Wood Grain Panel Installation Recommendations

TOOLS & SUPPLIES NEEDED

Tape measure	**Putty sticks & wood filler**
Level	**Utility knife**
Drill	**Saber or jig saw**
Miter box & saw	**Hammer**
Screw driver	**Caulk & caulking gun**
Pencil & compass	**Sealer/trim paint**
Finishing/panel nails	**Nail set**
Rubber mallet	**Shims**
Adhesive	

SAFETY FIRST

Be sure to wear safety glasses and ear protection while working on your project. While cutting and creating wood dust, wear a dust mask. For your protection and that of anyone near your work area, always think about what you are going to do before you take action.

PLANNING AND MEASURING

Estimate the number of panels needed by measuring the room circumference in feet and dividing by four. Cutouts for large openings (such as windows and doors) can often be used to panel small areas, such as above a window. Check the existing wall condition. You may apply panels with adhesive directly to surfaces that are level, sound and clean. Nail directly into the studs when installing your paneling over existing paneling, wallpapered walls or surfaces which will not support adhesive. Sand down any protrusions in the wall for a smooth fit. If your walls are not plumb, add furring strips to create a level, grid like surface. These steps will also provide additional rigidity to your wall. Use either 1"x2" or 1"x4" kiln dried lumber or 1/2" plywood strips cut 2" wide. Starting at the top, space strips horizontally 16" apart, using shims to line them up for true vertical plumb. Add a strip at the base. Starting in the corner, place vertical strips every four feet between your horizontal furring.

BEFORE YOU BEGIN

Condition your panels in the same atmospheric condition and same room that the panels will be installed. Stand them along the long edge (or lay flat) with wood sticks spaced between them so that air circulates around each panel. Let stand for 24 hours if installation is above grade and 48 hours if installation is below grade level. Remove all trim. Turn off the electricity before moving all receptacle covers. Place your paneling around the room in an attractive arrangement of grain or pattern. Previewing is especially important when you use panels with a definite direction in the pattern. Veneer panels will very in color and grain, preview and arrange the panels in a pleasing sequence. Number the backs of the panels in the sequence that they will be installed on the wall. Stain or paint wall surfaces at the point where your panels will be joined. Use a color which matches the edges or grooves of your panels. For all below grade applications, always use a vapor barrier between the outside walls and the studs.
Note: It is not recommended to install panels 1/8 " or thinner directly to studs or without a sound supportive backing.

CUTTING PANELS

Double-check all measurements before cutting. Start your installation in the corner that you see first when entering the room. Trim the panel 1/2" shorter than the wall height for easy fitting. A utility knife will cut your 1/8″ or thinner panels quickly and easily. Score the cut line (lightly first) several times until you cut through from face to back. The first panel is the corner stone. Do it right and all of the other panels will fall quickly in line. Use a carpenter's level to assure that the panel is vertically plumb. If your panel isn't vertically plumb to your starting edge, you will need to scribe it for a custom fit. For this step, you will need an inexpensive compass. Begin by measuring from the last full sheet of paneling to the farthest point on the uneven wall. Make a note of that distance from the edge of the last full panel installed to the nearest point on the uneven wall. Make a note of that distance. Subtract the second measurement from the first to get the "scribing" distance. Set the compass to this measurement. Position the panel you need to trim and fit so that it overlaps the last full panel installed by the "scribing distance". Use your level to position and then temporarily tack the panel to be scribed; making certain that the panel is vertically plumb. Run the point of the compass down the irregular wall while the pencil traces the same pattern onto the face of the panel. Cut along this pattern, test fit, then install. When using a table or hand cross cut saw, always make your cut with the finished side up. If you choose to use a circular or jig saw, make your cuts from the back side of your panel. Always use a fine tooth or paneling blade (not a rip blade). Cut and fit each panel individually, checking each for plumb. A good rule of thumb is to cut your panels so that you can put factory edges together and any cut or scribed edge in the corners. Allow at least 1/16″ gap between the sides of each panel and 1/4′ at the top and bottom for expansion and contraction.

FASTENING PANELS

Using panel adhesive is fast and effective, especially on solid walls. Always test fit each panel before you apply adhesive. After you test fit, apply adhesive in the following manner or according to directions on the adhesive package. Run zig-zag beads on the back of the panel, every 16" top to bottom, around openings, and about 2" in from all edges. Tack panel into position at the top with color matched panel nails, press panel to the wall, then pull the panel away for the recommended time to set up the adhesive. Next, press the panel to the wall and lightly tap with a rubber mallet to assure a tight bond. Finish by nailing at the base to hold the panel in position while the adhesive dries. When nailing, hammer nails to within 1/8" of the panel face, then finish nailing with a nail set. This will protect the face of your panel. If you apply adhesive directly to furring strips rather than to the back of the panel, follow the same procedure: Nail to secure the paneling. Let adhesive set up. Then, using a rubber mallet, tap the panel along the furring strips to set the adhesive.

SPECIAL CUTS

 You can fit your paneling around any obstacle. To make these special cutouts, measure horizontally from the last panel installed to the top and bottom edges of the opening. For easy fitting, allow 1/4" between the panel and the opening. Then, measure up from the floor and down from the ceiling. Transfer measurements to the panel and cut out the opening. For small openings, drill 4 holes at the corners of the marks, reverse the panel, and cut with a jig saw.

FOR A PROFESSIONAL LOOKING FINISH

Be sure to finish the job with coordinating trim moulding and color caulk in all nail holes on the face of the panels.