



Buyer's Guide to House Siding

A buyer's guide to select the right siding, budget planning and evaluating the latest materials.

Adding or replacing siding can update the look of your home immediately. With so many styles, materials, and applications, there's a siding option for every aesthetic.

In this guide, our house siding specialists provide tips on selecting the right type of siding, share what to consider when budget planning, and insights on the latest advancements in materials.



10 Tips to Pick the Right Siding

With all the options, finding and selecting the right siding for your home can be overwhelming. To simplify the process, our siding specialists share 10 tips for picking the right siding.

1: Look around

Check out the other homes in your neighborhood. If you live in a homeowners association, consult the architectural guidelines in your HOA's governing documents. If your neighborhood is filled with houses that are uniform in look, you'll likely want to choose a siding option that fits in well among your neighbors' homes. However, if each house on your block has a completely unique character, you'll have freedom to choose a more unique siding. The main goal is for your home to stand out in a positive way.

2: Bring in a piece

If you currently have a sample of actual siding you'd like or would like to replace a section of existing siding, bring a piece down to the lumber yard. Unlike most other lumber distributors, J&W Lumber has special machinery that typically match the shape of existing siding. This level of reproduction accuracy will save you from having to disguise areas of difference.

3: Ask yourself how much maintenance you're willing to do

Because the siding on your home is exposed to harsh elements like sunlight, moisture, wind, fire, and possibly salt air or snow, your choice of materials determines how much maintenance you'll be on the hook for. Wood generally requires more upkeep than other manufactured, low-maintenance options.

4: Get clear about your budget

Because exterior cladding must cover such large surface areas, incremental differences in per-foot pricing will add up to major cost differences as you budget your project. Don't be afraid to ask questions down at the lumber yard. If you're still in the research phase, bring in the measurements of the surface area you want to cover and the team will help you determine the rough amount of material you'll need, so you can start to get a sense of which materials you can afford and which are out of reach.

5: Be open to suggestion

There are lots of options in the siding market today, so it's wise to not become totally locked into a single idea before you begin your project. Talk with the team at the lumber yard about the look you're trying to achieve. They may introduce you to more efficient or cost-effective materials that you might not have otherwise known about or considered. You don't have to stray off course, but it's smart to familiarize yourself with all your options.



6: Consult with your family

Because the family home affects every member of the household, this is not a decision that should be made unilaterally. Share your ideas with others living in your home and get their input. This will help ensure that everyone is satisfied with the finished product.

7: Decide if you're going to hire a contractor or do it yourself

The decision between hiring a professional and DIYing will make a difference on your final budget, but keep in mind that different materials can be more challenging to install. Basic wood or aluminum siding may be user-friendly enough to handle on your own, but we would encourage you to hire a contractor for more complicated installs.

8: Evaluate the configuration of the area

The size of the area you are trying to re-side may determine your choice of material. For example, Allura Fiber Cement siding comes in sections with 12-foot lengths. Trying to cover a 15-foot wall in this material will result in lots of unavoidable seams. Speak with the team at the lumber yard to determine the best material for your project configuration.



9: Bring pictures

When it comes to exterior siding, a picture really is worth a thousand words. Scour the internet or home design magazines for examples of siding you love. Share these with the team at the lumber yard and they'll help you find exactly what you're looking for.

