



10 questions for your customers

What to ask before selling cedar shakes & shingles

Some customers know exactly what they are looking for. However, the most common call we get usually goes like this: “Hi, I have a customer who wants to buy cedar shakes or shingles, but I’m not sure what to sell them.” This guide walks you through the most essential questions you’ll need to ask your customer to ensure you order the right product and quantity the first time around.

Here’s what to ask — and why — so that you can effectively gather everything you need to know without a lot of back-and-forth. Then you can bring that request right to us and our team will provide a prompt, competitive bid that delivers exactly what they need.

1

PROJECT SCOPE

Is it new construction, a repair, remodel, or addition?

For **new construction**, the key is to understand the specific look desired. Architectural style (such as Victorian or Cape Cod), the look and feel (such as modern or rustic), and any details about the site (such as high humidity) are helpful in determining the choice of materials.

For **remodels, repairs and additions**, the most important consideration for most customers is compatibility between the new product to what exists on the structure. Ask the customer to provide details or measurements of existing, installed shakes to ensure a seamless match.

FOLLOW UP WITH:

(For new construction): Can you provide **inspiration photos** of the look and style you’d like to achieve?

(For remodels or extensions): Can you provide **photos of the existing** shakes and shingles?

2

PROJECT TYPE IDENTIFICATION

Will installation be on a sidewall or a roof?

If the installation will be on a **sidewall**, we’ll likely have greater coverage from each bundle of shingles because sidewall exposures are generally larger than roof exposures.

If the installation will be on a **roof**, ensure that the roof pitch is no less than 4:12, otherwise a tighter exposure — and therefore more material — might be required.



3

DESIRED LOOK AND FEEL

What aesthetic or overall look are you aiming for?

Taper-sawn shakes often contribute to a modern look, while **hand-split** shakes provide a more rustic appearance.

There are many options for shingles, including **sanded, grooved, stained**, or even **fancy-cut**.

Consider asking for the property address so that you can do a bit more research on the neighborhood and what nearby properties look like: Zillow and Google's street view can be helpful. This can help inform both the aesthetics and the price point that the customer is looking for.

4

CEDAR TYPE PREFERENCE

What type of cedar are you considering?

Each cedar type has unique properties:

Western Red Cedar has a distinct aesthetic appeal, particularly for the feel of natural wood. Its color ranges from light straw to pinkish-brown, and weathers to a silver-gray patina. It is known for its natural durability and resistance to decay. It offers a mix of both flat and vertical grains, depending on the grade you choose.

Alaskan Yellow Cedar is often chosen for taper-sawn shakes because it is known for its straight and uniform vertical grain. It can achieve a premium 100% vertical grain when milled, making it popular on premium installations. It ranges in color from pale yellow to light brown, and develops a silver-gray patina over time. It is highly resistant to decay and insects.

Eastern White Cedar is perfect if you're trying to achieve a classic, Cape Cod aesthetic. Its flat grain is used for siding and it takes stain exceptionally well, so there is a wide variety of customization options. Its natural color is light yellow to medium brown and it weathers gracefully to a silver-gray hue. While generally durable, it is considered less resistant to decay than Western Red or Alaskan Yellow cedar types.

5

MATERIAL MANUFACTURING SPECIFICATIONS

Do you want a hand-split or sawn look?

Do you prefer a 16-, 18- or 24-inch length?

Hand-split shakes offer variations in thickness (heavy, jumbo, medium), and provide a more rustic appearance due to the natural variations in the wood.

Taper-sawn shakes offer a more precise and uniform appearance and are typically 24 inches long by 5/8 inch thick at the butt. They can be thicker by special order. Taper-sawn shakes are basically a thicker shingle.



6

EXPOSURE EVALUATION

What exposures are planned for the roof and sidewall?

Roof exposures are often standard, but the exposure might decrease based on the pitch (angle) of the roof.

Sidewall exposures vary significantly, impacting coverage per bundle. For extremely long exposures, a second “course” of shakes might be required.

7

PRESERVATIVE TREATMENT NEEDS

Do you require any fire treatment or CCA treatment?

Fire treatment or CCA treatment serves as common preservatives, ensuring longevity and protection against external elements.

Treatments also require 316 stainless steel fasteners.

8

ACCESSORY REQUIREMENTS

What accessories are needed for your project?

What type of fasteners will be used for this project?

A ridge cap, starter, felt, or cedar breather might be required.

Choosing between nails and staples, stainless or galvanized, and the type of galvanization are all critical to the long life and durability of a project. Installers might also need guidance on nail lengths, which vary based on the type of shake or shingle, any accessories or underlayments used, and the installation location. Guidance on nail guns to prevent splitting is also important.

Cedarwood Products offers an in-depth [Fasteners Guide](#) to answer all of these questions, to help you ensure you buy the right product and the right amount.

9

TIMING REQUIREMENTS

When do you expect to need this material?

Believe it or not, not all shakes and shingles are available all year long. This could be because the mills have backlogs of orders, or they are unable to harvest appropriate shake wood, due to river flows, the ability to harvest in poor weather or fire conditions, and the ability to cut when the wood is not frozen.

10

BUDGET REQUIREMENTS

What budget do you have for this material?

Good news: the days of super-expensive cedar are over. You can now get a very nice value product for most projects, or you can pay a premium for top-tier cedar shingles that will knock most architects’ socks off. We’re here to help you choose based on your budget.

Print, clip and post this near your phone:

10 Questions to Ask Your Customers

1. Is it new construction, a repair, remodel, or extension?
For new construction: Can you provide inspiration photos of the look you like?
For a repair or addition: Can you provide photos of the existing shakes and shingles?
2. Is this project for a sidewall or roof?
3. What aesthetic or overall look are you aiming for?
4. What type of cedar are you considering?
5. Do you want a hand-split or sawn look?
Do you prefer a 16-, 18- or 24-inch length?
6. What exposures are you planning for the roof and the sidewall?
7. Do you require any fire treatment or CCA treatment?
8. What accessories are needed for your project?
What type of fasteners will be used for this project?
9. When do you expect to need this material?
10. What budget do you have for this material?

We'd love to help you! Call 800-547-8920.



NOW, WE HAVE ONE QUESTION FOR YOU...

How can we help you serve your customers?

At Cedarwood Products, our goal is to help you sell cedar to your customers. We provide expert advice and support for wholesalers and retailers (one-step distributors).

We'll answer your questions, help you find obscure products, and ensure your customer is equipped with everything they need for the job. We provide competitive and informative bids, to ensuring you get your order right the first time around.

Want to learn more? We offer free seminars to help your salespeople learn about cedar and how to sell it more effectively. Watch our latest seminar, [Cedar Shakes and Shingles 101](#), or call us to schedule a live seminar with Q&A time for your team.

Give us a call at **800-547-8920**, or email contact@cedarwoodinc.com, for help with your next project.



417 S 28th Street
Springfield, OR 97477
800-547-8920