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How To Replace An Exterior Pre-Hung Swinging Door

*This may be a 2-person job.
Have a second person that will be able to help carry the door.*

Step #1

- Remove the casing from the interior of the door.
- Measure the width from the backside of each side jamb.
- Measure the height from the surface of the sub-floor to the backside of the top jamb.
- Subtract ½ inch from each measurement and order your new door.
- Be sure to check which direction the door swings and match that direction with your new door.
- Measure the width of your door jamb. It should be around 4-1/4" to 4-3/4".
- Order your door. Have the salesman help determine if your new door has any special installation requirements. Check swing direction.

Most big box stores will have exterior pre-hung doors in stock. If your measurements require you to order a special size door, it may be less expensive to hang your own door. It will require more expertise and a few more tools. Watch our "How To Hang A Door Video" and determine if you are up for it!

A Pre-hung door must be smaller then the opening. You cannot cut a pre-hung door to fit into a smaller opening.

Step #2

- Remove the existing door by removing the pins from the hinges or remove the hinges from the door frame.
- Remove hinges, door strikes and any other hardware from the existing door frame. Look for any other screws and/or nails in the door frame and remove them.
- Remove both side jambs by cutting the jamb in the center, then remove both pieces. Remove the top jamb.
- You may have to use a reciprocating saw (sawsall) to cut the nails that secure the existing door frame.
- Clean any debris off the studs and walls. Re-nail the studs if they appear loose.

Step #3

- Place a level on the floor where the new sill will be and see if the surface is level.
- Place the Jiffy Seal on the floor where the sill will be. Level if necessary by stacking the Jiffy Seal on itself. Leave the backing on the last piece of Jiffy Seal.
- If your door came with weather stripping, remove the weather stripping.
- Dry fit the new door into the opening, and check side jamb for vertical level.
- Pre-drill the side jambs and top jamb for mounting screws. Try to place the screw holes where they will be covered up once the weather strip is reinstalled. Be sure that the screws will be covered when the door is in the closed position.
- ***Do Not Drill Any Holes In The Bottom Sill!***
- Be sure that the screws will be going into the stud behind the jamb, and space approximately 16 inches apart. Place one by each hinge.
- Be sure the door fits with your exterior surface. If you have stucco, dry fit the new stucco mold. For siding, the jamb will usually sit flush with the siding, and then trim will be placed over the siding and the jamb.
- With the door in the closed position, there should be a 1/16" gap minimum between the door and the jamb on both sides and the top.
- If the fit is good, remove the door.

Step #4

- Remove the backing from the Jiffy Seal.
- Apply Vulkem or a high-quality pure silicone on the Jiffy Seal where the sill will be placed.
- Place the bottom sill of the new door into the opening first. Then slowly push the new door into the opening.
- With a second person holding the new frame in place, place shims behind the frame until the door frame is level and plumb. Make sure the exterior of the jamb is in the proper location.
- Install deck screws through the pre-drilled holes. You should have at least 1 inch of the screw into the stud.
- Close the door and insure that the door is evenly spaced with the door jamb.
- Install door handle and deadbolt and make sure they latch properly with the jamb.
- ***Do Not Mount Any Screws In The New Sill!***

Step #5

- Cut your shims off flush with the jamb.
- Mount the exterior stucco molding or wood trim.
- Put expanding foam in the gap between the new frame and the old frame. Do not use too much, it will expand!
- Install the interior casing.
- Caulk all seams with paintable caulk.
- If you are going to paint the door, remove the handle and deadbolt and then apply the paint.
- Reinstall the weather stripping.
- Now add up the money you saved installing the door yourself!

If you have any questions, contact us at:

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Note: If the door will be exposed to extremely wet conditions, you may need a sill pan. This pan may be available from the dealer where you order the door. If not, you may be able to have one manufactured at a local metal shop.

You can make a sill pan by first installing 3"x1" L-flashing on the floor, and then placing a 1/4" x 3" flashing on top with the 1/4" into the inside. Then place 1"x3" corner flashing into each corner. Be generous with the Vulkem or silicone.