10: Don't forget about the downfall

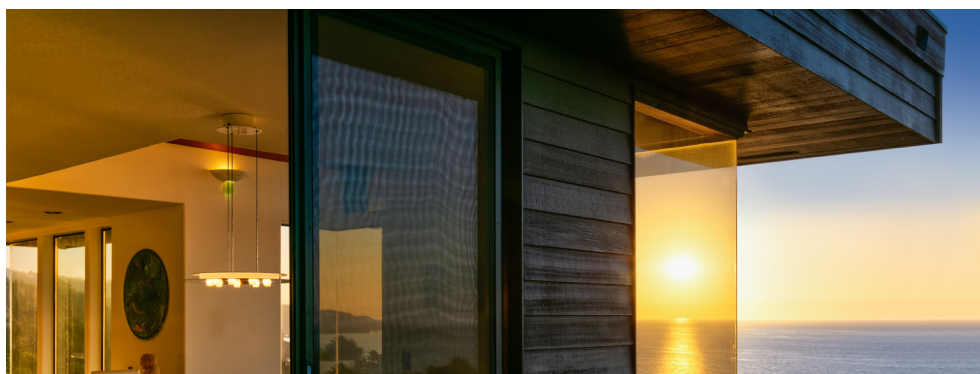
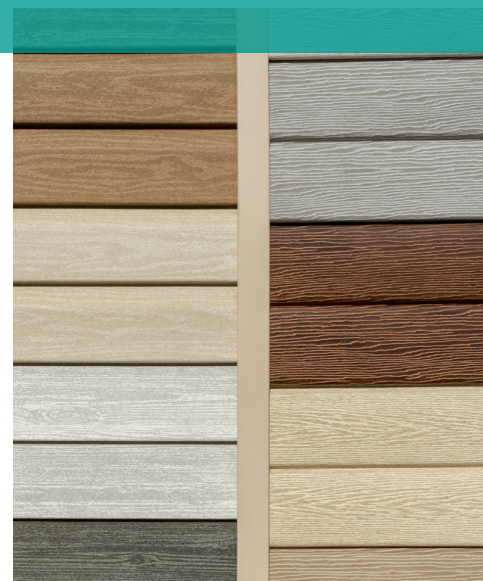
As with every construction project that uses natural materials such as wood, there are bound to be a few pieces that aren't usable (metal and wood alternatives are so uniform that this generally isn't a concern). In the industry, we call this unusable material "downfall". We typically recommend purchasing an additional 5% on top the amount of material your project calls for to make sure you're covered in case you need to swap out any boards. Be sure to keep this in mind as you are budgeting your project.



Wood Siding: What You Need to Know

Siding generally isn't top-of-mind for local homeowners. Many houses in this area are surfaced with stucco, a perfectly fine choice for Southern California's moderate weather. That said, drive around any neighborhood and look a little closer: you'll see lots of attractive siding options that make a huge difference in a home's style.

If you're thinking of adding a little – or a lot – of wood siding to your house, here's what you should know.



Need to match existing siding?

If your home has wood siding that needs replacing and if you want to match the same look, bring a sample board of your existing siding down to J&W Lumber. Our custom milling team can match the pattern most of the time.

Get Inspired

Go online or check out homes in your area to see what types of wood siding materials are in use and how the siding is applied.

There are many different wood siding materials available, each delivering a unique aesthetic.



- **Planks** –Apply vertically or horizontally for a crisp modern look. Or, use planks featuring knots for a rustic style.



- **Board and batten** – A clean exterior look, which is also sometimes called “barn siding”



- **Shingles** – Individual shingles are reminiscent of seaside homes



- **Lap** – Also known as “clapboard,” this is a classic look where boards overlap slightly



- **Logs** – Logs create a rustic, outdoorsy log cabin feel



- **Tongue and Groove** – Interlocking wood milled to look warm and inviting

Check out color combinations, contrasting material choices, and how much siding is actually in use. You can combine materials and color schemes to create beautiful effects.

Learn About Materials

Now that you have a sense of what your final result will look like, start talking with the team at J&W Lumber. We'll explain the differences between the types of wood, which is best for your application, and if there are any cost-effective alternatives to consider.

In addition to freshly milled lumber siding, there are lots of other innovative options:



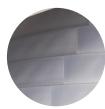
- **Fiber cement siding** – While technically not a wood product, fiber cement siding resembles traditional wood, arranged in a “lap” style configuration



- **Composite siding** – Composite siding has been engineered and produced to appear and perform like wood but without any of the required maintenance



- **Reclaimed wood siding** – Achieve the look of aged, weathered wood without the risk of weakened materials by using specialty manufactured “reclaimed wood” siding



- **Metal siding** – Though not wood, it's worth a mention. Metal siding is a durable, long-lasting option that creates a crisp, contemporary look.



Which Natural Woods Are Best for Siding?

If you decide to go the natural wood route, your choice will likely be dictated by a few factors like appearance, availability, and price.

Some great options for natural wood siding are cedar, redwood, or any of the hardwoods like Ipe or Red Mangarís. Pine is a more common option in other areas of the U.S. but we don't see much in Southern California, as it doesn't grow nearby and freight costs increase the price.

Though rough Douglas fir is fine for fences, timbers, or patio covers, we advise against its use for surface-grade applications.

Estimating Materials Costs

Because wood is a natural resource, the cost of lumber fluctuates. Speak to the team at J&W Lumber to determine which wood siding options are most economically priced right now. Our lumber specialists may be able to point you toward species you had not considered to conserve your budget.

Equipped with the cost of the wood itself, calculating the cost of materials is just a matter of multiplication.

Measure the width and height of the area you would like to cover with siding. Don't worry about accounting for windows or doors – it's always better to over-buy siding materials than to come up short.

If you're using natural wood products, you'll need to purchase an additional 5-10% materials to account for downfall (as mentioned above) so be sure to add that into your final materials cost.

