

Chinking 101

By



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General Notes

There are many methods to chinking a log home, but most of them generally use the same essential steps. This pamphlet is based on our experience and preferred method of chinking. It is important that you review the recommendations of the manufacturer of the chinking prior to starting and make adjustments to this guide as needed.

This is a guide on how to chink by hand. There are other methods that include the use of "chinking machines." Please refer to the factory guides for these machines.

The internet provides useful videos on chinking as well.

It is important for first time chinkers to understand that obtaining a smooth and clean chink line comes through experience. As you gain experience the look of your chink line should improve. Do not be frustrated with a rough finish when you start; this is normal and to be expected.

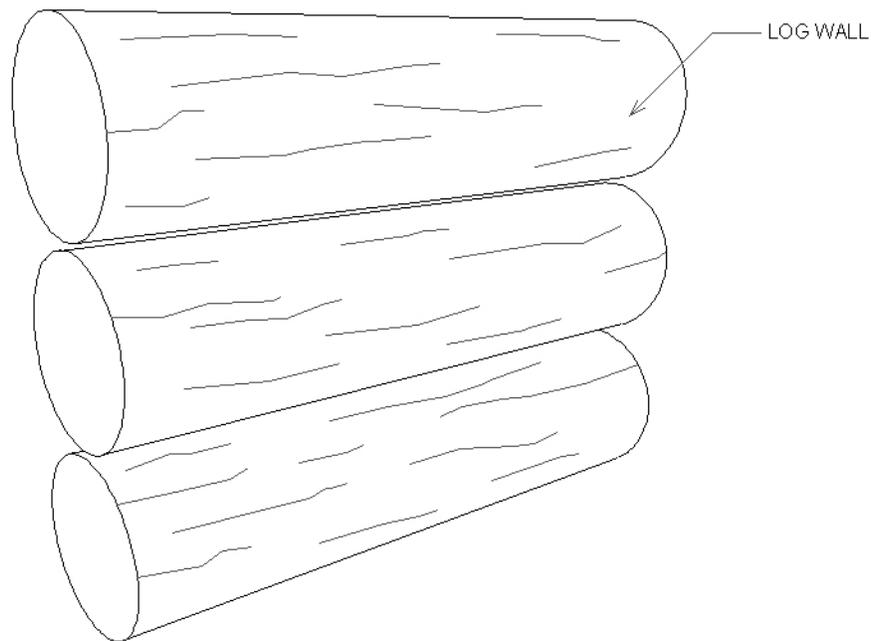
Materials

The following is a list of materials you will need to chink a round log or square log wall.

1. Chinking
2. Backer Rod*
3. Spatula, Metal (or brush, putty knife, etc.)
4. Foam Brush
5. Spray Bottle (filled with water)
6. Alcohol, Isopropyl
7. Sponge (or rag)

* Backer rod is an open or closed cell gasket used between logs that the chinking is then applied over. It helps create a water and air tight seal. Closed cell backer rod is less pliable than open cell, but provides better insulation and weather resistance.

Application

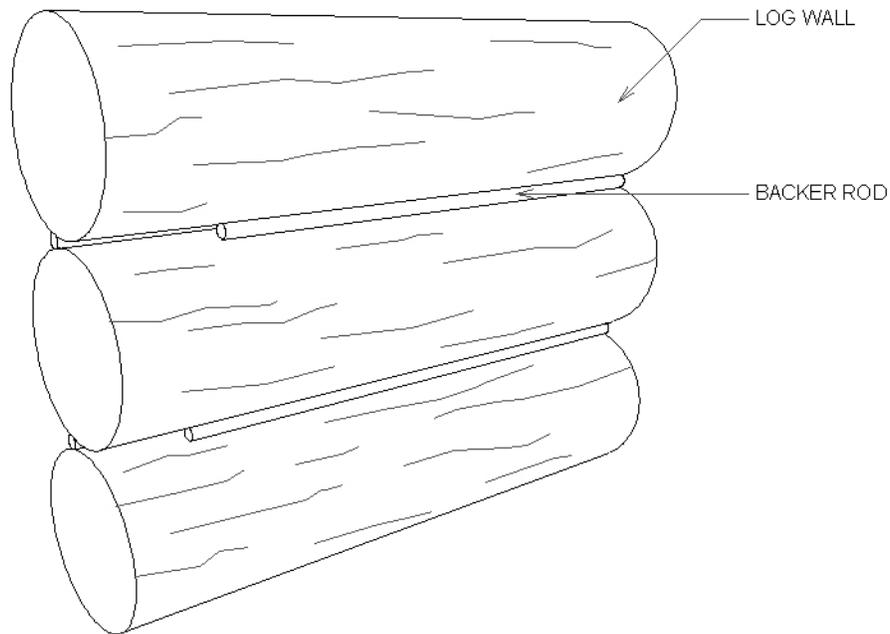


Prepare Logs

Before applying chinking, the logs must be clean of all dirt, oils, sawdust and other loose materials. The surface temperature of the logs should be between 40°F and 90°F. If the logs are too cold the wood pores will not allow proper wetting of the surface. Logs that are too hot will cause rapid evaporation which can lead to blistering or lack of adhesion.

