

Brighten your house with new aluminum trim

New aluminum trim can brighten an older house as effectively as new accessories rejuvenate last year's clothes, if the rest of its exterior is in good condition. It can also save you time and money because you won't have to paint the new trim.

Aluminum trim comes in a variety of colors. White is particularly effective in setting off a dark color house, while other colors, ranging from light to dark shades, let you match old brick, stucco, shingle and other wood surfaces. Or, you can use a contrasting color trim to perk up the outside of your home.

Gold, browns, blues, greens, reds and the earth tones are all available. Currently, dark brown trim on beige houses is especially popular, and the reverse scheme can be equally effective if your house is a darker color.

These baked-on finishes are warranted to last many years, and the metal is durable, corrosion resistant even in damp climates, and does not expand and contract as much as vinyl plastic does.

Variety of uses

Standard aluminum trim is generally used for the roof overhang (soffit), the roof edging (fascia), and gutters and downspouts. However, new installation techniques make it possible for a skilled technician to duplicate even the most complicated designs by forming them from aluminum coil stock (a roll of flat aluminum), also available in a variety of colors. Other siding materials are difficult to form to required shapes.

New gutters and downspouts can put the finishing touch on new house trim. In addition to carrying water from the house efficiently, a good gutter system protects the fascia, eliminates streaks and stains on the face of the house, and helps prevent water damage to the foundation. It's also a factor in keeping basement walls dry.

Before you add new gutters, though, make sure your roof is in good condition, and repair any damage to the fascia.

Choose contractor carefully

The integrity of the contractor you choose, and his ability to work with aluminum coil stock as well as the standard aluminum trim products, will determine the quality of the completed work. Remember, if you want original architectural design duplicated, don't settle for less.



IMAGINATIVE USE of aluminum trim gives this 60-year-old Tudor style house a facelift, and the brown color contrasts smartly with the tan stucco surface. The gables were covered with matching brown aluminum siding and the windows were framed with the same color aluminum coil stock. The new trim visually reduced the excessive height of the house and eliminated the need for painting.

The owner of one 30-year-old, two-story colonial house wanted to retain the curved contours of the old wood fascia, because it softened the severity of the brick surface.

She found a contractor who could achieve an exact replica of the old trim by forming it precisely from aluminum coil stock and concealing the seams. The house now has a fresher, snappier appearance, and painting has been eliminated.

A very steep, 1920s-style Tudor stucco house is an example of how the exterior can be improved by the imaginative use of aluminum trim.

Here, the owner wished to retain its basic appearance, enhance it where possible, and, again, eliminate as much painting and repair work as possible.

The tan stucco surface was left intact, but soffit, fascia and all other trim was covered with brown aluminum, and new brown color gutters and downspouts were added.

Then, to cover the original natural wood shakes in the gables, matching double-four-in. aluminum siding panels were used. The contrasting brown color and the horizontal pattern of the newly covered gables reduce the appearance of excessive height.

To complete the job, all the window frames, including the dormer, were built out with furring and then covered with brown coil stock cut to exact fit.

Even very old, turn-of-the-century houses are candidates for new aluminum trim. Typical is a rambling old New England

one. It is impossible to differentiate it from wood.

Modern houses can also benefit from adding aluminum trim. The owners of a dramatic 10-year-old contemporary home with brick, masonry and glass panels, and wood trim, decided they wanted total freedom from exterior painting.

They had the long lengths of wood soffit covered with white aluminum, and the aluminum fascia stretching along the length of the house covered with

black aluminum.

If your house was sided with aluminum 15 or 20 years ago, you may want to add aluminum trim if it was not part of the original re-siding package. Most owners of such houses are finding that it costs as much now to paint that wood trim as it did to re-side the whole house years ago.

If you decide to add aluminum trim to your home, select your contractor as carefully as you choose the material, for it is

his expertise that will give you the most effective, efficient job.

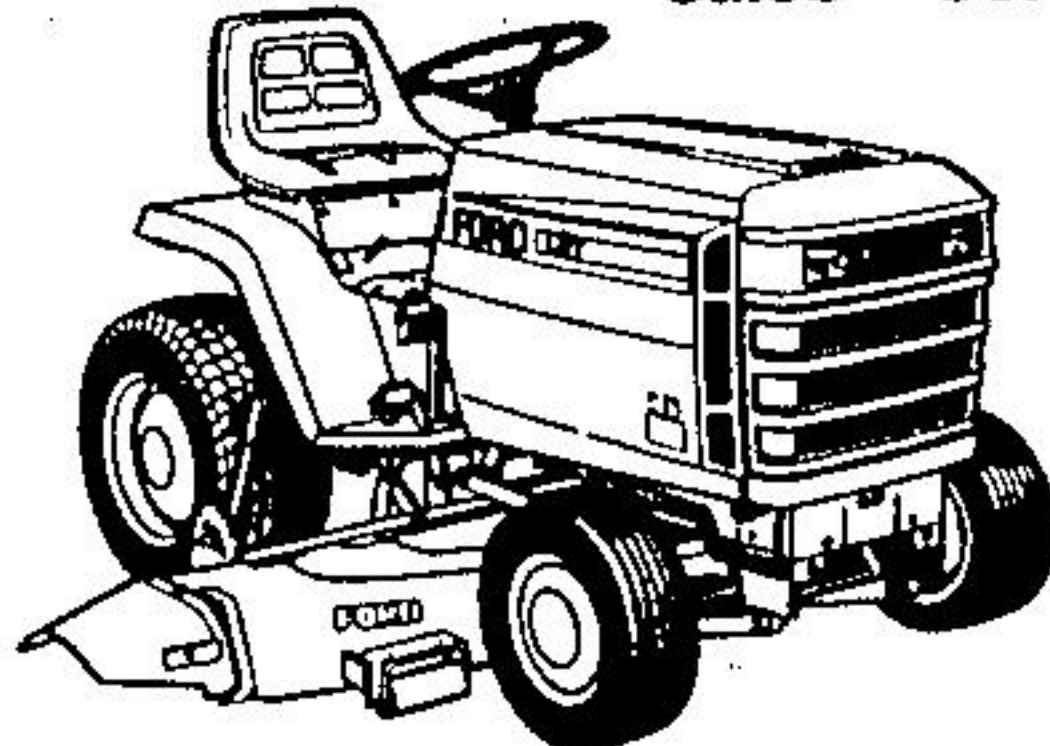
The trim must be installed so that water does not enter behind it, and should be properly sealed and caulked.

Check around

To help you find the right contractor, check with neighbors and friends who have had their homes re-sided or the trim applied, talk to local bankers, the Chamber of Commerce and the Better Business Bureau.

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