



# APA Panels for Soffit Applications

APA trademarked panels can enhance the appearance of almost any roof overhang. Quality APA panels are also an appealing alternative to other materials used in soffit applications. Other advantages include:

- Stiffness and strength
- Lightweight
- Negligible shrinkage, warping, or twisting
- Ease of fabrication and installation
- Availability

There is a variety of APA face grades from which to choose. Selecting the appropriate panel depends primarily on whether the soffit is open or closed.

Recommended spans for open and closed panel soffits are given in Tables 1 and 2. The recommendations in Table 1 for open soffits also apply to combined roof/ceiling construction. Panels are assumed continuous over two or more spans with the long dimension or strength axis across supports for both applications. For appearance purposes in open soffit construction, provide adequate blocking, tongue-and-groove edges, or other edge support such as panel clips. Minimum capacities are at least 30 psf live load, plus 10 psf dead load.

For open soffit construction, panels designated Exposure 1 may be used.

Exterior panels should be used for closed soffits (Figure 2). In open and closed soffit construction where Exposure 1 sheathing is used for roof decking, protect panel edges against direct exposure to the weather with fascia trim.

**Finishing.** Although unsanded and touch-sanded grades of plywood are often used for soffits, optimum appearance and finish performance is achieved by using panels with Medium Density Overlay (MDO), or textured (such as APA 303 Siding) or sanded A-grade faces.

FIGURE 1  
OPEN SOFFIT

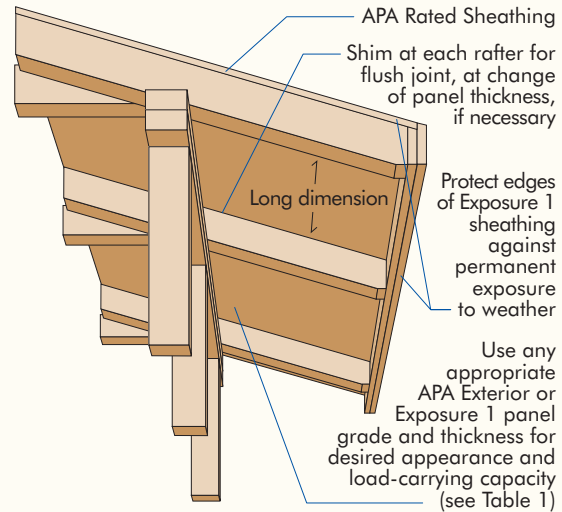
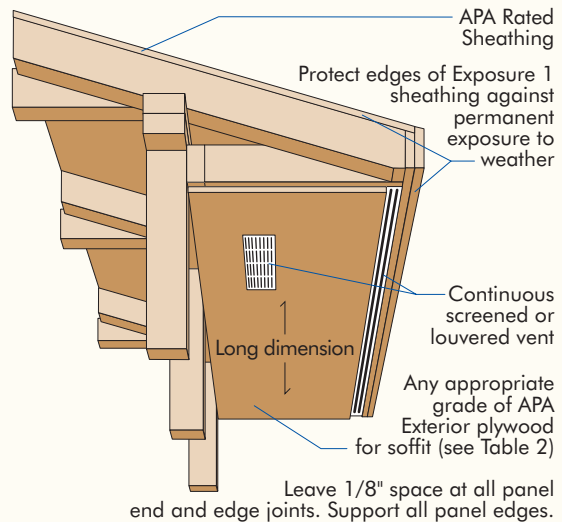


FIGURE 2  
CLOSED SOFFIT



Top-quality acrylic latex house paint systems perform best and are the only systems recommended for A grade.

Face checking (separation between fibers parallel to the grain of the face veneer) can be expected on non-overlaid plywood which is exposed to the outdoors, even when finished. If a smooth, check-free surface is desired, use MDO plywood. Surface flaking of some Exposure 1 panels is normal in this application.

**Additional Information.**

For complete plywood or other structural wood panel application recommendations, see:

■ *Engineered Wood*

*Construction Guide*, Form E30

■ *APA Product Guide:*

*Performance Rated Sidings*,  
Form E300

TABLE 1

**APA PANELS FOR OPEN SOFFIT OR FOR COMBINED ROOF DECKING-CEILING<sup>(a)(b)</sup> (Long dimension across supports)**

Maximum Span (inches)	Panel Description Exterior or Exposure 1	Species Group for Plywood
16	15/32" APA RATED SIDING 303	1,2,3,4
	15/32" APA MDO, Sanded and Touch-Sanded Plywood	1,2,3,4
24	15/32" APA RATED SIDING 303	1
	15/32" APA MDO, Sanded and Touch-Sanded Plywood	1,2,3
	19/32" APA RATED SIDING 303	1,2,3,4
	19/32" APA MDO, Sanded and Touch-Sanded Plywood	1,2,3,4
32	APA RATED STURD-I-FLOOR 16 oc	—
	19/32" APA RATED SIDING 303	1
	19/32" APA MDO, Sanded and Touch-Sanded Plywood	1
	23/32" APA Textured Plywood	1,2,3,4
48	23/32" APA MDO, Sanded and Touch-Sanded Plywood	1,2,3,4
	APA RATED STURD-I-FLOOR 20 oc	—
	1-1/8" APA Textured Plywood	1,2,3,4
	APA RATED STURD-I-FLOOR 48 oc	—

(a) All panels will support at least 30 psf live load plus 10 psf dead load at maximum span.

(b) For appearance purposes, blocking, tongue-and-groove edges or other suitable edge supports should be provided.

TABLE 2

**APA PANELS FOR CLOSED SOFFITS<sup>(a)(c)</sup> (Long dimension across supports)**

Maximum Span (in.) All Edges Supported	Nominal Panel Thickness	Species Group	Nail Type and Size <sup>(a)</sup>
24	1 1/32" APA <sup>(b)</sup>	All Species Groups	6d nonstaining box or casing (0.099" x 2")
32	15/32" APA <sup>(b)</sup>		8d nonstaining box or casing (0.113" x 2-1/2")
48	19/32" APA <sup>(b)</sup>		

(a) Space nails 6 inches at panel edges and 12 inches at intermediate supports for spans less than 48 inches; 6 inches at all supports for 48-inch spans.

(b) Any suitable grade of Exterior panel which meets appearance requirements.

(c) For appearance purposes, blocking, tongue-and-groove edges or other suitable edge supports should be provided.

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