Do not chink in direct sunlight.

If log stain is to be used the logs should be stained prior to applying chinking. Refer to the manufacturer's recommendation for cure time. This time is generally 3-4 weeks. It is also important to make sure that the stain and the chinking are compatible. Some stains use a wax base which may prevent the chinking from being able to adhere properly. Testing an area of the logs prior to full staining and chinking is recommended.

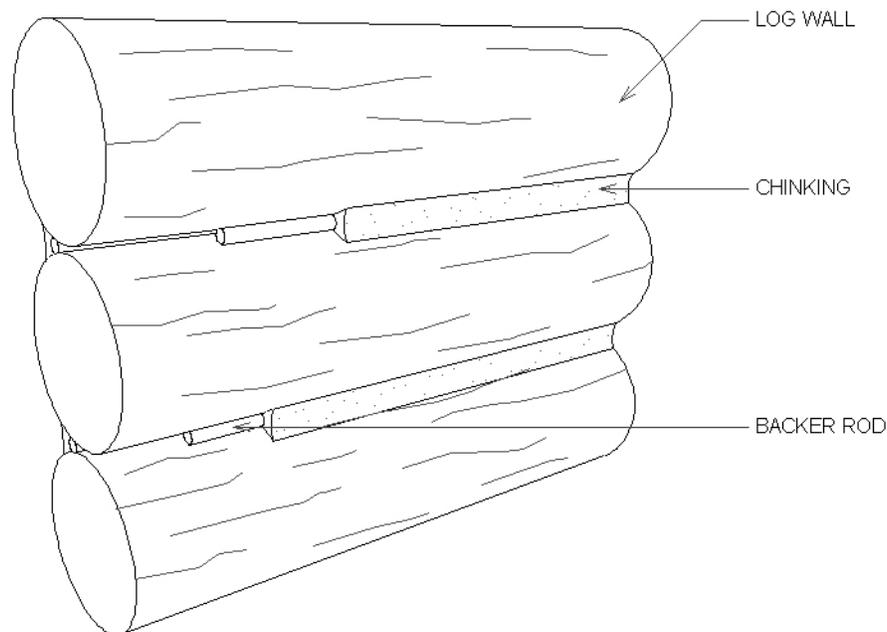


Backer Rod

There are several types of backer rod. Please consult with the manufacturer for the specific size and type of backer rod for your log home.

Backer rod is pushed into the joints between the logs. This provides a 2 point application surface for the chinking. This also provides increased insulation, and if a closed cell backer rod is used, helps repel moisture.

Do not push the chinking too far into the joints. See the manufacturer's specifications for depth.



Chinking

There are several methods of actually applying chinking. The method we are using in this pamphlet is with a caulking gun and tubes of manufactured chinking. Please see chinking manufacturer for additional application methods.

Apply a generous row of chinking over the backer rod. Use spatula, putty knife or moist brush to trowel the chinking over the backer rod and to the logs. If using a spatula or putty knife it is recommended that application side is lightly misted with a release agent (may be water. See manufacturer's instructions for proper release agent).

CAUTION: Using too much release agent may prevent the chinking from properly adhering to the logs.

Firmly push the chinking into the gaps to create a weather tight seal. A properly moistened trowel will allow the chinking to be molded to the areas needed without sticking and pulling. It may be necessary to lightly moisten the chinking as you apply. Work the chinking until a tight smooth surface is achieved.

Clean up

Clean up is generally simple. Use a damp cloth to remove excess chinking (see manufacturer's specifications for additional clean up tips). Be sure and clean up while the chinking is still moist else clean up will be more difficult.

Blisters

Blisters are areas in the chinking where moisture, either from the chinking or externally, accumulates in voids and the heat draws it to the surface. To help prevent this, do not chink in direct sunlight. Monitor your chinking for the first 24 to 48 hours and if blisters appear, simply pop the bubbles and work the chinking back in place. After a few days, simply apply a little additional chinking over the affected areas.

Consult the manufacturer's specifications for the chinking for additional application information and warnings.