Q A photo in the "Flexible Flashing" article in *JLC*'s April issue shows accordion-style flashing around a circle-top window. How do you flash around the curved window if you have only straight flashing tape?

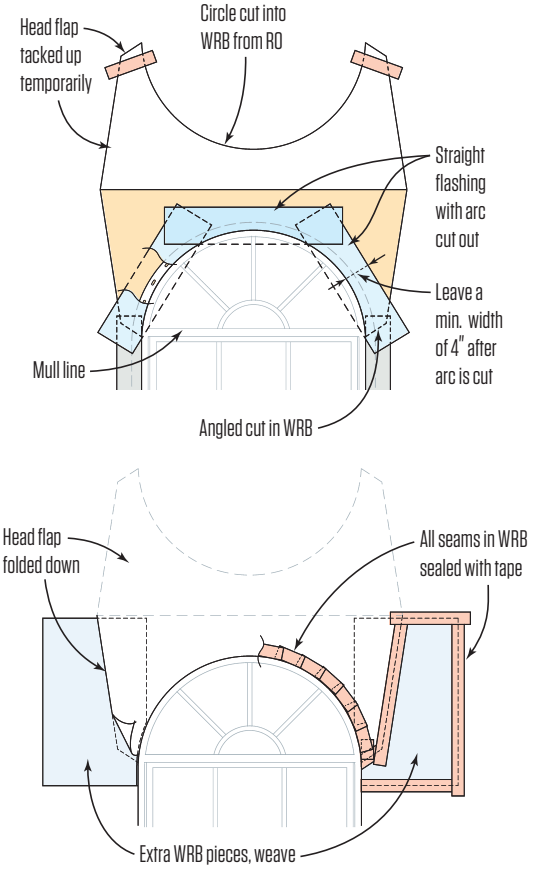
A Mike Guertin, contractor and presenter at JLC Live, responds: As with every detail like this, proper installation begins before the window goes in. After running the housewrap (WRB) over the opening and making the center and sill cuts for the rectangular part of the window, make a horizontal slit across the mull line (where the curved and rectangular sections meet) of the rough opening. Cut the WRB along the circular part of the RO, and extend the cut for the mull line out about 3 inches on both sides of the opening with the cuts angled upward. Continue the cuts vertically up about 8 to 10 inches past the top of the RO. Fold the top flap up and temporarily tape it above the opening. Detail the WRB and sill pan flashing for the lower rectangular section as you would for any window. Install the window and run flashing tape along the sides of the window, letting it extend a few inches past the mull line.

For the curved window on top, there are many brands of flexible flashing tape (like the one in the article) that make for a seamless installation. However, in a pinch, you can revert to the method we used before those so-called accordion tapes were available: layering strips of straight flashing tape along the arc of the window. The goal is to use as few pieces as possible; otherwise, the layers will build up, preventing your trim and siding from lying flat.

One way to use fewer pieces is to cut the window arc out of the straight flashing tape. I'd use 6-inch or wider tape so that you still have plenty of coverage even after cutting the arc. Start with a piece about 18 to 24 inches long and place it over the curved window frame. Trace the curve of the window, making sure that you leave at least 4 inches of tape at the deepest point of the arc. Then use scissors or a sharp knife to cut along the curved line. Apply pieces starting from the outer (lower) edges on both sides of the curved window, working upward to the top of the curve. The number of pieces used depends on the width of the flashing tape and the size of the window, but often you can flash a curved window this way with just three or four pieces.

Next, roll the flashing tape against the window flange and the sheathing, and fold down the top flap of WRB. Many installers simply tape over the slits to complete the installation, but I weave extra pieces of WRB into the vertical slits to create a mechanical lap as well, and then I tape all the joints. That way I'm not depending on the tape alone to complete the WRB around the

Flashing a Curved Window With Straight Flashing



window—an inexpensive and easy way to ensure greater durability.

A word of caution: Be sure to check the compatibility of the flashing tape with the window brand you're installing. Asphalt-based tapes can't be used to flash some windows because the asphalt can react with plasticizers in the window's vinyl frame, flanges, or gaskets. Butyl and acrylic adhesive tapes are usually compatible.

Q I hope to use local red cedar logs as posts for a client's rustic porch. What's the best way to remove the bark without damaging the wood underneath?

A Craig Aument, a timber framer and founding owner of Cascade Joinery, a timber-frame company in Ferndale, Wash., responds: We're often asked to include natural logs in the timber-frame structures we build. The tree shape creates an interesting contrast to and visual juxtaposition with the milled timbers that make up the rest of the frame. Red cedar, with its natural rot resistance as well as its fairly easy workability, is an excellent choice for unique-looking porch posts.

We've found that cedar logs cut in the spring, when the sap is running, are a joy to peel. Loosen a strip of bark at one end of the log with a draw knife or peeling spud. (A peeling spud has a steel blade about 6 inches long and about 2½ inches wide that's mounted on a long wood handle. The blade is slightly curved and sharpened on the end as well as on both sides.) Once you've separated a section of bark, pull up; you can usually peel full-length strips from the log. Native Americans in my area harvested basket-making material from live trees this way. They did not strip the whole tree, but usually took just a 6-inch to 8-inch strip from one side, so the tree wouldn't die.

When the sap isn't running, the bark is a lot tougher to peel. In this case, work your way down the log using a draw knife or peeling spud, taking off the outer layers of hard bark and being careful to stay in the right layer to avoid cutting into the log. This can get tricky around the knots or branches, but you don't need to get all the way to the wood in these areas, just the harder outside layer of bark.

Regardless of when the tree is cut, it is best to get the bark off as soon as possible. Otherwise, moisture and bugs can get under the bark, staining and burrowing into the sapwood layer.

Once you've taken off most of the outer bark, carefully pressure wash the logs to clean up the inner layer. Then begin working them to make your posts. Usually by the time you've finished with the fabrication, the logs are dry enough to be finished. In most cases, we use Sikkens Cetol Log and Siding (sikkensstains.com) to seal the log and bring out the natural color of the wood.

To see photos of the bark-peeling tools mentioned here, go to the online version of this article at www.jlconline.com.