

Panelling

Market Overview

There are no clear-cut classifications for defining wall panels in Japan. However, wall panelling may be categorized in a similar manner as flooring, by board and block.

The traditional Japanese wall panel is a partial panel called *koshiita*, which literally translates as "waist-high panel." Western-style wall panels have been produced by every major housing component manufacturer in Japan.

The standard measurements of wall panelling are presented in Table 19. Western-style panels are available in the standard western sizes as well as local sizes.

There are no specific trade statistics for panelling. This is largely due to the fact that the housing components industry does not attach too much importance or value to the panelling market. Furthermore, wall panels are not particularly popular among Japanese users.

Traditionally, the walls of Japanese homes are finished with white plaster. At present, the more popular wall finishings are either wallpaper or plaster. It is believed that wall-panel use accounts for less than 1 per cent of the total wall space of housing starts.

Total wall space for residential buildings is approximately 2.5 times the actual floor space, while that for commercial buildings is nearly double. Based on these assumptions the total wall space can be estimated (see Table 20).

Table 19

Typical Wall-Panel and Moulding Dimensions

Waist-High Panel (mm)	
Height	750 to 885
Width	303 to 1 820
Thickness	9.5 to 10
Floor-to-Ceiling Panel (mm)	
Height	2 430 to 3 950
Width	300 to 910
Western Sizings (ft.)	
	2 × 8
	2 × 9
	3 × 6
Moulding (mm)	
Length	1 950, 3 850, 3 950, 4 000
Width	20, 30, 35, 38, 45, 49, 57, 64, 70, 75, 90, 105, 150
Thickness	5, 6, 8.5, 9, 12, 16, 20, 21, 25, 30, 90, 150

Source: *KF International from manufacturers' catalogues.*

Table 20

Interior Wall-Space Estimate in New Construction (million m²)

Year	Commercial Building		Residential Building		Total Wall
	Floor	Wall	Floor	Wall	
1982	88	176	108	270	446
1983	90	180	99	248	428
1984	96	192	100	250	442
1985	96	192	103	258	450
1986	97	194	111	278	472
1987	105	210	133	333	543
1988	121	242	135	338	580
1989	118	236	131	328	564

Source: *KF International.*