

Shiplap Installation Guide

PREPARATION

Step 1: Acclimate the Wood

- Let the shiplap boards sit in the room where they'll be installed for 2–3 days. This helps them adjust to indoor humidity and reduces gapping or movement later.

Step 2: Prep the Wall

1. Remove outlet covers and any trim or baseboards.
2. Use a stud finder to locate studs and mark them with a pencil — you'll want your nails to hit studs for the best hold.
3. Clean the wall surface to remove dust and loose debris.

LAYOUT

Step 3: Measure and Plan

1. Measure your wall height and width to calculate how many boards you'll need.
2. Add about 10% extra for cuts and mistakes.
3. Decide if you'll install horizontally (classic look) or vertically (taller, cleaner lines).

Step 4: Snap a Chalk/Level Line

- Use a level or chalk line to mark where the first board will go — typically starting at the bottom of the wall so all boards above stay straight.

Tools and Materials Needed

- Tape measure
- Level
- Stud finder
- Pencil
- Circular saw, miter saw, or jigsaw
- Hammer or nail gun (16-ga brad/finish nails recommended)
- Safety gear (glasses, ear protection, dust mask)
- Shiplap planks
- Construction adhesive (optional but recommended)
- Nails (1½-inch finish or brad nails)

TIPS

- ✓ Keep boards straight: Always check level, especially on long or tall walls.
- ✓ Stud nailing: Find studs before you start so every board gets solid support.
- ✓ Allow for movement: Wood expands/shrinks with humidity — leave small gaps at floor/ceiling edges.



INSTALLATION

Step 5: First Board

1. Apply a bead of construction adhesive to the back of the first board (optional but strengthens the bond).
2. Place the board bottom edge 1/4–1/2" above the floor to allow for expansion.
3. Use a level to make sure it's perfectly straight, then fasten it to the wall studs with nails through the face of the plank.

Step 6: Add Boards

1. Slide the next board into place so the rabbeted edge latches snugly.
2. Use nails every 12–16" into studs or blocking.
3. Continue up the wall, checking periodically with your level to keep boards straight.

Step 7: Cut Boards as Needed

- At the end of each row or near outlets/windows, measure and trim boards with your saw so they fit precisely.

Step 8: Final Row

- You may need to cut the last row to fit under the ceiling (for horizontal installation), leaving a small gap for expansion.



FINISHING TOUCHES

Step 9: Fill and Sand

1. Use wood filler or spackle on any nail holes.
2. Lightly sand smooth once dry.

Step 10: Paint or Seal

1. Most shiplap comes primed and ready for paint — paint it your desired color once installed.
2. For unfinished shiplap, prime it and then paint. For a natural wood look, seal it with a clear coat or stain instead.

Step 11: Replace Trim and Outlets

- Reinstall baseboards, trim, and outlet covers for a polished finish.

