

Frequently Asked Questions – LP® SmartSide® Siding, Trim, and Soffit

1. Can soffit be used for siding?
 - a. No. The soffit is designed specifically for a protected soffit application whereas siding is designed for a direct exposure to the weather. Refer to the installation instructions.
2. Is the LP SmartSide architectural series cedar shake siding primed?
 - a. Yes. It is primed on the face and edges.
3. Can I install SmartSide over foam sheathing?
 - a. Yes. The fastener length must provide 1.5-inches of penetration into the wood stud or combined wood sheathing and stud. Avoid compression of the foam sheathing. Refer to the foam sheathing manufacturer's installation instructions, the LP SmartSide installation instructions, and the LP SmartSide code reports. LP SmartSide precision series panel siding provides wall bracing when installed over wall assembly with maximum 1-inch thick foam sheathing on unconditioned side and ½-inch gypsum on the conditioned side
4. Can I use a traditional transparent or semi-transparent stain on SmartSide products?
 - a. No. These stains are typically low in solids and provide less protection from UV and other weathering effects. There are new acrylic latex paints commercially available that can replicate the appearance of a semi-transparent stain. Refer to the installation instructions for proper finishing.
5. Can I use a solid stain on SmartSide products?
 - a. Yes. These stains are generally lower in solids so increased maintenance will probably be required. Refer to the installation instructions for proper finishing.
6. Can I leave Knotty Barnside project panel natural or unpainted?
 - a. No. It must be primed and painted. Refer to the installation instructions for proper finishing.
7. Can I use a transparent or semi-transparent stain on Knotty Barnside?
 - a. No. These stains are typically low in solids and provide less protection from UV and other weathering affects. There are new acrylic latex paints commercially available that can replicate the appearance of a semi-transparent stain. Refer to the installation instructions for proper finishing.
8. Can I install SmartSide trim over lap siding, rather than butting to it?
 - a. Yes. Special precautions should be taken to provide proper spacing between the lap siding and the trim, as well as fastening of the trim.
9. Can SmartSide panel be installed horizontally or diagonally?
 - a. No. LP SmartSide panel siding is designed specifically to be installed parallel to the framing. Refer to the LP SmartSide® Precision series panel siding installation instructions.

10. What kind of nails do I need?
 - a. Corrosion resistant fasteners must be used to avoid rust staining and erosion of the fasteners. Please refer to the proper installation instructions and code report for the minimum size and type, as well as the fastening schedule.
11. If the installation is not consistent with the application instructions, will it void my warranty?
 - a. The LP® SmartSide® limited warranty will remain in effect with the exception that any issue caused by an installation that varies from the LP SmartSide installation instructions will not be the responsibility of LP. Refer to the installation instructions for proper installation.
12. Can I install SmartSide® lap vertically and cover the joint with battens?
 - a. No. LP SmartSide siding is designed for horizontal installation only. Ungrooved LP SmartSide Precision series panel siding is available for board and batten applications. Refer to the installation instructions for proper installation.
13. What is the fire rating?
 - a. LP SmartSide is a class C (III) rated product when tested according to ASTM E84. All LP SmartSide siding can be used in a 1-hour fire rated assembly when it is installed over 5/8 type-X gypsum, which is consistent with other siding types such as fiber cement siding.
14. What kind of paint must I use?
 - a. Acrylic latex coatings designed for wood composites are highly recommended. Refer to the installation instructions for proper installation.
15. How do I install SmartSide siding® over SIP or ICF assemblies?
 - a. Follow the LP SmartSide installation instructions. The SIP manufacturer will need to specify the type of corrosion resistant fastener and the fastener spacing to meet the minimum required wind-load values. The fastener spacing must not exceed the maximum fastener spacing stated in the LP SmartSide installation instructions. If you have further questions, contact the LP Technical staff at (800) 450-6106. Consult your local code authority to ensure compliance with the local building code.
16. Is it beneficial to prime the back side of the LP SmartSide® siding or trim?
 - a. No. Back priming has proven to be useful to control tannin staining with some types of solid wood siding, trim, and some composite sidings. LP SmartSide products are designed to perform without back priming.
17. Should we caulk at the overlap of the lap siding?
 - a. No. Refer to the installation instructions for proper installation.
18. Can we rip lap to create a smaller size?
 - a. It may be necessary to rip the lap siding at times where the wall terminates at the soffit or around penetrations. Use special care to prime and paint any exposed wood that may result. Ripping the lap siding to make narrower lap siding is not recommended.

