



HOME BUILDERS ASSOCIATION of Dayton

Choosing Your Siding

By Greg Vreeland, President
Home Builders Association of Dayton

The saying “you can’t judge a book by its cover” not only pertains to a good fiction novel, but also is very true with today’s new homes. While the architecture of the home dictates what materials and how the materials are used, you would be surprised that many exteriors of homes today are built with materials that are relatively new and improved yet maintain the character of the design.

The exterior material or siding of your new home strongly impacts the home’s appearance and you will find, your lifestyle. As with anything exposed to the elements, maintenance is critical for the longevity of the material, ask anyone who owns a boat that is kept at a lake.

There are several great choices for the exterior of your new home. Below is a list of several of the most popular materials as a resource to help you choose exterior siding.

Wood Lap Siding

Modern science has given us many synthetic wood-look products, yet solid wood (usually cedar, pine, spruce, redwood, cypress, or Douglas fir) is still available, at a cost. With required maintenance and painting wood siding can be preserved for a very long time. Wood lap siding can be stained rather than painted.

Engineered Wood Siding

Engineered wood, or composite wood, is made with wood products and other materials. Oriented strand board (OSB), hardboard, and veneered plywood are examples of engineered wood products. Engineered wood comes in lap siding or panels that are easy and inexpensive to install with less waste due to imperfections. Because the textured grain is uniform, engineered wood does not look exactly like real wood. Still, the appearance is more natural than vinyl.

Cement Fiber Siding

Fiber cement siding can have the appearance of wood, stucco, or masonry. This durable, natural-looking material is often called by its brand name HardiPlank®. If you want the look of authentic wood with a bit less maintenance, cement fiber siding is a good option. Fiber cement siding hold paint very well, is fireproof, termite-proof, and may have a warranty up to fifty years.

Vinyl Siding

Vinyl is made from plastic. Unlike wood or cedar, it won’t rot or flake. Vinyl is less expensive to install than most other siding materials. The latest generation of vinyl siding performs and looks much better than its earlier versions. The greater thickness and reinforcement/insulation systems remove much of the “wave” effect once seen with most installations. Also, the manufacturers simulate many different architectural details such as shakes and fish scales. There is very little maintenance and gives the option of an affordable choice for siding.

Cedar Shingle Siding

Cedar shingles (sometimes called “shakes”) on a new home blend beautifully with wooded landscapes. Made with multiple, natural cedar shingles factory applied to a substrate for faster and improved installation as brought the cost down from the labor intensive, individual installation. The shingles are usually stained to minimize peeling.

Brick Veneer

The most popular exterior in the Dayton area is brick. Made of fired clay, brick comes in a wide variety of earthy, eye-pleasing colors. Although it is relatively more expensive, brick is desirable because it can last the test of time and probably won’t need any patching or repairs for the first twenty-five years.

Stone and Synthetic Stone

If you have ever been to our nation's capitol, you will quickly realize that stone is one of the most durable of all building materials. Granite, limestone, slate, and other types of stone are beautiful and nearly impervious to the weather. Unfortunately, they are also extremely expensive. Precast or synthetic stone veneers and facings look and feel very natural, but the prices are more affordable. The trade term "lick and stick" stone describes the ability to apply the stone to a wood framed wall without the expense of a foundation beneath.

Synthetic Stucco

Synthetic stucco will look authentic and offers insulation qualities that provide an energy efficient aspect. Newer systems are installed with a water management system to allow for drainage. The color is often mixed in with the stucco compound and will last for many years. The ability to sculpture the base allows for designers to be very creative with the architectural details of the home.