

Design

Composing With Shingle Cladding

by Katie Hutchison

Exterior shingle cladding, widely used on late-19th-century Shingle-style homes, remains a versatile siding option today. You can create patterns by using shaped shingles or by modifying the coursing. Shingles are particularly adaptable for cladding curved sculptural forms.

Any time you use shingles as siding, you face an array of design decisions: Should you weave the corners or use corner boards? Should you use patterns — and if so, where, and which ones? Would a shingle flare or bow be appropriate?

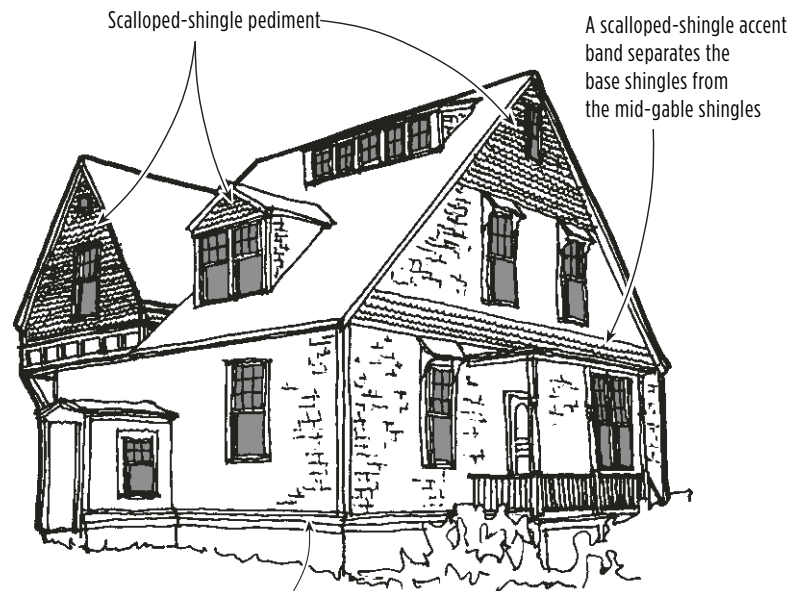
Make your choices based on an overview of what you're trying to accomplish. Are you interested in using

texture and detail to define the base, middle, and cap of a boxy exterior? Or are you wrapping a more sculptural form?

Shingle patterns and corner boards can help to differentiate the elements of a monolithic form, while a more uniform, continuous shingle skin can unite an otherwise complex form.

In this column, we'll explore three homes that use exterior shingles in different ways to accomplish different effects. Each is successful in its own way.

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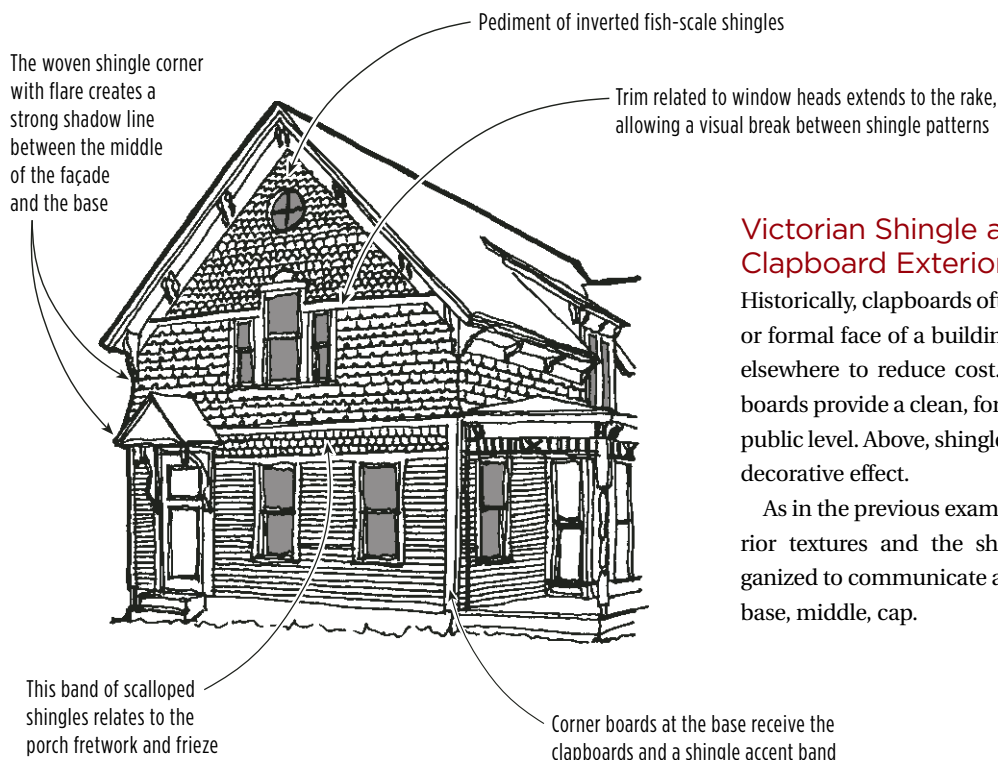
Because there are corner boards, a built-up sloped water table is used instead of a shingle flare. This adds to the overall linear effect, which is less sculptural and more streamlined.

