

Siding and cladding inspection checklist

Cladding is a rain screen, not a seal. What keeps water out is the barrier and the flashing behind it, both of which disappear the moment the first board goes up. Photograph the wall before it is covered and the finish work becomes cosmetic instead of critical.

Who runs it: Siding contractor; the builder or GC verifies the barrier and flashing before cladding starts. When: Barrier and flashing before cladding; fastening and clearances as the work progresses; sealant at completion.

Behind the cladding

- ☐ Weather-resistive barrier continuous and lapped shingle-style
Horizontal laps with the upper sheet over the lower; tears repaired before cover. 3 photos required
- ☐ Drainage plane or rain screen gap as specified
Furring or drainage mat continuous, with the gap open at top and bottom. 2 photos required
- ☐ Penetrations flashed and sealed to the barrier
Hose bibs, lights, vents and conduit sealed to the barrier, not to the siding. 3 photos required

Flashing

- ☐ Kick-out flashing at every roof-to-wall intersection
Present, correctly sized, and integrated over the barrier below. 2 photos required
- ☐ Step flashing lapped with each course
One piece per course, not a continuous strip of sealant. 2 photos required
- ☐ Head flashing at openings and horizontal transitions
Metal with an end dam, barrier lapped over it. 2 photos required

Cladding installation

- ☐ Fastener type, length and spacing per the manufacturer
Fasteners hitting framing, not just sheathing; no overdriven heads dimpling the face. 2 photos required
- ☐ Course exposure consistent and lines straight
Snap lines and consistent reveal; check across openings where drift shows. 2 photos required
- ☐ Joints and butt seams detailed per the system
Flashing or joint covers behind butt joints where the system requires them. 2 photos required

Clearances and closeout

- ☐ Ground, roof and hard-surface clearances maintained
Measure it. Landscaping and paving are the usual culprits later. 2 photos required
- ☐ Sealant only where the system calls for it
Butt joints and terminations sealed; drainage paths left open. 2 photos required
- ☐ Finish undamaged and touch-up complete
No cut edges left unsealed on products that require it. 1 photo required