

Smart Words for Smart Homeowners

THE EXPERIENCE OF EXPERTS AND THEIR ADVICE ON RELEVANT HOMEOWNER TOPICS

Replacing A Rotted Door Sill

Overview

Without the correct care any wood exterior door sill will rot. Wood door sills will – if not sealed, primed and painted often – wear, rot and require replacement. You may notice that your door sill is feeling mushy or may even be showing gaps and holes. Open seams where snow, ice-melt, water, pollen and dirt can accumulate invite the moisture and the degeneration to reside. Open seams and gaps will invite critters to enter your home.

This is not an easy place to work but unless you do it when needed the surrounding walls, frame and trim are the next things to absorb water, sit in dampness, then decompose and rot. This will take a few hours of your time on you hands and knees.



Removing The Rotted Sill

- 1) Remove the door. Expose the old sill. Gently remove the door stop trim sections so they are not damaged when removing the sill.
- 2) Saw the sill in half. Don't cut or damage anything else.
- 3) Pry up on one side of the rotten sill. Wriggle it until it pulls loose. Repeat on the other side.
- 4) Remove or cut off any bent nails.
- 5) Clean and vacuum out any dirt, wood chips or other debris so glue & caulking will stick to a clean surface.
- 6) Treat & repair insect damage now.



Fabricate A New Sill

- 1) Using the old sill as a template fabricate the new sill. Make your final product is the same size and shape.
- 2) Prime all the wood you can see. Double prime the new sill if you are planning to paint it, or treat it with linseed oil or polyurethane if you are planning to leave it natural. Please follow ALL the instructions for all applications of paint or liquids.
- 3) If your using AZEK or KOMA do not prime it. Plastic doesn't need it if you intend to leave it white.
- 4) Envision a base outline for Phenoseal® adhesive caulking to rest the new sill but don't do that yet.



Install the New Sill

- 1) Insert the newly fabricated sill into the insulated and prepared space.
- 2) Before making it permanent, Dry Fit the sill making sure it fits correctly. Before you put the adhesive and caulks under it be sure it is level and has the correct slope to drain water. Make all your adjustments now.
- 3) Apply the Phenoseal®. Secure the sill by toe nailing and screwing into the frame. Use only exterior grade or stainless steel screws.
- 4) Replace the trim. I like to embed the parts in something like Phenoseal® vinyl caulking to ensure it is water tight and the parts bond.
- 5) Carefully caulk (Phenoseal® vinyl adhesive caulk) all seams around the trim and the sill.
- 6) Prime then repaint the trim with the best quality exterior grade paint you can find. I like Sherwin-Williams DURATION® for its incredible durability and warranty.



A Note About Quality Methodology

As you're working your way through this project take every opportunity to fill any large holes and gaps with a quality expanding foam insulation. I like "Great Stuff" for its convenience. Don't forget to clean or vacuum the voids before you use foam or caulking. Follow the directions and Do Not Overfill the space. Two applications are better than one partial fill. Take care to repair everything you can touch now, while it's all open and available to you.

Tools You'll Need

Claw hammer	Eye protection
Crowbar	Gloves
Circular saw	Linseed oil or polyurethane
Drill bits	Phenoseal vinyl caulk
Electric drill	Nails and exterior grade screws
Exterior grade primer	Sawzall or hacksaw
Great Stuff or a good expanding foam	Shop vacuum

Wood: 3" thick x 36" wide sill material (White Oak or Southern Yellow Pine are woods that work best) - or PVC like AZEK® or KOMA® of the same dimensions. This is plastic so it will not rot or invite critters.