19. Can LP® SmartSide® trim and fascia be miter cut?
- Do not miter cut the edges or ends of the trim at corners. Miter cuts or “picture framing” around door and window openings are acceptable. Butt joints are preferred but scarfed joints are permitted with LP SmartSide trim and fascia. All joints must be spaced 3/16 inch to accommodate expansion during equilibration. Refer to the installation instructions for proper installation.
20. Can I overlap my LP SmartSide siding more than the recommended 1”?
- Yes but the siding should not project beyond the thickness of the trim. The specified overlap and edge-spacing of the nails in the installation instructions are minimum requirements. Refer to the installation instructions for proper installation.
21. Are there any special considerations when applying any panel siding to the interior of my home and is this application allowed and will my warranty be good?
- Using LP SmartSide in an interior application is acceptable. Please review the material safety data sheet (MSDS) before using the product indoors.
22. When panels are installed, is it ok to allow the panel to rest on the flashing?
- No. A drainage space is required between the panel drip edge and the flashing. Refer to the installation instructions for proper installation.
23. Now that your fiber products have Zinc Borate, can they be used west of the Cascades?
- LP SmartSide Architectural and Precision Series Siding can be used west of the Cascades. Certain LP SmartSide Foundations Series siding cannot. See the Smart Side warranty for complete details.
24. Are LP SmartSide products “green”?
- The green attributes built into LP products today are recognized in green building certification programs around the country, most often in the “Materials & Resource Efficiency” section.
 - LP uses 100% SFI-certified wood – a renewable resource from small diameter, rapidly regenerating trees
 - LP SmartSide products are treated with environmentally friendly borates to resist rot, termites, and mold
 - LP SmartSide is durable and comes with a 50-year limited warranty
25. Can LP SmartSide® siding be used in a one-hour fire-rated wall assembly?
- Yes. It must be installed over 5/8-inch type-x gypsum the same as fiber cement siding.
26. Are LP SmartSide® products compliant with the building code?
- Yes. LP SmartSide Precision series Lap and Panel siding is covered by the ESR-1301 code report. LP SmartSide Foundation series lap and panel siding, and architectural shake and panel meet the requirements of ANSI 135.6 and therefore satisfy the requirements of the 2006 International Building Code. Code report NER-626 also represents the Foundation and some of the Architectural series siding products. The code reports are available at:

- i. http://www.icc-es.org/reports/pdf_files/NES/NER626.pdf
 - ii. http://www.icc-es.org/reports/pdf_files/ICC-ES/ESR-1301.pdf
27. Can LP® SmartSide® siding be fastened directly to the studs?
- a. Certain LP SmartSide products can be attached to framed walls without sheathing such as Precision series siding. Refer to the LP SmartSide installation instructions for the specific type of LP SmartSide siding you are using. Note that a code-approved breathable water-resistive barrier is required between the siding and the studs.
28. Why are the LP SmartSide code reports important?
- a. The code reports are published by the International Code Council and demonstrate the safe use of the siding. The code reports are useful to engineers, architects, and code officials to ensure the siding is used within its design limits.
29. Is a house-wrap required behind the LP SmartSide siding?
- a. A code-approved, breathable, water-resistive barrier is required behind all LP SmartSide® siding as per the International Building Code. Refer to the installation instructions for proper installation.
30. Can I install LP SmartSide® siding differently than what is specified in the LP SmartSide installation instructions?
- a. LP strongly recommends LP SmartSide siding be installed according to the installation instructions. If the siding is installed in a manner inconsistent with the instructions, the siding will continue to be warranted under the LP SmartSide limited warranty although any issue caused by the inconsistent installation will not be the responsibility of LP. Refer to the installation instructions for proper installation.
31. Is LP SmartSide® siding permitted for use in California's high fire hazard areas specified in chapter 7 of the California building code?
- a. Yes. All LP SmartSide Foundation and Precision series siding is listed by the California State Fire Marshals office as accepted siding. Special installation methods are required in high fire hazard zones. Refer to the report at http://www.lpcorp.com/Literature/LP_SmartSide_SFM_Report.pdf for installation details.
32. Why is it important to space LP SmartSide® siding at all joints?
- a. LP SmartSide siding will expand naturally as its moisture level balances with the surrounding environment. Spacing the joints provides the necessary room for the siding to expand. This is also an important reason to properly apply a non-hardening caulk or sealant. Refer to the installation instructions for proper installation.
33. Do LP SmartSide products resist wind loads?
- a. Yes. Refer to the LP SmartSide code reports ESR-1301 and NER-626.
34. Is LP SmartSide panel siding structurally rated?
- a. Some LP SmartSide siding is structurally rated. Refer to the LP SmartSide code reports ESR-1301 and NER-626.

