

# Wallboard is a fixer-upper's best friend

Wallboard is used as a backing throughout houses in the United States. Because it is so common, repairs are going to be needed at some time turning your tenure as a homeowner.

These repairs range from fixing minor dents to replacing entire sections of a wall. The key element in wall repair is that once you're done with the repairs, the repaired area should blend in with the surround surface.

Standard wallboard is composed of a fire-resistant gypsum core sandwiched between two layers of paper. There are also waterproof panels available for use in the bathroom and other damp areas.

### Preparation

Plan your layout in advance so you know how many supplies you will need. The larger the size panel, the fewer seams you'll have in your wall, so consider using long panels, such as 10- or 12-foot sizes. Panels can be hung horizontally or vertically, but horizontal placement is stronger.

Stack the wallboard against the last wall you plan to cover to leave maximum floor space available for working.

Examine the framing and straighten bowed or crooked studs by planing down high spots. Install blocking wherever joints are not available to give panels edge support. Make sure all electrical boxes are flush with the finished wall. Wires should be at least 1-1/4 inches from faces of studs or joists. If they aren't, nail on metal protectors.

It might be a good idea to rent a wallboard juck if you plan to

redo the ceiling. The juck cradles a full sheet of wallboard and can raise or lower it with a crank. The juck is also mounted on wheels so you can position the wallboard however you choose.

### Ceiling panels

The first thing you should do is mark all joint locations on the wall plates so you know where to nail after panels are in place. Start on one wall and lift the first panel into place and attach to joists with 1-1/4-inch ring-shank wallboard nails or 1-1/8-inch type W screws. Start in the center and work outward, spacing nails seven inches apart, 12 inches if using the double-nail technique. Screws should be placed 12 inches apart. Nails/screws should be at least 3/8 inch from the panel edge and embedded slightly into the paper.

Once the first panel is up, measure, cut to fit and install remaining panels. Measure and mark holes for electrical outlets, flues or other obstructions and cut out with a wallboard saw. Gaps around the obstructions should be no more than 1/4 inch.

### Wall panels

Once again, the first thing you should do is mark all stud locations on the ceiling and floor. For horizontal panels, place top panel first and snug it up against the ceiling. Bring the bottom panel snug up against the top panel and fill in any gaps

below with strips of wallboard. Before attaching wallboard to the studs, snap vertical lines to indicate stud locations. Use screws or nails to attach the panels in place. Space nails eight inches apart, while screws should be 12 inches apart. Cover all outside corners with metal corner bends and make sure to angle nails away from the corner.

### Taping

You will need a number of specialized tools to tape and fill joints properly. These include three sizes of putty knives (a three- or four-inch, six-inch and a 10- or 12-inch), an angled knife for corners, a tray to hold compound, a sanding block, wallboard tape, joint compound and taping compound.

There are three applications required to adequately finish jointing joints. Initially, mix the compound with a limited amount of water and spread a layer of compound along the joint. Wet the tape and lay it over the joint/compound and smooth it with a three- or four-inch putty knife.

After putting on the tape, apply a thin layer of joint compound with a four-inch putty knife. Use corner tools for inside corners and feather edges carefully.

Check the joint for dimples and smooth any you find out with a layer of compound. Let the compound dry overnight and then smooth by sanding or using

a wet sponge. Don't forget to flatten any high spots with a putty knife.

Use a six-inch putty knife for the second application. This is done mainly to smooth and feather edges.

Do one side of inside corners at a time, one this application and the other during the third application.

When the second application is dry, sand again and apply a third coat with the 10- or 12-inch knife. Don't forget to coat nail dimples.

Once the compound is dry, sand again and check to see if a fourth coat is necessary.

### Painting

Before you paint wallboard, it must be sealed to prevent absorption of paint into the panels. Polyvinyl acetate (PVA) is the most common primer on the market and creates an acceptable surface for most latex paints.

Don't use PVA primer where you will be using wallpaper. It prevents wallpaper from adhering to the wallboard. If you plan to use oil-based paints, use an alkaline primer.

Information for this article was provided by the Do-It-Yourself Encyclopedia and How To Build Additions by Ortho Books.

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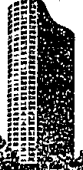
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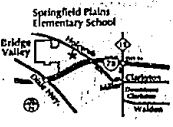


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