

Though wooden houses account for only about 40 per cent of total housing starts, this is the market for wooden entrance doors and windows. The two key sub-sectors for wooden houses are prefabricated and the 2 x 4 system.

Prefabricated houses are well established and now account for 12 to 14 per cent of total housing starts, as indicated in Table 2. Nearly 220 000 were built in 1988 of which about 27 per cent were made of wood. Of the remainder, 63 per cent used a steel structure and 10 per cent were concrete.

Table 2
Non-Traditional Housing Construction
1982 - 1988
('000 units)

<u>Year</u>	<u>Prefabricated</u>	<u>2 x 4</u>
1982	138.5	16.2
1983	146.7	17.2
1984	162.8	20.2
1985	177.8	24.1
1986	203.4	31.7
1987	247.5	40.1
1988 (est)	218.7	41.9

Source: Ministry of Construction and K. F. International, Inc.

The 2 x 4 system is still new in the Japanese market but is growing steadily since the concept has gradually been accepted as good technology and an attractive alternative to wooden custom made houses. In addition 2 x 4 houses give a complete Western design and the "look" that many consumers dreamed about in their youth while watching American movies and TV programs.

Besides new housing starts, there is significant home renovation activity. This is not included in new housing starts statistics but it does represent an additional market for doors and windows.

As shown in Table 3, some 164 000 units were renovated in 1987, although this was a significant decline from 1982. Approximately 80 per cent of those units are wooden houses.