

BS 5534-grade battens

BS 5534 and roofing battens

Roofing battens must comply with BS 5534: 2014. This means that all battens should be graded in accordance with BS 5534 and should have the appropriate supporting documentation.

All Marley Eternit roofing battens are mechanically pre-graded and fully BS 5534 compliant. This means that you can specify and install our battens with complete confidence with less on site sorting, less time and product wastage, and minimised health and safety risk.

Roofing battens

Not all battens are the same.

Roofing battens must meet the recommendations stated in BS 5534 in terms of their species, permissible characteristics and defects (knots, fissures and splits, wane, slope of grain, rate of growth, distortion, decay and insect attack, sap stain, resin pockets and moisture content*), including minimum dimensions and grading requirements. Failure to comply with any BS 5534 requirement may mean the invalidation of supplied warranties.

To help meet these minimum standards, roofing battens delivered to site should be pre-graded and marked in accordance with the requirements of the standard and have all necessary supporting documentation (as described opposite).

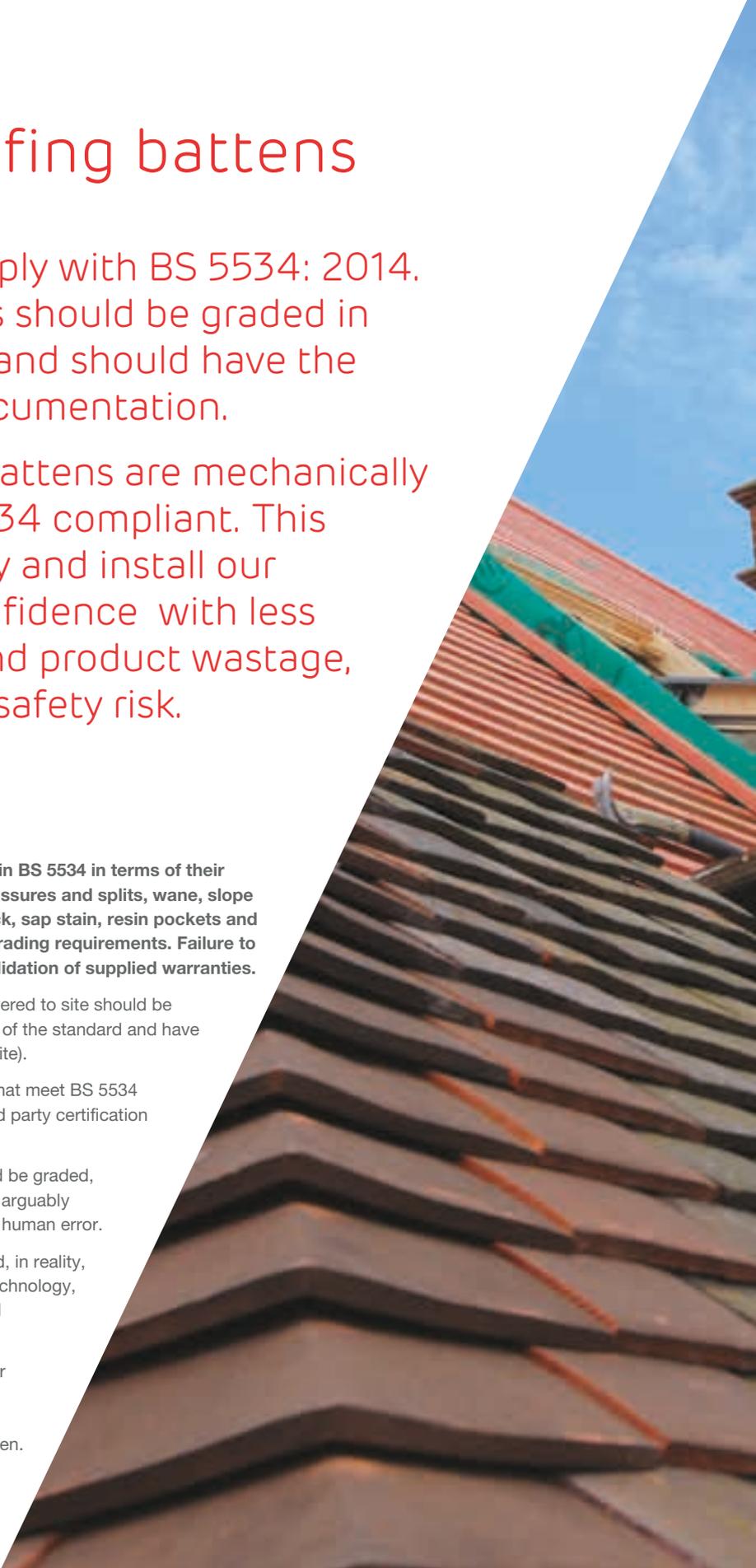
The way to comply is to buy factory-graded roofing battens that meet BS 5534 and have been produced by a supplier with a recognised third party certification of conformity.

Although BS 5534 doesn't state where roofing battens should be graded, grading offsite - outside a factory controlled environment - is arguably neither practical nor commercially viable; potentially prone to human error.

Whilst visual grading is permissible under the British Standard, in reality, only mechanical grading, using camera and laser scanning technology, is able to produce the most accurate and consistently graded roofing batten.

JB Red battens from Marley Eternit are laser graded using our unique Goldeneye scanning process, which precisely checks each piece of timber, to a fraction of a millimetre, delivering superior levels of consistent and BS 5534 compliant roof batten.

* Moisture - this is a defect however the dimension of the product must be within dimensional tolerance at 20% moisture content.



Ensuring quality and consistency

All documentation with a roofing batten delivery must include:

- Name of supplier (the company that graded the roofing battens NOT the company that cut them)
- Origin
- Graded in accordance with BS 5534
- Basic size
- Type of preservative (if applicable)

It is important to note that counter battens need not be marked or graded where they are fully supported by the rafters. In cases where they are used to restrain insulation boards and are subject to upward bending loads they should be graded.

However, if counter battens are used to provide a ventilation gap beneath the roof covering, there is a potential risk of high levels of moisture, and it is advisable for them to be preservative treated in order to provide the required durability.

One of the biggest issues with roofing battens is under-sizing. To avoid this, there is now a clear tolerance limit on 25mm battens, which is +3mm/-0mm depth and +/-3mm width. Also, roofing battens cannot be less than 25mm deep and where the span between supports exceeds 600mm, calculations must be completed to determine their correct dimensions for structural integrity.

In all instances, guidance should be obtained from the roof covering or insulated sarking manufacturer.

Recommended minimum timber batten sizes (roofing and vertical work)

Application	Basic minimum size of battens			
	Up to 450mm span*		Up to 600mm span*	
	Width (mm)	Depth (mm)	Width (mm)	Depth (mm)
Double lap slates – natural sized or random	50	25	50	25
Double lap slates – fibre cement or concrete	38	25	50	25
Double lap clay and concrete tiles	38	25	38	25
Single lap clay and concrete tiles	38	25	50	25

NOTE Tolerances on basic sizes: width +/-3mm, depth -0/+3mm; based on measurement at a reference moisture content of 20%.

*Span is defined as the distance between centres of supports, or the clear distance between the faces of supports plus half the bearing length at each end support, whichever is the lesser. The end-bearing length should not be less than 17.5mm. Further guidance on the use of timber battens in slating and tiling is contained in NFRC Technical Bulletin 33 and NFRC Guidance Document Q.

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