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## A Contractor's Guide to Fence Fasteners

Before you can even begin to think about the right fencing fasteners or fence fastening system to use on your projects, it's important to understand what your customers are looking for in a fence. Your customers may come to you in search of fencing for many different reasons, and you will need to know exactly what they expect their fencing to accomplish before you can begin to match their needs with the correct type of fencing. A correct match will create happy customers - which will create happy fence builders.

A few of the possible solutions and benefits people are looking for from their fencing projects include:

- increased security
- decoration
- privacy
- landscaping accents
- industrial use
- agricultural use

With needs as diverse as these, it is important that you're able to offer your customers a wide range of fencing, constructed from a wide range of materials, including, but not limited to, wire, wood, vinyl, aluminum and wrought iron. Each type has its distinctive advantages and disadvantages, and of course, each type requires different types of fencing fasteners. Just like matching the right type of fencing is paramount to a successful installation and pleased customers, matching the fence fasteners to the materials being used will help to ensure a long functional life for any fencing project.

In this guide we will look at the different options in fastening for both wire fencing as part of industrial and agricultural projects, as well as for wood and vinyl fencing. There are other types of fences, such as brick and concrete fences, or "growing green" fences (which are basically just shrubs designed to create a privacy border). We will not discuss these in the context of this paper as they don't require the fasteners we're detailing, nor are they what people commonly think of when searching for a fence builder.

Another common fencing material is a metal fence. Most fences made entirely or primarily of metal will not need fence fasteners in the traditional sense. While chain link fencing does require wire to attach it to the support posts, most metal fencing comes in sections that are pre-assembled, which, once installed, may be welded together or connected through the use of pins.



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## WIRE FENCING

Wire fencing, like the type frequently used to keep livestock in their proper place, is usually strung from post to post and supported by hooks or staples in the posts themselves. Due to the size of these fences often required to cover acres – even miles – of a farm or range, the emphasis is often on speed and strength, not necessarily beauty.

## WIRE FENCING FASTENER SYSTEMS

A stapling system is a great fit for most wire fencing projects. Using staples as fencing fasteners is not a new idea, but the fence stapling system from the BECK Fastener Group® has found a way to make their use more efficient, and their effective lifespan longer. The stapling system has two main components, the stapler and the staples:

- **F46 40-315 Fence Stapler:** A powerful pneumatic stapler designed specifically for driving staple fasteners into seasoned wood fence posts. It's powerful enough to countersink 1-9/16" staples into even the hardest of woods, yet is light and balanced for comfortable use. It has a rubber grip designed to not only prevent slipping, but also to reduce vibration, allowing contractors to use it for hours without worrying about pain or damage to the nerves of their hands or forearms. It even has a special mechanism to prevent double shots and subsequent jamming, plus a depth of drive adjustment. This tool is built to work efficiently and effectively for the duration of even the longest jobs.
- **F40-315 Fence Staples:** Designed specifically to be used as fencing fasteners. They can be used to securely attach a variety of wire types in almost any regularly used thickness. They are made of hot dipped galvanized wire, with a generous outside coating of zinc for extended life. The points are sharp to ensure they can be easily driven in, and are divergent to ensure they don't easily come back out. The staples also have a patent-pending Diamond Coating to ensure excellent holding power. They're glued together both inside-and-out to prevent them from being separated prematurely, which can lead to jams, frustration and lost work time.

## WOOD AND VINYL FENCING

If a large amount of your work is done in rural or industrial areas, you may spend most of your time working with wire fences. However, if your business does most of its fencing projects in suburban areas, you will need to become well versed in the wooden and vinyl types of fencing. These types of fences are not only durable and attractive, but also are well suited to meet the common needs of suburban homeowners, including providing security, privacy and enhancement to their landscaping.



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Wood Fences last between 5-20 years, depending on the type of wood (cedar will last longer than pine, for example), and are they relatively inexpensive. They can, however, be difficult to clean and often require annual maintenance such as painting.