Always Use a Contractor to Install Siding

Applying siding to your home's exterior may look easy, but there's a lot more to it than meets the eye – literally, which is why we typically suggest you hire a professional to do the job right.

To avoid moisture getting trapped between your siding and your home's true exterior wall, and most importantly intruding into your home, installation must be done carefully. It's also important to make sure most siding doesn't run to the ground. Though some engineered materials like Boral trim are approved for ground contact, most natural wood siding materials should not be exposed to raw earth's damaging moisture.



Manufactured Siding: What You Need to Know

While traditional wood siding is still a common material in use in older homes, newer homes feature manufactured siding options that perform just as well, if not better, than their natural wood counterparts – all for a comparable price.

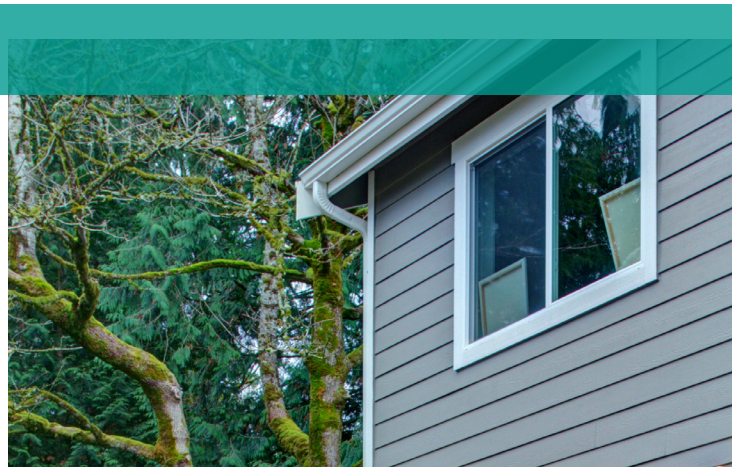
If you think wood siding is the only option, think again. Here's what you need to know about manufactured siding.

Innovation: Fiber Cement Siding

Fiber cement siding is a new option for exterior commercial and residential surfaces. Allura, one of the industry's most popular brands of fiber cement siding, is available in-store at J&W Lumber. Produced by mixing cellulose fiber and sand, silica, and Portland cement, Allura siding products are fire-resistant, moisture-resistant, and weather-resistant.

Allura features lots of siding applications, including shake, lap siding, panels, trim, and more. Many products feature realistic wood grain that echoes the look of natural lumber without the costly, time-consuming upkeep required by real wood.

As a manufactured product, Allura products carry a robust, 50-year warranty, further ensuring your siding investment stays protected.



Usability: Ground-Contact Products

Natural lumber siding should never come in contact directly with the ground and should be avoided for high moisture-collection areas such as windowsills. Moisture starts eroding wood from the first moment of contact. Over years, moisture-laden wood will start to rot and require replacement.

The solution? Boral TruExterior fly-ash siding and trim.

Fly-ash is a by-product recovered from coal combustion. Because it's an engineered material, fly-ash resists damage from moisture, heat, direct sunlight, salt air, or insects. This means that TruExterior siding and trim products are approved for ground contact and can be combined with other siding on the areas that are likely to face more moisture exposure.

Just like fiber cement siding, TruExterior products require minimal maintenance, which makes these products an ideal siding option for anyone who wants to “install it and forget it.”

Style: Trex Cladding

“Cladding” is an umbrella term referring to the outermost shell of any building. It's the exterior surface that the weather touches.

Trex cladding is an attractive, durable choice that instantly imbues any structure with an elegant, modern style. This composite siding material is made from 95% reclaimed wood scrap and recycled plastic. Trex is available in a variety of natural-looking colors with grain that mimics the aesthetic of real lumber.

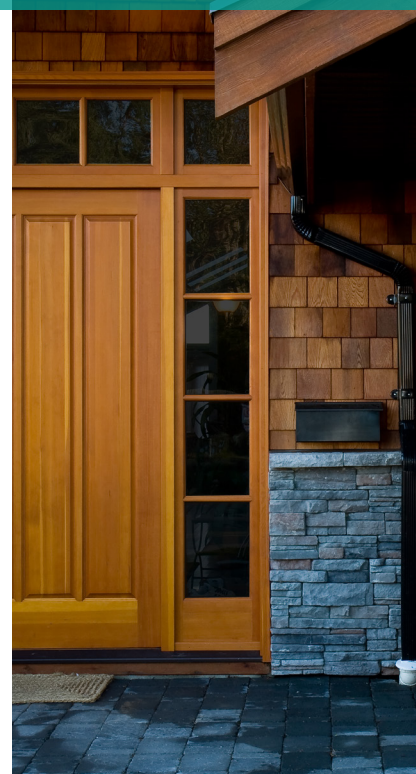
Unlike natural wood, Trex resists fading or staining from sun or rain, and is impervious to moisture or pest damage. This guarantee is backed by a 25-year “fade and stain” warranty. Just like all other composite siding materials, one of the main advantages of Trex is that it doesn't require expensive, frequent maintenance.

