



SCREW BUYING GUIDE

Whether you're a professional or a DIYer, screws are an essential fastener for nearly every project. Menards® carries a wide variety of general and specialty screws to suit any task. This buying guide will cover the different types and what to look for when starting your next project.

Screw Benefits



- Screws are easy to remove, which makes them great for temporary projects that may need adjustments as you work.
- Screws offer superior tensile strength. This means they're well suited for projects that are under tension or bearing weight, such as porch railings or kitchen cabinetry.
- Screws have a great resistance to withdrawal pressure, so they're perfect for adhering surfaces that tend to pull apart.
- Screws grip into wood and draw boards together tightly to hold during wood's natural expansion and contractions.
- Screws are the preferred fastener for all of the following applications: hanging drywall, attaching ledger boards, installing cabinets, decks, woodworking projects, and any wood-to-wood connection that may need to be taken apart.

Screw Applications

No matter if you're looking for a screw to fasten a cabinet or build a deck, you should take careful consideration of the type of screw you choose. Interior screws are typically going to be standard steel screws with little or no coated finishes, while exterior screws are typically galvanized or stainless steel to provide rust resistance to withstand outdoor elements.

Interior Screws



Wood Screws

Wood screws are mainly used for secure connection of wooden materials. They work with chipboard, MDF, softwood, and hardwood. There are many types of wood screws available from construction screws to finish and trim screws, particleboard screws, and outdoor screws.



Cabinet Screws

Cabinet screws are made for the purpose of securing kitchen cabinets to the wall. The larger head on a cabinet screw bears down on the cabinet's hanging strip/nail which ensures sturdy installation.



Drywall Screws

Drywall screws are used to secure full sheets of drywall or partial sheets of drywall to either wood or metal studs. Drywall screws feature a long shank with threading that runs the length of the screw.



Self-Drilling Screws

A self-drilling screw is a type of screw that has similar design features as a drill bit, with a tip that enables it to drill its own hole. As the name implies, self-drilling screws don't require a pilot hole in order to perform as a fastener. They're designed to work on soft steel, wood, and metals.



Thumb Screws

Thumb screws are multipurpose fasteners designed to be tightened and loosened by hand. They have a wide range of useful applications, especially in parts, materials, and builds that don't easily support the use of manual or power tools.



Interior Collated Screws

Interior collated screws are standard screws that are embedded into a plastic collation tape. This tape allows for automated loading of the screws into auto-feed screw systems. Interior collated screws are available for [drywall](#), [framing](#), or [subflooring](#) applications.



Interior Sheet Metal Screws

Interior sheet metal screws are special types of fasteners that are designed for use with sheet metal. Sheet metal screws are characterized by the presence of exterior threading covering their entire shank. These screws are typically made of steel.



Interior Machine Screws

Interior machine screws are designed with finer, more accurate threads than alternative fastener types. They are intended for use with a predrilled interior tapped hole or a nut. Machine screws are most often used for fastening metal parts securely together in various types of machinery or construction. Interior machine screws are typically made of steel.



Interior Socket Cap Screws

Interior socket cap screws feature cylindrical heads and a hexagonal recessed drive. The specialized drive requires a hex wrench or Allen key to tighten or loosen the screw. Socket cap screws have threads along their length and come either fully or partially threaded. These screws are typically made of steel.



Interior Set Screws

Interior set screws are headless screws that are often designed for affixing two or more loose parts together. Interior set screws are typically made of steel.



Interior Lag Screws

Interior lag screws are generally used to connect heavy lumber and other materials that bear an intense load. Interior lag screws are typically made of steel.

Exterior Screws



Timber Screws

Timber screws are specialized wood screws used for fastening pressure-treated lumber. Timber screws have a durable epoxy coating designed specifically for pressure-treated lumber.



Deck Screws

Deck screws are threaded fasteners that are designed specifically for decks. They feature a shank with deep threading and sharp ends. Deck screws are suitable for both hardwood and softwood applications. These screws are weather-resistant and provide a strong and solid attachment.



