

**Skill Level: INTERMEDIATE** Give these projects a try if you're a confident DIYer with a good working knowledge of a variety of tools. They can take a day or more to complete. If you can build a birdhouse or install a ceiling fan, your skill level is probably appropriate.

### ✓ MATERIALS

- Pressure Washer—including 3 to 5 Nozzles and 25' to 50' of Hose
- Siding Cleaning Detergent
- Garden Hose
- Plastic Drop Cloths
- Painter's Tape
- Safety Glasses or Goggles

Pressure washing is one of the quickest and most cost-effective ways to keep your home looking like new. It removes dirt, mold and mildew that can actually damage your home's siding. Pressure washers use up to 80 percent less water and are up to 50 times more powerful than a garden hose. Follow these steps for the proper way to pressure wash your home's siding.

### PREPARATION

- **Your home could use a wash about every two years or as needed.**
- **Repair any damaged areas first, like loose siding or deteriorating wood.**
- **CAUTION: Do not pressure wash your home if you think it has been painted with lead paint. Typically, these are homes painted before 1978. If you think your home might have been painted with lead-based paint, contact a professional for an inspection and recommendation.**
- **Pressure wash on a day that's clear with low winds.**
- **Work on one side of your home at a time.**
  - Direct sunlight can cause the cleaning solution to dry prematurely. So plan on working on each side when it's not in direct sunlight.

- **Cover lights with plastic and tape.**



- **Turn off power to exterior outlets.**
- **Move any furniture that is near the home.**
- **Close all windows and doors.**

- **Trim any bushes, shrubs or other plants that are touching your siding.**

- Areas where plants touch the house tend to be vulnerable to mold, mildew and algae growth.



- **Wet any shrubs near the siding with a garden hose.**
  - Soap can adhere to and damage plants.

#### IMPORTANT

Always use eye protection when pressure washing. And never use the pressure washer while standing on a ladder. Pressure washers use extremely high pressure, so never spray anyone. Only spray what you're intending to wash. Contact a professional if you're not comfortable using the pressure washer.

### SETTING UP YOUR PRESSURE WASHER

- 01 Hook your pressure washer up to a water source, following the manufacturer's instructions.
- 02 Insert the siphon hose into the cleaning detergent.
  - Some pressure washers have a separate holding tank for soap.
- 03 Adjust the wand to low-pressure or attach the low-pressure soap tip.



### CLEANING

- 01 Press the trigger until you see soap in the water stream.
- 02 Spray the solution onto your siding starting from the bottom working your way to the top.
  - Applying the solution from the bottom-up prevents the soap from running down onto dry areas, which can cause streaks.
- 03 Allow the cleaner to penetrate the dirt for about 5 to 10 minutes.
  - Remember, when pressure washing your house only clean one side at a time.



### RINSING

- 01 Set the nozzle to high-pressure mode following the manufacturer's instructions or change to a high-pressure tip.
  - A typical nozzle for this step is a 25° to 45° tip.
- 02 If you're cleaning a two-story house, you'll need a special tip and extension wand.
- 03 Press the spray trigger gently to flush any detergent left in the line.
- 04 Rinse from the top down.
- 05 There is a special technique to rinsing.
  - Hold the spray gun firmly with both hands.
  - Keep the nozzle about 1' from the surface at a 45° angle.
  - Don't spray underneath horizontal siding.



### RINSING (cont.)

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- 06 Avoid spraying windows directly and stay 10' from power lines.**
- 07 After you have cleaned and rinsed one side of your house, move to the next side.**

### OTHER USES

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- **Use your pressure washer on other areas of your home too. Cleaning your driveway or deck is easy with the high-pressure water stream.**
- **Pressure washers are also a great way to remove dirt and grime from cars, RVs and boats.**

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