Shingle Exterior With Corner Boards

This straightforward treatment uses shingle pattern and texture to delineate the building's base, midsection, and cap.

Crisp corner boards coupled with shingles create a somewhat contemporary, linear look. They clearly separate each elevation; as a result, the building reads less as a single volume and more as a multifaceted assembly of walls.

Although corner boards are relatively inexpensive to install, they don't take advantage of the unique adaptability of shingles to create woven corners. You could argue that since corner boards are used here, the base cladding might as well have been clapboards.



Victorian Shingle and Clapboard Exterior

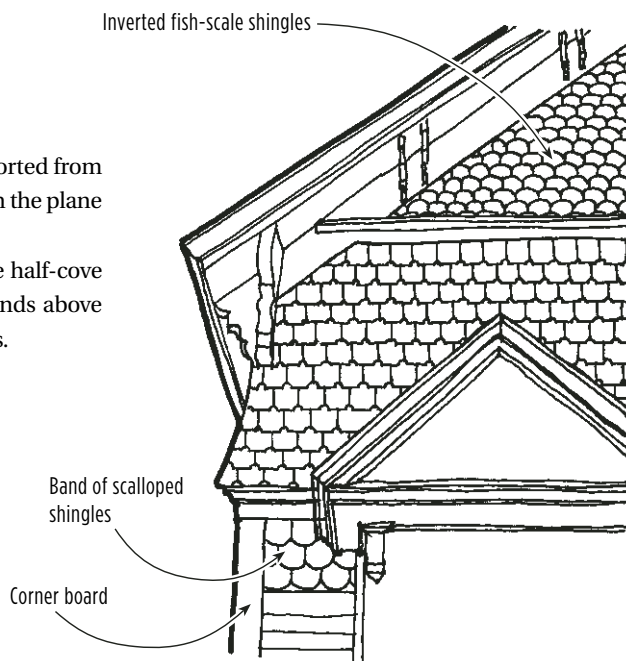
Historically, clapboards often adorned the most public or formal face of a building, while shingles were used elsewhere to reduce cost. In this example, the clapboards provide a clean, formal finish at eye level — the public level. Above, shingles convey a more whimsical, decorative effect.

As in the previous example, the play of various exterior textures and the shadows they create are organized to communicate a deceptively simple order of base, middle, cap.

Detail From Victorian Exterior

Note how the woven shingle flare is visually supported from beneath by a small crown molding and flat stock in the plane of the corner board.

At the midsection, the transitional shape of the half-cove shingles recalls both the curved profile of the bands above and below and the straight edge of the clapboards.



Shingle Exterior With Woven Corners and Bowed Balcony

There is no need for multiple shingle patterns or accents when the exterior is punctuated with other architectural features that modulate the elevation.

Here, a series of ganged windows enclosing a porchlike room defines the base. The asymmetrical gable above is enlivened with a mid-level bowed shingle guardrail that grows smoothly from the end wall to encircle a lookout perch before folding back into the wall. This is a good illustration of how shingles can achieve a sculptural effect. Woven corners contribute further to the sense of a cohesive volume shaped with shingles — rather than of four independent walls joined at the corners.

