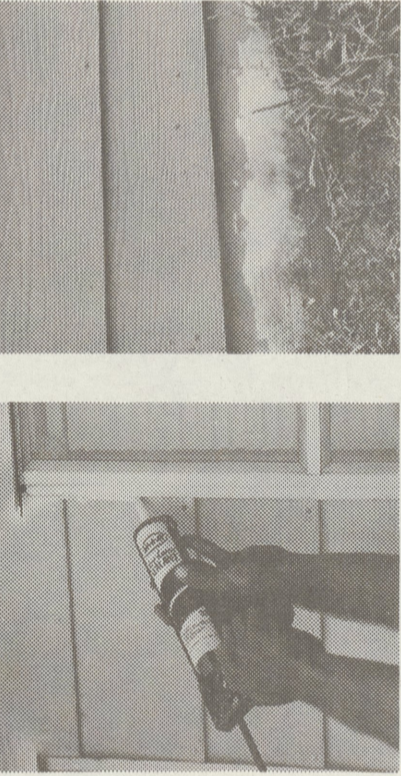


Seven common errors of wood-based siding

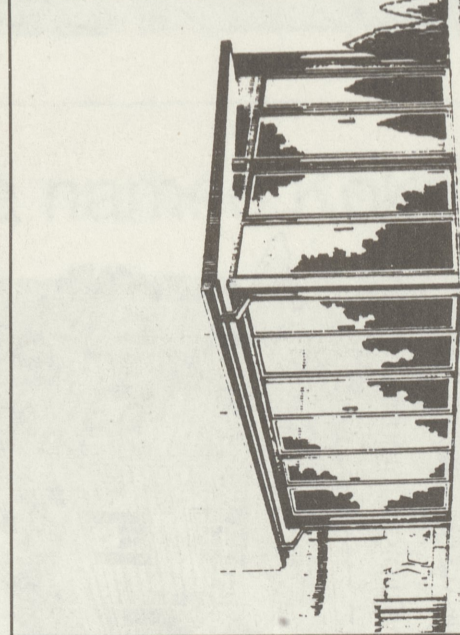
Wood composite siding and other wood-based siding materials have been used extensively for residential construction throughout the United States for decades. Wood products represent affordable cladding material that has allowed the price of homes to be within reach of many market segments. When these products are properly installed and finished by a qualified builder or installer, and receive normal homeowner maintenance, they will perform as designed and look great for many years.

- Flashing**—Properly installing simple metal flashing over windows, doors and other horizontal surfaces prevents water from penetrating the exterior wall of the home.
- Caulking**—All gaps around doors, windows and other wall openings should be filled with long-life caulk as a barrier against water entry.
- Painting**—Two coats of high quality, low- or no-chalking acrylic latex paint will protect the siding from the weather. It is particularly important that paint is properly applied to the bottom edge as well as the face of the siding.
- Roof/Wall Detail**—A two-inch clearance should be left between the roof and siding where the roof abuts a vertical wall, and the gap should be flashed to divert rain water.
- Concrete Contact**—An air space or vapor retardant membrane must be kept between wood or wood composite siding and masonry to prevent deterioration of the siding. Siding must not come in direct contact with masonry.
- Grade Clearance**—Maintaining a minimum six-inch clearance between the siding and finished landscape grade, will protect the siding.
- Rain Gutters**—According to HUD Minimum Property Standards, rain gutters must be installed on any single story home with less than 12 inch overhang.



Many problems with wood-based siding are not caused by the siding itself, but by errors in application. Gaps around doors, windows and other wall openings should be filled with long-life caulking. Maintain a six-inch clearance between siding and the finished landscape grade.

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Entry door facts and fantasy

When it comes to exterior entry doors, there was a time when things were simpler for homeowners. Styles and materials were fewer, making choices easier.

Today, however, a wide variety of choices confront the homeowner. Designs and materials have multiplied and the price tags on exterior doors range from about \$100 to several thousands of dollars for a hand-made, prefinished door.

For hundreds of years, a wood door was the only product available. An easily worked natural material, wood was readily available. In the 1950s and 60s, steel doors began to make their appearance and in the late 70s and 80s, steel doors made a significant jump in their share of the market. They were presented as more secure, durable and requiring less maintenance than wood. In the 1980s fiberglass doors began to make an appearance and in the 90s attained a small but significant market share.

Both steel and fiberglass doors are offered with features and designs to make them look like wood, but without the "problems" associated with wood.

The wood industry was also working on its technology while steel and fiberglass technology were developing. Today's engineered wood products are stronger, more durable, and perform far better than their ancestors.

A wood entry door remains the standard by which other doors are designed and judged. Most competing door products use wood for interior strength and dimensional stability. Some door manufacturers even use wood to create thermal breaks between interior and exterior surfaces.

The following tips may help homeowners separate some of the facts from the fantasy when it comes to the variety of door products on today's markets.

FANTASY: One type of door product is better than another.



Many wood doors offer high-end features such as decorative glass and raised molding.

FACT: Most products on the market today are well made. The buyer's best guide begins with his or her own budget and personal taste. Two good indicators of quality on any particular door are attention to detail by the manufacturer and the warranty that accompanies the door.

FANTASY: One type of door performs better than another.
FACT: Best performance for any door is assured by proper installation, finishing and maintenance.

FANTASY: One kind of door is more energy efficient than another.

FACT: Yes and no. Some doors with interior insulating materials achieve higher initial test results. Over time, however, many of these materials lose much of their insulating value. The best guarantee of energy efficiency through the years is correct installation, finishing and maintenance. Also, no homeowner should ever try to save money on a weather-stripping system, because weather-stripping is a key to energy performance.

FANTASY: Some exterior door products are maintenance-free.

FACT: Nothing in this life is maintenance free.

Suspended ceilings find a home

Believe it or not, suspended ceiling panels can provide a great deal of architectural detail at low cost. Here, a scalloped ceiling panel imparts a classic ornamental look to a living room.

BRUNNING

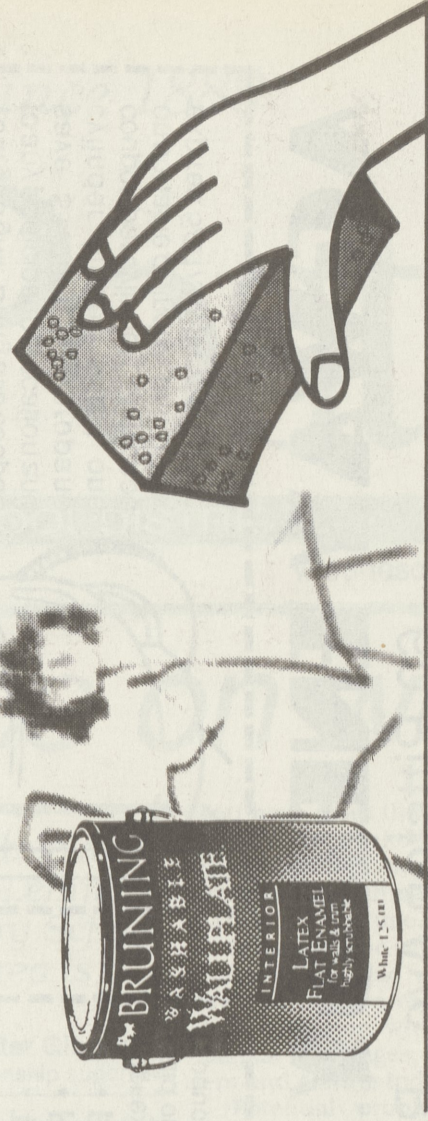


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