Concrete Screws

Concrete screws are generally used for securing medium to high load applications into concrete, solid brick, hollow brick, or stone surfaces. Sometimes they're referred to as concrete anchors, concrete bolts, or concrete screw anchors.



Cement Board Screws

Cement board screws are made specifically for cement boards and will feature small grooves directly under the screwhead. These grooves allow the screw to dig into the cement board for a sturdier hold. These screws have extra-sharp points paired with deep, wide threads to help them sit flush against the board.



Pole Barn & Roofing Screws

Pole barn and roofing screws are metal screws that work with both metal-to-metal and metal-to-wood projects. These screws are strong and allow quick attachment of multiple boards or sheets, creating a durable connection between various materials in construction projects.



Gutter Screws

Gutter screws are designed specifically for use with gutters. These screws are strong enough to hold the weight of the gutter's components plus the sheer weight of the water runoff being channeled to the storm drain.



Exterior Collated Screws

Exterior collated screws are standard screws that are embedded into a plastic collation tape. This tape allows for automated feeding of the screws into auto-feed screw systems. Exterior collated screws are available for decking applications.



Exterior Sheet Metal Screws

Exterior sheet metal screws are special types of fasteners that are designed for use with sheet metal. Sheet metal screws are characterized by the presence of exterior threading covering their entire shank. These screws are typically made of stainless steel, aluminum, or have a galvanized coating.



Exterior Machine Screws

Exterior machine screws are designed with finer, more accurate threads than alternative fastener types. They're intended for use with a predrilled interior tapped hole or a nut. Machine screws are most often used for fastening metal parts securely together in various types of machinery or construction. These screws are typically made of aluminum, nylon, or stainless steel.



Exterior Socket Cap Screws

Exterior socket cap screws feature cylindrical heads and a hexagonal recessed drive. The specialized drive requires a hex wrench or Allen key to tighten or loosen the screw. Socket cap screws have threads along their length and come either fully or partially threaded. These screws are typically made of stainless steel for superior corrosion resistance.



Exterior Set Screws

Exterior set screws are headless screws that are often designed for affixing two or more loose parts together. Exterior set screws are typically made of stainless steel for superior corrosion resistance.



Exterior Lag Screws

Exterior lag screws are generally used to connect heavy lumber and other materials that bear an intense load. Exterior lag screws are typically made of stainless steel or steel with a specialized exterior coating.

Screw Length & Size

Screw Length

The general rule of thumb is at least 2/3 of the screw length should end up in the underlying piece for sufficient holding power. If the underlying material is thinner, then your screw should pass through the first layer and come within no more than 1/8" of the far side of the underlying material. Any closer and the Sp could create a small, raised bump that you likely won't see until the finish is on your project.

Screw Size

The screw size refers to the thickness of the screw shank and is designated with a # sign followed by a number. The larger the number, the thicker the shank of the screw and the more load it can support.

Common Applications

#0 - #5 are great for delicate projects and general hardware installation.

#6 - #10 are great for general-purpose joining of panels and are popular sizes for pocket hole screws.

#12 and larger are great for decking, construction, and cabinet installation.

Screw Size to Decimal Conversion

#0 - 0.06"
#1 - 0.073"
#2 - 0.086"
#3 - 0.099"
#4 - 0.112"
#5 - 0.125"
#6 - 0.138"
#7 - 0.151"
#8 - 0.164"
#9 - 0.177"
#10 - 0.189"
#12 - 0.216"
#14 - 0.25"

Common Screw Materials & Finishes

The screw material and finish are major factors in the type of work the screw can handle and where to use it. Some materials aid screws to handle heavier loads, while some help prevent rust or corrosion. Keep reading to learn about the different options.

Steel

This is the most common screw material. This material does not have corrosion resistance unless coated or plated with a corrosion-resistant finish.

Galvanized

Electroplated galvanized screws are coated in zinc powder. The result is a bright finish that's rust resistant but not designed for outdoor use.

Stainless Steel

Stainless steel is a highly corrosion-resistant metal that's considered a material rather than a finish.

