



Roger Wade photos

CHOOSING LOGS (PROFILES & PACKAGES)

Deciding on a log package is one of the key moments in the log home buying process. Our no-fail guide will help you understand your choices.

CONGRATULATIONS! You've decided a log home is the house for you, and you couldn't have made a better choice. Now, if only the decisions stopped there! The process of log home selection – not to mention log home building – is filled with decisions, some of them totally foreign to most homebuyers. Everything from the wood species you choose to how the logs are dried and treated to the shape they are cut. How do you know you'll make the right decisions?

Fear not – we're here to shed a little light on the subject. There are a number of factors that can impact the quality, durability and longevity of your home's logs, and picking the right combination of these factors is the key to ensuring that your home will stand the test of time.

So what are these myriad choices? And how do you get started narrow-

ing down the field? Our 4 easy steps will guide you along your way to a log home package that will satisfy now and for years to come.

STEP #1: MAKE THE GRADE

Luckily, when it comes to the structural quality of logs, there are a few third-party oversight boards that have made it easier on the buyer. The Log & Timber Homes Council [a body within the National Association of Home Builders [NAHB]] and Timber Products Inspection have trained personnel who visually evaluate the structural appropriateness of log members and make sure they're suitable for homebuilding. By certifying the grade of a log, structurally unsound products are eliminated before they are installed in a home.

"Grading logs is one of the most important parts of any log

home. Buying a log package from a manufacturer who doesn't grade would be like buying a house that had never been inspected or buying a vehicle that had never been through a safety check," says Log & Timber Homes Council Executive Director, John Lingerfelt. "To ensure the safety and longevity of your log home, using graded logs is the only way to go."

"One fact most consumers are not aware of is that the National Building Code mandates that logs are certified and graded," Mark Elliott, Vice President of Coventry Log Homes explains. "There are hundreds of little companies not meeting that code requirement, and the consumer is the one that doesn't get the material quality they should. You have to ask yourself, 'If they don't grade, what else are they not doing correctly?'"



STEP #2: DRY UP

Of the many quality checks the grading system ensures, one of the most important is dryness. The moisture content of timbers used in log home construction is a key indicator to predicting the amount of settling that will occur in the wall system. The moment a tree is cut, water begins to evaporate from the wood cells as it seeks equilibrium with the humidity of its surroundings.

In the log home industry, kiln-drying helps to control logs' moisture levels: The lower the moisture content,

the more stable the wood. A kiln-dried log typically has less than 19% moisture content; whereas a surface-dried log can contain 25% or more (some log packages are sold in this condition).

"We believe very strongly about starting with dry logs. We not only kiln-dry our logs, we have a 3rd party inspector verify the moisture content," Mark Elliott says. "I tell people all the time that you wouldn't consider buying green 2-by-4s to build a stick frame home, so why would you use green (wet) logs to build your dream log home?"

Remember that the drier and more stable the logs are, the less prone they are to twisting, checking and decay, which has a direct effect on the look and performance of your log home.

STEP #3: GO NATIVE

Regardless of which species catches your eye, one of the major factors that will influence the species you choose is the region you live in. Most manufacturers use wood that is native to their area. It makes sense – if a tree grows naturally in a particular climate, it should easily adapt to its new life as

CORNER STYLES

How your logs intersect at the corner is one of the most defining features of your home.

8X8 ROUND ON ROUND BUTT & PASS

A notch on the bottom of the log straddles the top of the log coming from the perpendicular wall. Both logs extend past the corner.



8X8 D-LOG BUTT & PASS

One log stops where it meets an intersecting log, and the other log extends past the corner.



SQUARE/CHINK LOG WITH CORNER POST

A post is found at each corner into which grooves are cut to hold log ends. Looks similar to post-and-beam construction.



DOVETAIL CORNER

This style is used with square or rectangular logs. The corner is cut in a fan-shaped wedge and interlocks with perpendicular logs.



part of a log home. Cost control also is a contributor here because it's expensive to haul raw materials a long distance from the source.

That being said, if your heart is set on a specific species that may not be indigenous to your build site, the advances in the sealant and preservative industry make it possible for nearly any type of tree to adjust to a new area. And when it comes to shipping it long distances, chances are someone will be willing to get it to you.

STEP #4: SELECT THE SIZE & STYLE

The final consideration you'll want to make about your logs is their size. There are actually two choices to

make here: length and diameter. The length of the logs is important because longer logs mean fewer butt joints, which can create water infiltration points and contribute to leakage and decay. This is especially critical because moisture enters the end grain at many times the rate of the side grain.