35. Can the butt joints on LP SmartSide lap siding be pan-flashed rather than caulked/sealed?
- The butt joints of LP SmartSide Precision Series lap siding can be pan-flashed without caulk, sealant, or joint cover if the siding is prefinished and the ends of the siding are factory primed and prefinished. All field cut ends must be caulked/sealed regardless of field priming or painting. Refer to the installation instructions for proper installation.
36. Is LP SmartSide siding hail resistant?
- LP SmartSide Precision Series siding has been tested and qualified by an independent lab according to the acceptance criteria in AC321. A hard-body impact test is part of that acceptance criteria to represent hailstones, hammer blows, baseballs, or other impacts.
37. How do I talk to an LP representative about installation questions?
- Call our Warranty and Technical Services staff at 800.450.6106. There is a staff member available Monday – Friday during regular business hours.
38. Does LP SmartSide siding have an R value?
- No. Lap siding inherently provides air leakage at the overlap and panel siding is typically grooved so the value is reduced. According to APA-The Engineered Wood Association, OSB and plywood sheathing have a thermal resistance value of less than 0.55 at thicknesses less than 7/16”
39. Does LP SmartSide provide resistance to sound transmission through an exterior wall?
- Yes. It will differ between lap and panel siding and thickness is a factor. APA-The Engineered Wood Association and the National Association of Home Builders provide techniques that can be used to decrease the sound transmission through the wall assembly.
40. Are there places where I can't use LP SmartSide products?
- Certain Foundation Series siding is not warranted for use in Alaska, Hawaii, Northern California, or west of the Cascades in Washington, Oregon, and California. LP has no other geographic limitations on the use of SmartSide products. Always check your local building code for any special restrictions.
41. How do I know what fastener to use?
- The installation instructions include the fastening specifications. For further detail in seismic or high-wind load areas, refer to ESR-1301 or NER-626 for additional fastening details.
42. How much paint do I need to apply and how often do I need to repaint the siding?
- Refer to the “Finishing Instructions” section of the LP SmartSide® installation instructions and your paint manufacturer’s installation instructions. Proper maintenance is important to the lasting performance of any exterior siding material.
43. How do I know LP® SmartSide® siding is permitted for use in my area?
- Check with your local code authority. LP SmartSide is widely recognized and accepted. Refer your local official to code report ESR-1301 for

Precision Series products and to NER-626 for Foundation Series and some Architectural Series LP SmartSide siding.