18-8 Stainless - 18% chromium and 8% nickel; the most common grade of stainless steel used in the manufacturing of fasteners.

Stainless 316 - More corrosion resistant than 18-8 stainless; ideal for saltwater and chlorine environments.

Stainless 410 - Harder than 18-8 stainless but not as corrosion resistant.

Plastic/Nylon

Plastic/nylon screws are used in electrical and electronic units because they offer good electrical resistance. Most plastic/nylon screws are in natural white or black. Being inert to most natural environmental conditions makes plastic/nylon screws useful in applications for medical and food sectors.

Brass

Brass-plated screws will not rust, which makes them an attractive choice for outdoor projects. However, they're not as strong as steel.

Hot-Dipped Galvanized

Hot-dipped galvanized screws are dipped in molten zinc to produce a rough, dull coating that resists corrosion. This material is recommended for outdoor projects and cedar, redwood, and treated lumber that requires "ACQ-compatible" screws.

Aluminum

Aluminum fasteners are lighter and more malleable than stainless steel, with a high weight to strength ratio. They're often used in applications such as car manufacturing, medical equipment, and aerospace, where minimizing weight is important. They're also aesthetically pleasing and robust fasteners with high corrosion resistance. Aluminum is not magnetic, so it's ideal for use in electronics and sensitive applications.

Screw Drive Types

The drive of a screw refers to the recess or slot in the screwhead. The drive type will correspond with a matching driving tool, such as a screwdriver or wrench, for both installation and removal of the screw. Each drive type is suited to different applications to optimize torque transfer, or the amount of force needed to drive the screw, and minimize wear and cam out.



Phillips

The Phillips drive has a cross-shaped recess that is designed to cam out when the screw starts to prevent damaging the work or screwhead.



Square

The square drive is a square-shaped recess that reduces cam out under load, providing a positive connection for high-torque applications.



Star

The star drive has a six-point, star-shaped recess that mainly enhances torque resistance and ensures a snug fit. The star design cuts down on the risk of stripping the screwheads, slippage, or cam out.



Security Torx®

Security Torx® screws are otherwise known as pin-Torx® due to the additional pin at the center of the six-point star socket head. This center pin makes it impossible to use a standard Torx® screwdriver, making this type of fastening tamperproof.



Hex

Hex head screws have a hexagonal-shaped head that can be tightened with a wrench or socket. Hex screws are typically used in applications requiring high strength, such as in construction, machinery, and automotive projects. They're sturdy and durable, making them ideal for projects requiring permanent fastening.



Hex Allen

The socket head cap (in hex drive) has a hexagonal recess that provides positive engagement between the screw and drive bit for high-torque applications. This drive type is for use with a hex bit or hex key and is designed not to cam out.



Pozidriv

Pozidriv® screws are externally threaded fasteners with torquing heads, which feature a cruciform socket with radial indentations that are set at 45 degrees from the main cross.



Slotted

Slot screwheads have a single horizontal indentation, referred to as the slot. The fastener head is driven by a "common blade" or flat-bladed (flat head) screwdriver. These screws have a slot with a flat bottom and are good for low torque, low speed applications.



Security Slotted

Security slotted screws, otherwise known as one-way security screws, are designed to stay in place once installed. Part of the head curves away—the section which lies in the direction that a screwdriver would be turned to remove the screw—thereby making the head impossible to grip.



Spider

The spider drive system contains eight points of contact, maximizing bit fit and reducing stripping. Each patented spider drive bit is specifically designed to be used with HeadLOK® fasteners. Spider drive screws help eliminate cam out and have eight points of bit engagement to provide easy installation.

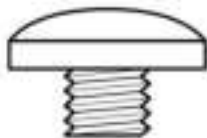


Combination

Combination head screws are externally threaded fasteners with torquing heads. They feature a socket designed to engage with two or more types of internal drivers. Combination head screws are designed to increase the chance of having a suitable driver available with which to tighten or loosen the fastener. These screws are commonly available in different drive combinations including: Phillips and slotted, Phillips and square, and hex and slotted.