The diameter of the logs, on the other hand, is primarily an aesthetic and cost choice. As a general rule, the larger the log diameter, the higher the price. You can totally change the look and feel of a home when choosing the diameter and profile of your logs. The scale of the home also will play a big part in the log selection. With a large home, you'd

typically choose a larger log profile so it doesn't get out of scale with the structure.

With size selected, it's time to decide on a profile and how the logs will interface with each other. From D-shaped to square, Swedish-cope to double-tongue-and-groove, these, too, play a big part in your log home's style (see the following page for a diagram of choices).

In the end, choosing a log home manufacturer that will listen to your needs and deal with you in an honest, direct manner is the ultimate commodity, and choosing this company is the smartest decision you will make.



LOG PROFILES

The shape of your logs can have a major impact on your home's looks. Here are the most common styles:

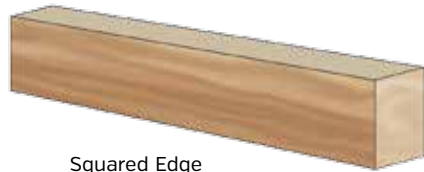


D-Log



Round & Round

Rectangular Logs



Squared Edge



Clapboard



Square Chinked

Square Logs



Ship Lap



Squared

Round Logs



Full Round



Swedish Cope

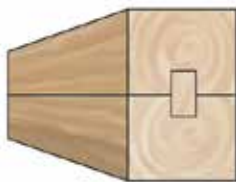
INTERFACE STYLES

Your log profile will influence how the logs are fitted together horizontally. Here are some common techniques:

