

Nail Material Selection Guide

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Material Comparison by Environment

Material	Corrosion Resistance	Cost	Best For	Avoid In
Bright Steel (Uncoated)	None	Lowest	Interior dry areas only, temporary work	Any moisture exposure, exterior use
Electro-Galvanized (EG)	Light	Low	Interior, light exterior, short-term protection	Harsh weather, treated lumber, coastal areas
Hot-Dip Galvanized (HDG)	Excellent	Moderate	Exterior siding, roofing, treated lumber, fencing	Direct saltwater contact, very harsh chemicals
Stainless Steel 304	Superior	High	Marine, coastal, treated lumber, food service	Budget-conscious projects where HDG sufficient
Stainless Steel 316	Extreme	Highest	Direct saltwater, harsh chemicals, marine docks	Interior work where less expensive suffices
Aluminum	Excellent	Moderate-High	Cedar, redwood, aluminum siding (prevents staining)	Structural applications, high-load connections
Copper	Superior	Highest	Cedar roofs, slate roofing, historic restoration	Budget projects, hidden applications

Application-Specific Material Recommendations

Application	Recommended Material	Why
Interior Framing	Bright steel or EG	No moisture exposure, economical
Exterior Framing	HDG or coated	Weather protection, cost-effective
Pressure-Treated Lumber	HDG or stainless (304)	Resists chemical corrosion from treatment
Cedar/Redwood Siding	Stainless or aluminum	Prevents tannin staining, no rust marks
Roofing (Asphalt)	HDG roofing nails	Weather resistance, appropriate head size
Roofing (Cedar/Slate)	Copper or stainless	Longevity matches roof material, no staining
Marine/Coastal (within 1 mi)	Stainless 316	Salt air highly corrosive
Marine/Dock (direct water)	Stainless 316	Direct saltwater contact requires highest grade
Interior Trim	Bright finish nails	No corrosion concerns, economical, paintable
Exterior Trim	HDG or stainless finish	Weather exposure requires protection
Composite Decking	Stainless or manufacturer spec	Prevents staining, follows warranty requirements
Concrete/Masonry	Hardened steel (bright)	Indoor use; HDG for exterior

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