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## Screw Spike Manufacturer

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# What nail do I use?

Nails are the most common and the quickest fastener for anything from building houses or chicken coops to repairing a wine rack or hanging pictures. To achieve the best possible bond, it pays to use the right type. Most nails are made from steel, some are galvanised and others, where strength isn't the main factor, are made from alloys. They're made in many different shapes and sizes to suit different applications. So, if you're patching or repairing, try to find a nail similar to those already used.

Nails come in various lengths and gauges (thickness) and in a variety of metal types (see [What metal type should the fastener be? \(/what-metal-type-should-the-fasteners-be.html\)](#)).

Here is a list of common ones, but ask your hardware merchant, cabinet maker or builder if you're in doubt. There are specialist nails galore so have a look through a few shopping carts on the internet for ideas if you are looking for something special.

For hammering techniques see [Use a hammer like a professional \(/how-to-use-a-hammer-like-a-professional.html\)](#).

### Bullet or jolthead nail



A general-purpose nail with a small head, which allows the nail to be punched below the timber surface and then filled. Ideal for a painted or varnished surface.

### Clout



Has a large, flat head, which helps support the material being fixed. Ideal for fixing metal straps, brackets or plastic clips (such as the ones holding your down-pipe to the wall).

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### Plasterboard clout



Similar in shape to an ordinary clout, but has annular rings around the shank for greater holding power. Used for attaching plasterboard or drywall sheets to timber framing indoors (e.g. the walls in your lounge and bedroom).

### Flathead nail



A longer nail than a clout, used mainly with soft woods and thin timber. Good for fencing and chicken coops and projects where an immaculate finish isn't necessary. The flat head stops the timber pulling over the head, which can also help prevent the timber from warping in the sun.

### Pallet nail



A flathead nail with a twisted shank, which provides stronger holding power. Ideal for fences, crates and pallets (and chicken coops!).

### Timbergrip nail



A specially-designed flathead nail, which allows the head to be driven below the surface of the timber. A screw thread on the shaft adds extra holding power in soft timber. Ideal for decking, fences and pergolas.

### Panel pin



A shiny, slim nail, easy to hammer into soft woods. Because the inherent strength of this slim nail isn't great, glue is usually used as part of the join. The head can be punched below the surface for filler and paint application. Useful for panelboards and small, neat projects.

**Roofing nails**



These are galvanised for outdoor use and have a wide conical head, which acts as a cap over the nail hole, to prevent water penetrating the roof through the nail hole. Some versions have 'spring' heads (i.e. loosely attached to the shaft to allow them to angle appropriately as they firm up on corrugated iron). Others have a plastic washer under the metal cap, which provides extra waterproofing. On the other hand, many iron roofs are now tied down with hex screws instead of nails.

**Fibre-cement nail**



Used for fixing fibre-cement board to timber framing (i.e. the thin fibre boards that are made to look rather like weatherboards).

**Staple**



Like a rounded, heavier version of the staples your teacher used at school. Useful for attaching netting or wire to posts, such as when building a chicken run, training your climbing roses or supporting your runner beans and tomatoes.

**Masonry nail**

Used to secure materials such as wood to concrete or brick. Made of thick, hardened steel, they come in varied forms: from fluted shank to shiny shank, flat head to jolt head and even with round metal caps under the head. A browse through a manufacturer's website might show all types.

**Tack or cut tack**



A short, very sharp nail used to attach fabric to wood. The sharp point prevents fabric breakage and the wide head holds the fabric in place. Good for furniture upholstery.

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