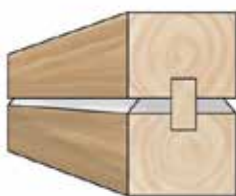
Rectangular



Flat on Flat



With Spline



Corner Support System with Chinking

Round



Round on Round Swedish Cope



Round on Round with Chinking



With Spline

Tongue-and-Groove



Single Tongue-and-Groove



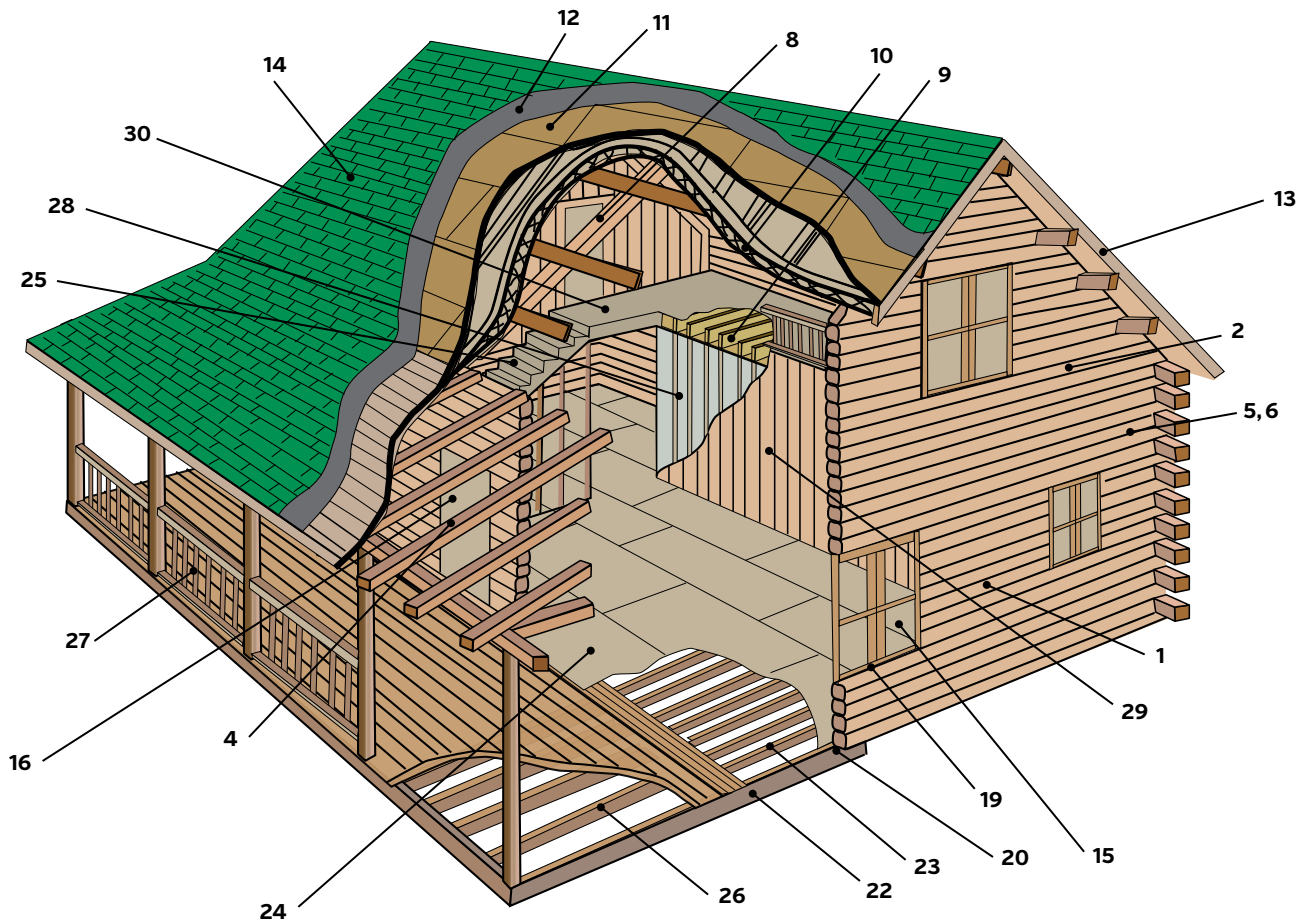
Double Tongue-and-Groove



Ripple [Triple Tongue-and-Groove]

COMPLETE PACKAGE CONTENTS

In this example from Coventry Log Homes, you are provided with the necessary mill items that are pre-cut to your design



1. Pre-cut, kiln-dried, Eastern White Pine numbered for easy assembly
2. Pre-cut log gables (two story)
3. Log siding skirtboard (2 rows)
4. Pre-cut log porch headers, 6" x 6" porch posts, 4" x 8" porch beam rafters and porch ceiling T&G pine
5. All the log home caulking, corner sealant, foam gaskets and splines
6. All the 11" LogHog Fasteners
7. Log siding and framing for gables (ranches) (not shown) and dormers (shown)
8. Pre-cut truss and purlin roof beams Craftsman Series
9. All the loft beams 4" x 8"
10. Conventional roof rafters or pre-built trusses (not shown)
11. All roof and porch sheathing
12. Triflex membrane for roof
13. All the soffit [T&G pine] and fascia [1" pine] material
14. 35-year architectural shingles
15. Andersen 400 Series Tilt-Wash Low-E windows complete with full screens + patio doors
16. All the exterior doors 3/0 x 6/8 Therma-Tru Fiber-Classic Fiberglass insulated with adjustable sills
17. Pre-hung interior doors with split jambs and knock down jambs supplied (not shown)
18. Oil rubbed bronze handles and hinges for all doors (not shown)
19. All the window and door jambs and exterior trim
20. All the sills for the floor system PT
21. All the girder materials 2" x 8" or 2" x10" or 2" x 12" (not shown)
22. All the perimeter box 2" x 8" or 2" x10" or 2" x 12"
23. All floor joists 2" x 8" or 2" x10" or 2" x 12" 16" O.C.
24. All the subfloor 3/4" T&G Advantech® for first floor & loft
25. Basement and loft stairs
26. All the porch & deck joists 16" O.C. (flooring 5/4" x 6 PT)
27. Loft & porch log railings
28. All the interior framing [kiln-dried]
29. T&G pine boards for wall covering and ceilings (ranches)
30. All the subfloor for loft 2" x 6" T&G spruce or AdvanTech
31. Detailed construction manual and CD
32. Three sets of construction plans
33. Unlimited technical service

Package contents vary among manufacturers. This example is for illustration purposes only. Be sure to get a complete list of building components from every log home producer you're considering.

Coventry Log Homes The Best Choice



★ **MOST COMPLETE PACKAGE**

See Our Website:
www.coventryloghomes.com

★ **FACTORY DIRECT**

No Middlemen

★ **KILN-DRIED LOGS**

Dry Logs Are Better



Ask Our Log Home Experts
About Custom Log Additions

Always the BEST Materials, the BEST Price, & the BEST Value!

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