44. Can I use LP SmartSide® siding in Canada?
 - a. Yes, refer to CCMC listings 11826 and 12353
45. Will freezing conditions affect the performance of LP SmartSide® siding?
 - a. LP SmartSide products are resistant to freeze thaw damage.
46. Can LP SmartSide® siding be used in humid climates?
 - a. Yes, it is designed and tested to withstand wet humid conditions. Some restrictions do apply to certain Foundation Series siding products. Refer to the LP SmartSide limited warranty for additional details..
47. How is the LP SmartSide® Precision Series siding different from OSB?
 - a. Commodity OSB sheathing and LP SmartSide Precision Series siding both use geometrically controlled wood strands to provide superior strength and stiffness. LP SmartSide Precision Series siding is treated with the SmartGuard® process, bonded together with increased levels of a durable exterior binder system, overlaid with a resin-impregnated prime-base overlay, and edge coated with a proprietary water-resistive primer coat.
48. How is LP SmartSide Foundation Series siding different from hardboard?
 - a. LP SmartSide Foundation Series siding is the only fiber based siding product in the world treated to resist decay fungi and termites with the SmartGuard process
49. How long is the LP SmartSide® warranty?
 - a. The LP SmartSide limited warranty is a 50-year warranty with a 5-year repair or replace feature. Refer to the LP SmartSide warranty for details.
50. Can LP SmartSide® siding and trim be installed so it contacts the ground?
 - a. No. LP SmartSide siding is designed to be used in above-ground applications.
51. Why do I have to space the joints of the LP SmartSide® siding and trim?
 - a. LP SmartSide products expand as their moisture content balances with jobsite conditions after it is installed. It is important to properly space the joints 3/16-inch so there available room for the siding to expand.
52. Can I rip the LP SmartSide trim?
 - a. Ripping the trim, and fascia is not recommended, as it will leave the edges unprotected. If the material is ripped, special care must be taken to prime, paint, and seal all exposed wood fiber as described in the finishing section of the respective installation instructions.
53. Can LP SmartSide trim be used as fascia without a subfascia?
 - a. Yes, certain LP SmartSide Fascia can be installed without a subfascia but it cannot be used structurally. Refer to the installation instructions for proper installation.
54. Can I use a finishing or casing nail on LP SmartSide® trim?
 - a. No. A corrosion resistant box or common style must be used. Refer to the installation instructions for proper installation.
55. How long should I wait before I paint my LP SmartSide® Trim and Siding?

- a. LP® SmartSide® products should be painted as soon as possible after installation. They must be painted within 180-days of installation. Refer to the installation instructions for proper finishing of the siding and trim.
56. Can LP SmartSide® siding be blind nailed?
- a. LP SmartSide Precision Series lap siding can be blind nailed. Refer to the installation instructions for proper installation.
57. Do all of the nail heads need to be caulked?
- a. Nail heads that are recessed or counter sunk must be caulked. Refer to the installation instructions for proper installation.
58. Does LP SmartSide vented soffit provide enough ventilation to satisfy the building code?
- a. Yes. LP SmartSide vented soffit provides ten square inches of ventilation for every twelve inches of length of soffit.
59. Do I have to apply a screen to the vents of the LP SmartSide vented soffit?
- a. A screen is not required to be applied to the back of the LP SmartSide vented soffit. The opening of the vent complies with the 2006 International Building Code.
60. Which LP SmartSide soffit products are rated to be used as roof sheathing?
- a. LP SmartSide Precision 76 Series soffit is the only soffit approved to be used as a structural roof sheathing.
61. What are the allowable maximum spans for LP SmartSide siding?
- a. Most LP SmartSide siding is limited to 16-inch framing spans. 76 Series Precision lap siding and 190 Series Precision panel siding may be used with up to 24_-inch framing spans.
62. Do I need special tools to work with LP SmartSide siding?
- a. No. LP SmartSide siding can be installed using common woodworking tools.
63. Can LP SmartSide Architectural Series cedar shake siding be installed with the straight edge down?
- a. Yes. It can be installed with either edge down. If the random edge is down, start at the lower left corner of the wall. If the straight edge is down, start at the lower right corner of the wall. Refer to the installation instructions for proper installation.
64. Can LP SmartSide Architectural Series cedar shake siding be blind-nailed?
- a. No. Refer to the installation instructions for fastening.
65. Is it okay to exceed the minimum overlap on LP SmartSide Foundation and Precision Series lap siding?
- a. Yes, but do not let the overlapped thickness of the siding exceed the thickness of the trim. Do not overlap the siding less than the minimum specified amount. Refer to the installation instructions for proper installation.
66. Can stucco be applied directly against LP SmartSide trim?

- a. No. The trim must be separated from the stucco and other masonry materials with an impervious flashing or air space. Refer to the installation instructions for proper installation.

LP SmartSide®