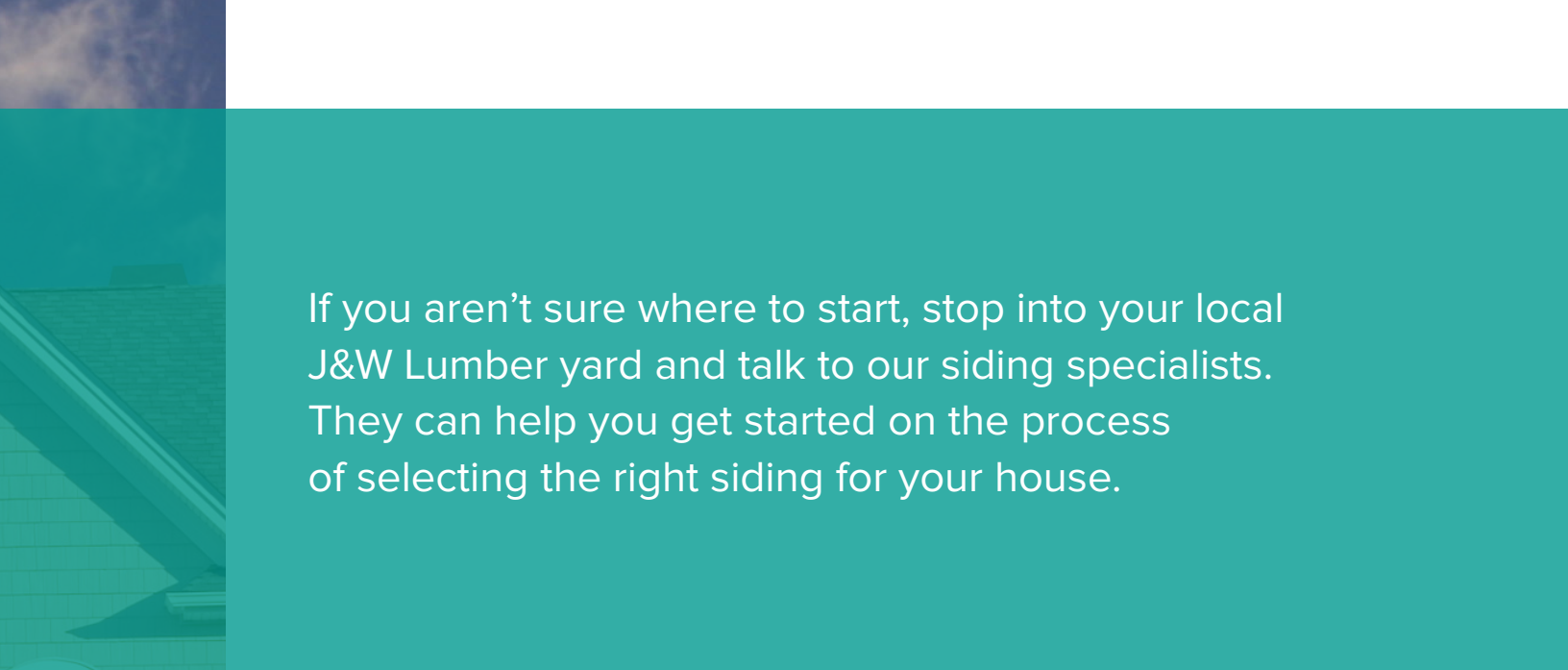
Manufactured siding is making major waves throughout the construction industry. Today's man-made siding is durable, long-lasting, attractive, low maintenance and perfectly priced. If you're thinking of replacing the siding on your home – or installing new siding configurations – talk to our siding specialists about your options.

The Right Siding You'll Love

Picking the right siding can be a big decision, since it has such a major impact on the style of your home. By taking your time, comparing your options and keeping these tips in mind, you'll be able to select an attractive, long-lasting material that you love for years to come.

If you aren't sure where to start, stop into your local J&W Lumber yard and talk to our siding specialists. They can help you get started on the process of selecting the right siding for your house.





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