Vinyl fences will last much longer than wood fences, up to a lifetime if they're made from quality vinyl. They can come in a variety of colors that should not fade over time and are easily cleaned if they get paint on them. They are, however, more expensive in terms of upfront costs.

### WOOD AND VINYL FENCE FASTENERS

As you might imagine, there are many types of fencing fasteners and fence fastening systems available on the market. Which one you'll need will depend on the type of fencing you're constructing. When it comes to wood or vinyl fencing, there's much debate about which is better to use: nails, or screws. Here is a look at the pros and cons of the fastening options:

**SCREWS:** Good coated screws will secure a fence to rails longer than nails, and will resist loosening up from the wind movement. However, they cost a lot more than nails just to buy, and installation takes longer. They also cannot be used as easily in tight spots, but can be removed and replaced easier than a nail without damaging the wood. Be forewarned though: Some contractors using screws on pickets instead of nails tend to be stingy with the screws due to cost and time, negating the long term benefits of screws, and damaging the fence builder's reputation for quality.

**NAILS:** Many people say that galvanized nails installed with nail guns will last as long as the wood. So if you are building a fence with a lower quality wood, not designed to withstand the elements, a nail will not deteriorate faster than that wood. This could be ideal for a temporary fence, or one that's shielded from the elements. They're less expensive, easier to install (especially with a pneumatic nail gun), and easier to get in to hard to reach or tight spots. However, nails will get looser as time goes on, and many deteriorate and bleed on the wood. Plus, when you pound a nail you're loosening the nails already driven in elsewhere on the fence.

**BOTH NAILS & SCREWS:** Many contractors prefer to use a combination of screws and nails for fencing projects, opting for screws in the posts and nails for the pickets. Full ring shank nails used in treated lumber will not come lose as quickly as you may fear. But again, this is dependent upon the quality of the wood as well, so the cost savings in the nails is void due to the higher cost of the lumber.

**NAIL SCREW COMBINATION FASTENERS:** Another option is using a fastener that is a cross between a nail and a screw. These nail screw "hybrids" provide the ease of use of a pneumatically driven nail and the sturdy, long lasting hold of a screw. Like a screw,



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they can be easily removed and reused, saving time and money. The BECK Fastener Group® manufactures a broad assortment of these, under the name "SCRAIL®," which are one of the best fencing fasteners available today.

As fencing fasteners, SCRAIL® are available in many sizes so you're sure to find what you need to complete your project with a minimum of fuss and a maximum of customer satisfaction. Equally as effective whether you're installing wood or vinyl, they're even available coated in FasCoat®, the exterior coating that significantly reduces the occurrence of rusting, even in harsh climate conditions.

SCRAIL® fencing fasteners give you a secure, long lasting hold and are designed to minimize damage to the material they're driven into.

### WOOD & VINYL FENCING FASTENING TOOL

Regardless of which types of fasteners you're in need of, Fasco America®, the North American Master Distributor of BECK Fastener Group® products, has what you need:

**F58AC RHN20-90B SCR:** The premier fence fastening tool from Fasco America® features the F58AC pneumatic nailer. The F58AC fastener tool is one of the many offered by Fasco America that gives the user the option of using SCRAIL® fencing fasteners. Equally as effective whether you're installing vinyl or wood fencing, this tool's easy to use and easy on the user. Its innovative and patent pending design includes many new design features, including a unique magazine design with two insertion points, side and rear. It also features a new system for eliminating jams, releasing the entire magazine so you can easily see and fix the problem. It also allows the user to adjust the depth to which the fasteners are driven, offers a removable lock-out device that completely prevents dry firing, and includes a rubber comfort grip and a no mar tip.

To learn more about fastening tools for fencing or any other application, or to find out how SCRAIL® fasteners can benefit your business by saving you both time and money, contact a representative from Fasco America®. They will be happy to answer any and all of your questions about the products they carry, including those manufactured by the BECK Fastener Group®, and can offer helpful advice about which tool or fastener is the best choice for the job at hand.

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