

Chapter 16 – Installing Stair Treads and Risers

Installing Stair Treads and Risers	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Verify the stringer rise is $9\frac{3}{4}$" and stair treads are $11\frac{1}{4}$" to $11\frac{1}{2}$" wide.2. Prepare a block 2" thick to be used to ensure treads have required nose overhang.3. For safety reasons, only remove the temporary treads from one step at a time and make certain that the stairway gap is never unattended.4. Starting at the bottom of the stairs, measure between the skirtboards to get the length of the tread. If the stairs are going to be carpeted, cut the tread $\frac{1}{2}$" short. If the stairs are not going to be carpeted, cut the tread $\frac{1}{8}$" short.5. Apply a bead of construction adhesive on the three stringer sections. Place the tread on the stringers, align so the tread is centered between the skirtboards and the nose of the tread is flush with the 2" thick held against one of the outside stringers. Drill one $\frac{5}{32}$" pilot hole through the tread into the stringer about $3\frac{1}{2}$" from the nose of the tread and loosely secure the tread using a $2\frac{1}{2}$" exterior screw.6. With the other outside stringer, check flushness with the 2" block and drill and secure using a $2\frac{1}{2}$" exterior screw as described in Step 5.7. Drill and insert screws as described in Step 5 so that the tread is secured to each stringer section with three screws. All screws should be inserted until they are flush, or slightly shy of the tread surface.8. Starting at the bottom of the stairs, install the bottom riser below the tread just installed. Cut the riser to length using the same process as the bottom tread as described in Step 4.9. Rip the riser to $\frac{1}{8}$" less than the height between the two treads (between the tread and the floor for the bottom riser).10. Center the riser between the skirtboards position the riser tight against the tread above it. Secure the riser to the stringers with two $1\text{-}\frac{5}{8}$" exterior screws in each stringer.11. After a tread and riser pair is installed, remove the temporary tread from the step immediately above it.12. Repeat Steps 4 - 11 for each tread and riser, proceeding up the stairway. Cut no more than 2-3 tread and risers at a time to length, in case distance between the skirtboards varies along the stairway.13. For the topmost tread, measure from the beam at the top of the stairs to the stringer rise immediately below where the topmost tread will be placed and add 2". Rip the top tread to this width. Install the top tread as described in Steps 4 – 7.14. Install a riser below the topmost tread using Steps 8 – 10.15. No riser is required above the top tread.
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Quality Points

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- Treads have 1-1/4" overhang from the riser immediately below them.
- Treads and risers are centered between the skirtboards with the appropriate gap on either side (if stairs to be carpeted – ¼" gap, if not carpeted – 1/16" gap)
- Risers are attached to stringers with two screws per stringer
- Treads are attached to stringers with three screws per stringer. All screws are flush, or slightly shy of the tread surface.