

Materials and Procedures

For Designing, Painting and Assembling a Barn Quilt



Note: This discussion is for a quilt that will be 8 feet by 8 feet.

- ✓ Exterior grade oil based wood primer —2 coats on both sides of plywood and 4 coats on the edges
We suggest J&W Paint and Sherwin-Williams Paint Store, both in Ashtabula, as providers of good quality paint; both businesses are aware of the Barn Quilt Trail and will provide guidance as to quantities needed.
- ✓ High quality exterior grade semi-gloss paint in colors needed. We suggest you work with quarts.
- ✓ Medium grade sandpaper
- ✓ Paint stir sticks
- ✓ Paint roller and pan (for applying oil primer). We recommend replacing the roller in between long periods, rather than go to the expense of cleaning it.
- ✓ Paint brushes—small angled, plus 1” and 2” foam brushes, 1 for each color
- ✓ 1” yellow painter’s tape for painting a clean crisp edge
- ✓ Pencils and large erasers for sketching out the design
- ✓ Drop cloths, plastic, or rolls of paper to protect surface of work area
- ✓ Tables or saw horses to support the barn quilt
- ✓ Small utility knife or Exacto knife to trim the painter’s tape edges or cut paper patterns
- ✓ Can opener or screw driver to open paint cans
- ✓ Hammer to close paint can
- ✓ Rags and paper towels for clean up
- ✓ Paint thinner for clean-up and getting primer off your skin
- ✓ Plastic containers for small portions of paint. We suggest saving food containers that might work for small amounts of paint.
- ✓ Straight edge, quilter’s 24” ruler, or yardstick for drawing your design

Materials for Assembling a Barn Quilt Frame (8’x 8’):

- ✓ (2) 4’x 8’ sheets of ¾-inch MDO board
- ✓ (6) 2”x 4” by 8-foot treated lumber (you will cut 3 to 8½-inch lumber)
- ✓ (2) 4”or 5” eye bolts
- ✓ (6) 4”or 5” connector plates (hold the frame together until it’s screwed into the plywood)
- ✓ 1-pound box of 2” stainless screws (hold 2”x 4” frame to the plywood)
- ✓ (4-5) 4” or 5” long large contractor stainless deck screws (hold the mounting 2”x 4” to the barn)
- ✓ (2-3) 6” long large contractor stainless deck screws (hold top of quilt to barn)
- ✓ Paintable silicone caulk. We recommend DuPont Siliconized Acrylic Caulk Airtite for the seams and filling in any cracks or defects in the side of the lumber/MDO board.
- ✓ Clear silicone caulk to be used between the quilt and barn

Procedure for Designing and Painting a Barn Quilt:

- ✓ Mark top, bottom, front, and back of MDO board (it is easy to lose orientation after applying primer and paint).
- ✓ Prime the plywood and framing lumber using the oil primer. Use roller. Paint 2 coats on the flat surfaces and 4 coats on the edges allowing adequate drying time in between coats.
 - Prime front and edges—let dry.
 - Prime back and edges—let dry.
 - Repeat once more.
- ✓ Apply a thin coating of sealer over primed edges.
- ✓ **Optional Border:** Draw a border on the outside edge of MDO board. The width of the border depends on the size of the barn quilt and the pattern chosen. This leaves the remainder for your quilt design. If you are painting a border, remember to paint the sides of your plywood. This will help guard against weather by sealing the edges and makes a more uniform appearance.
 - If you do not choose to paint a border, your entire quilt design will be the full size of its dimensions.
 - Many sources state tell us a border will make your design stand out.
- ✓ On smaller quilts (4'by4') it is advantageous to frame your quilt prior to painting. If you decide to go to this route, proceed to the “procedure for assembling a barn quilt section.” Assemble it after applying the first coat of primer; then prime the entire assembled quilt.
- ✓ **Lightly** draw your barn quilt design on the primed surface of the MDO board with a pencil and a straight edge (if you mark too hard, the pencil marks may show through the paint). Remember that the two pieces of plywood (for an 8'x 8' barn quilt) need to be lined up so the seam will line up *vertically and have the exact image, but in mirror form. When you have finished drawing on both pieces of plywood, line the two pieces of plywood up to each other to ensure that the pattern lines match. * This is done with a vertical seam so moisture will not collect in the seam, as it may with a horizontal seam.
- ✓ Plan to paint the lightest colors first. Begin taping your quilt sections, making certain that your tape lines are outside your intended painting area and that all tape is pressed tightly and adheres well to the primed plywood. Good tape lines ensure clean edges. The tape can be removed after the second coat is applied. Some colors may require more than two coats. Yellow paint tends to be a bit translucent, so do not remove your tape if more paint is required after the second coat.
- ✓ **Note:** It is more beneficial to paint multiple thin coats of paints rather than fewer “thick” coats. This will help avoid bubbles and paint ridges once the tape is removed.
- ✓ Allow plenty of time to dry in between coats and before moving on to the next section of taping and painting. Taping on a surface that has not yet “hardened” may result in pulling that section of paint loose.
- ✓ **Note:** A sealer is **not** recommended as a top coat. You are using exterior grade paint that will stand up to years of weather. In fact, if and when the square needs repainting, a sealer hinders that effort. A sealer may also yellow and flake.

