirements

The following requirements are essential for nails used on EWP siding:

1. Rust-resistant, preferably rustproof. See “Types of Nails Recommended.”
2. Should not cause splitting even when driven near end or edge of siding.
3. Should have adequate strength to avoid the need for pre-drilling.
4. Nails should be able to be driven easily and rapidly.
5. A nail should not emerge or “pop” at any time after being driven flush with siding.
6. The nail head should not cause an unsightly visible pattern on the sidewall.
7. Nail butt joints at the stud or blocking.
8. Nailing is preferred over stapling.

The proper application and nailing of wood siding does much to improve the appearance and durability of both wood and paint by reducing the tendency of the siding to split, crack, and cup with changes in moisture content. When possible, depending on the siding pattern, siding boards should be fastened so boards are free to shrink and swell, thereby reducing the tensile stresses that develop at fasteners.

Types of Nail Recommended

Common iron nails or poor-quality galvanized nails corrode easily and will cause unsightly staining of the wood and paint.

1. Stainless Steel
2. High Tensile Strength Aluminum Nail
   This nail is corrosive-resistant and will not tend to discolor or deteriorate the wood siding. It is an economical nail when the nail count per pound is considered, although it is somewhat more expensive than the common galvanized.
   Hot-dipped galvanizing. Degree of coating protection varies.

When the wood is to be left unfinished to weather or finished naturally with light-colored penetrating stains or water-repellent preservatives, only aluminum or stainless steel nails should be used.

Nail penetration and Spacing

Suggested sizes are minimal and should be longer when siding is installed over other than wood
sheathing and/or sheathing and studs. Recommended penetration into a solid wood base is 1 1/2", 1 1/4" with ring shank nails.

Vertical siding should be nailed to blocking or other wood framing members not over 36" on center when face nailed, and 32" on center when blind nailed.

Horizontal siding should be nailed to studs at 24" o.c. maximum when applied over solid sheathing and 16" o.c. maximum when applied without sheathing.

Nail Shanks

Many nails are smooth shanked and will loosen under extremes in temperature changes. Increased holding power may be obtained by using a ring-threaded or spiral-threaded nail shank. These particular shanks are readily available.

Nail Points

The most commonly used nail points include:

- **Blunt** – reduces splitting
- **Diamond** – most commonly used
- **Needle** – tops in holding but tendency to cause splitting

For the best possible holding power with the least splitting, a blunt or medium diamond and a blunt or medium needle with a ring-threaded shank are recommended.

How to estimate coverage

The following estimator provides factors for determining the exact amount of material needed for basic types of wood siding.

Multiply square footage to be covered by factor (length x width x factor).

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<th>Nominal Size</th>
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<th>AREA FACTOR*</th>
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* Allowance for trim and waste should be added.