Screwhead Shapes

The screwhead refers to the design of the top of the screw. Some styles are designed for a functional purpose while others are more decorative. The head is typically larger than the body of the screw and provides a surface that keeps the screw from being driven deeper than its length.



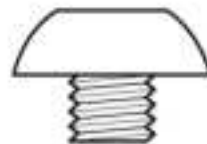
Binding

Binding screwheads have slightly domed heads that are designed with male and female sides that screw into one another. Binding heads are used to hold together switches, large mirrors, and other bonding projects.



Bugle

A bugle screw is a form of self-drilling screw that's specifically designed for drywall applications. Bugle head screws feature a countersunk head with a flat top and a conical under-head bearing surface.



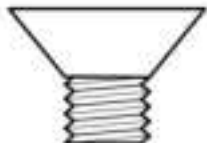
Button

A button screwhead is a broad, low-profile head with a rounded profile and flat underside. Designed to sit flat on the surface being fixed, these are generally used for fixing sheet metal signage and non-load bearing brackets.



Curved

Curved head screws are great when fastening materials to a cylindrical or curved surface. They're designed for use through a 1" OD round tube. They have a special curved head that lies flush on a curved surface.



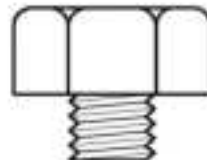
Flat

Flat head screws are conical with a flat outer face and a tapering inner face. The main advantage of flat head screws is that there's very little of the head protruding beyond the surface, allowing it to sink into the material. These types of screws are also commonly known as countersunk screws.



Headless

Headless screws are commonly known as nut screws and are threaded along the entire length of the screw with recessed internal drives.



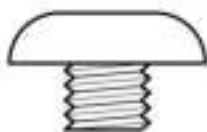
Hex

Hex heads are designed to allow for greater torque. They require a wrench or socket to install the screw or bolt. Apply force against the screwhead's outside to drive this head shape.



Oval

Oval head screws are a combination of a countersunk head and a domed head. Largely used as a decorative feature, the screw is countersunk, but the top of the head still protrudes above the surface.



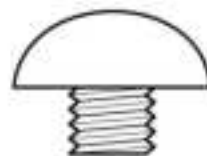
Pan

A pan screwhead has a rounded profile head with a flat underside used where a flat bearing surface is required. These are generally used for metal applications.



Pencil

Pencil screws are distinguished by their round, low-profile heads. These are the ideal choice for fastening panel clips to wood, along with many other applications like building carports or barns and working on roofing projects.



Round

A round screwhead has a rounded or domed head. The bulk of the screw that remains visible when screwed into the surface is rounded and domed. Round head screws tend to be used less frequently than flat head screws.



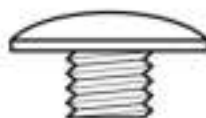
Socket Cap

Socket cap heads are unique to socket drive recesses and install flush against the surface. With easy access to the drive, socket cap heads provide a smooth appearance despite being a non-countersunk style.



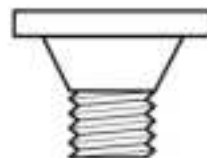
Trim

Trim screwheads are standard countersunk screws that provide a flat, smooth surface after installation. These are an alternative to flat head screws, with a narrower head. The trim head is often used as a finishing screw for carpentry and woodworking.



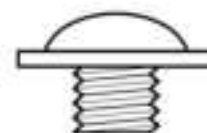
Truss

Truss screwheads are a low-profile, dome-shaped head with a flat, sharp edge that's designed to cut through truss flues as it self-countersinks. These screwheads are great for decking applications.



Washer

Washer screwheads are broad, low-profile heads with a flat profile and underside. These are designed to sit flat on the surface they're being fixed to. Washer screwheads are generally used for fixing brackets and light gauge channels.



Washer

The underside of a washer head screw is designed to accommodate a sealing washer to prevent water ingress in roofing and structural applications. Two common washer head types are **flex washer** and **oval washer**.