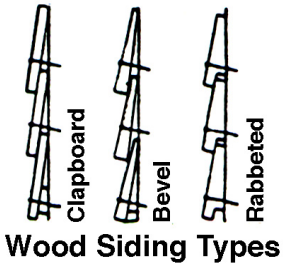
HOMEOWNER REPAIR GUIDE

REPLACING WOOD LAP SIDING

For do-it-yourself repairs

LAP SIDING AND SIDING SHINGLES

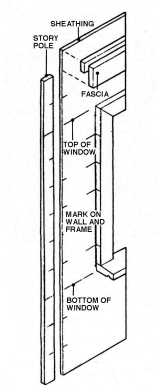
Common to most homes (and particularly to homes built more than 50 years ago) are two types of exterior wood coverings. The first one, often used on the whole house, but also commonly found on just the bottom half of a house, is called “lap siding.” Lap siding consists of straight horizontal boards, about six inches wide. The second type, most often found on the top half of a house, but occasionally covering a whole house, is “siding shingles.” These are rectangular pieces of wood attached in rows, resembling roofing shingles in appearance.



Wood siding types

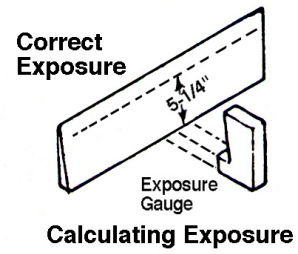
Lap siding comes in several different widths and thicknesses; the most common is 6” wide and 3/4” thick. If you need to replace any pieces because they are warped or split, however, take a piece with you to the lumberyard to match up the size used on your house.

HOW LAP SIDING IS INSTALLED



Story pole

If you understand how lap siding is installed, you will have a better idea of how to repair it. The bottom piece is put on first. Subsequent pieces are installed from the bottom up, with each piece put on top of—and “lapped over”—the preceding piece. Where the pieces meet going across a row, the ends are butted together, and that joint is caulked. Trim pieces are then installed around doors and windows, and on corners *(see illustrations)*.



Calculating exposure

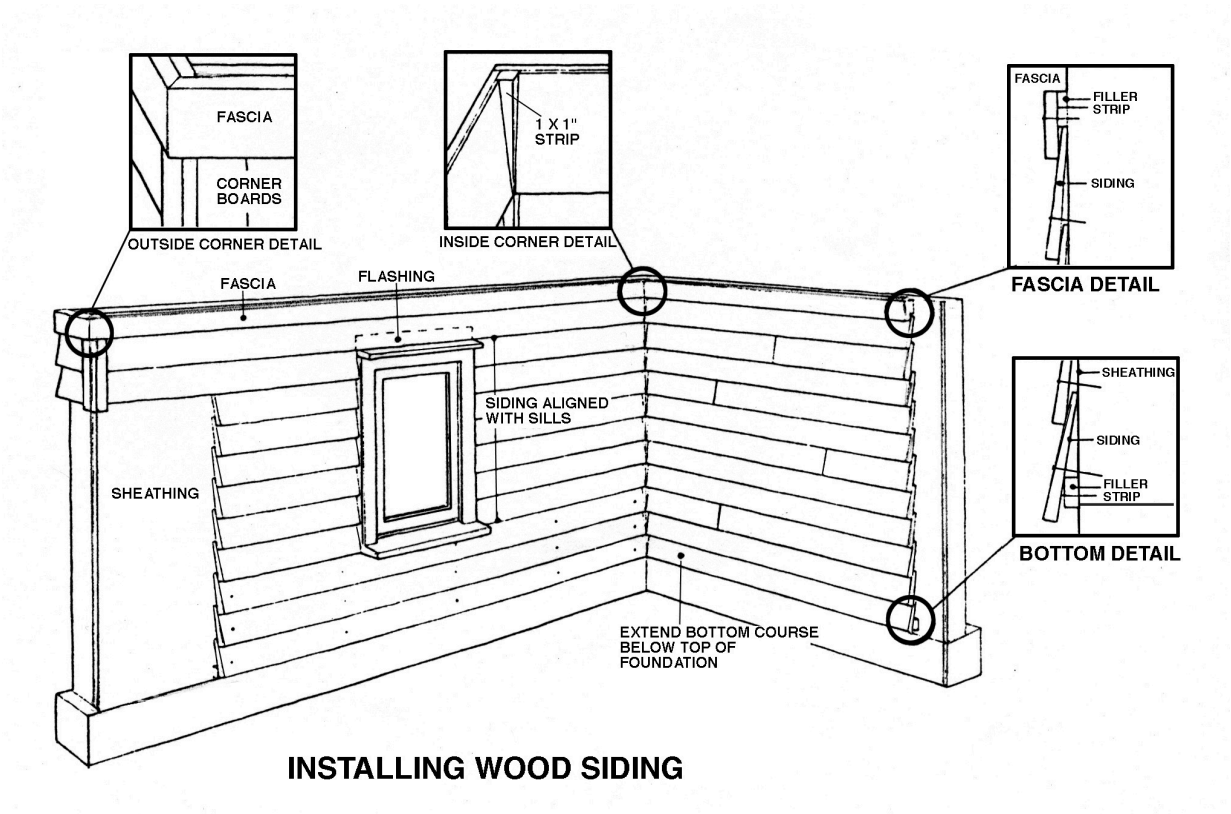
You'll notice that a piece of siding is wider than the area it is to cover. For instance, a 6” wide piece of siding will cover only a 5-1/4” wide area. The extra 3/4” “laps over” the piece below it. This overlapped area is where the siding is nailed, in such a way that the nail heads don't show.

REPLACING A DAMAGED PIECE

1. To remove a piece in the middle of a wall, you first need to pry up slightly the piece above the one you are removing.
2. Then, pry up or loosen the board that needs replacement. It's often easiest to split this piece with a hammer and a wood chisel to get it out.
3. Then, use a hacksaw blade to cut off the nails that are under that top piece of siding (rather than trying to take them out).

4. After you have cut your new piece of siding, slip it into place, line it up on either side with the existing siding, and nail through the new piece near the bottom.

5. Finish the repair by sinking the nails about 1/8" below the surface of the wood and covering over the nail heads with wood putty.



Installing wood siding — corner, fascia and bottom details

Home Repair Resource center

Home Repair Resource Center empowers homeowners to maintain their homes for sustainable and diverse communities.

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