Procedure for Assembling a Barn Quilt:

- ✓ We suggest that you assemble the barn quilt on the site where it will be installed. However, on smaller quilts (4'X4') and smaller, it may be easier to do your framing before painting the design. There is less chance of damaging the painted surface if you frame between the priming and painting steps. Further, we recommend you apply silicone caulk between the frame and MDO board to seal out moist at these contact points, and this needs to be done prior to painting the sides.
- ✓ The lumber used at the top of the frame must have two holes drilled in it to accommodate the eye bolts. For an 8'X8' quilt, drill these holes at the 2-foot and 4-foot points. For a 4'X4' quilt, drill at 1 and 3 feet. You will need a wood bit at least 5 inches in length to drill this hole. Make sure you drill a size that is exactly the same size as the diameter of the eyebolt (at least 3/8-inch). Try to use galvanized eyebolts and washers. Drive an eyebolt through each hole, with a galvanized washer on both the top and bottom of the eyebolt. Secure with a nut. These eye bolts will provide an easy way to lift the assembled barn quilt when the installation process takes place. You will leave the eyebolts in place once installation is completed.
- ✓ Lay out the frame on a flat surface. Assemble the frame.
- ✓ Use connector plates at each junction of the 2-by-4s; the plate side will go against the surface of the barn. Make sure all edges are flush and angles square. (See Figure 1.)
- ✓ Turn frame over completely, with connector plates on the bottom.
- ✓ Lay the two 4'x8' plywood pieces on the frame. Keep plywood flush with the top and sides of the frame. Plywood should extend beyond the bottom of the frame by 3½ inches (the frame will rest on another 2'X4' nailed to the barn and thus complete the square framing.
- ✓ Make sure the frame and plywood are square.
- ✓ Use 2" stainless steel screws to fasten the sheets of plywood to the frame. Keeping the inside edges tight against each other, screw each inside corner to the frame. Be sure to place those screws first, or the two sheets will tend to spread at the center. Then space remaining screws about 18" apart along the outside and center edges of each sheet of plywood.
- ✓ If the quilt will be hung diagonally, complete the square frame, but add a cross piece inside each side of the frame at a 45-degree angle. Use connector plates to secure to the frame; the quilt will rest on matching supports screwed to the barn.
- ✓ Run a bead of silicone caulk on the sides of the framed quilt, where the MDO board and 2x4s meet. Use a putty knife to smooth out the caulking if necessary and fill in any deep gouges or cracks in the board or lumber with caulk.
- ✓ The Barn Quilt Steering Committee strong advises AGAINST placing any type of protective top coat or covering on the completed barn quilt. This includes the use of Plexiglass or similar clear material, especially if the glass touches the painted surface or if the Plexiglass is sealed with silicone caulk to the barn quilt. We recognize that in rare cases the possibility of vandalism may override the committee's preference on this matter. In those cases, the committee strongly suggests consulting with our technical adviser to make certain that "breathing room" be engineered into the space between the barn quilt and the encapsulating material.

Procedure for Fastening the Barn Quilt to the Barn or Building:

- Fasten the remaining primed 8-foot 2"x 4" (4-foot 2"x4") to the barn, using 4" or 5" screws. This board should be centered and placed exactly where you want the bottom of the barn quilt to be. It holds all of the weight of the barn quilt, so try to hit good solid structural wood and keep the board level.

- Hoist the barn quilt into position using the two eye bolts. Set the barn quilt on the 2"x 4" already mounted on the barn. Put enough 2" screws through the bottom of the barn quilt to hold it to the 2"x 4" fastened to the barn. Put 2 or 3 long screws (6") through the top of the quilt to secure it to the barn.
- Use clear silicone caulk between the barn quilt and the barn to keep insects and moisture out.