

Redwood

TECHNICAL DATA SHEET

The No-Maintenance Option: Naturally Weathered Redwood

Redwood can be left unfinished, unlike many other woods...

With its inherent dimensional stability and heartwood decay-resistance, redwood lumber is one of few woods that can be left unfinished. This no-maintenance option results in a look often preferred for a rustic weathered appearance. Years of testing by the U.S.D.A. Forest Products Laboratory have shown that redwood is among a group of woods that erode at only $\frac{1}{4}$ inch of wood fiber per century in unfinished exterior applications. Because of these qualities, many centuries-old redwood homes and other buildings now being recycled and renovated, have been found to be in excellent condition, requiring a minimum of structural repair or replacement of siding or trim.

Color changes due to weathering

As redwood weathers, several natural color changes take place. These changes may occur over a period of years and will vary from one climate to another.

Color changes will vary depending upon climate...

In a damp or humid climate, redwood used outdoors will go through two stages, the first being a darkening of the wood. As time goes on, this darkening may be rinsed away by rain and the redwood will weather-bleach to a soft driftwood gray. A redwood structure sheltered from rinsing rains may remain dark throughout its lifetime. Therefore, the site of the structure plays an important part in the decision to leave the wood unfinished.

In drier climates, unfinished redwood may not darken. Instead, the wood will gradually turn a silvery tan, becoming lighter in color as the natural weathering continues.

Infinite variations of color

The effects of natural weathering will not be the same on all sides of a house. This is because redwood's color changes are caused by sunlight and water, and different areas of a house usually are exposed to different amounts of each.

Two boards installed side by side may also vary in color because of the infinite variations of color and texture offered by redwood

lumber. This is one of the refreshing, inherent qualities of a natural material such as redwood, compared to the artificial uniformity of synthetic products.

Color changes are reversible

These natural color changes, a result of the weathering process, are completely reversible by following the guidelines presented in CRA's Technical Data Sheet "Color Restoration of Redwood Siding and Decks".



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