

How to Remove Wallpaper

If you are redecorating a room that is covered in wallpaper, it is usually necessary to remove the old wallpaper. Whether painting or wallpapering, a clean surface free of old paper and adhesive is necessary. As in most cases, the prepping stage is the most time consuming, but it definitely pays off with your final result.

Removing wallpaper is an easy job once you learn the best way to remove your type of paper.

- Electric wallpaper steamer (rental item, shown)
- Utility knife (or razor blade)
- Taping knife (or wall scraper)
- Protective goggles
- Rubber gloves
- Large sponge



Step 1. Score the Wallpaper

Before using either a chemical agent or steam, you must score the wallpaper with a utility knife so the chemicals or steam can soak into the paste and soften it. (See Figure 1.) To score the paper, make cuts in it in a crisscross pattern. This helps the softening agent to get through the paper to the glue. Many types of wallpaper are made of vinyl or foil which are waterproof. If these papers aren't scored, the paste will not soften at all.



Step 2. Soften the Paste with an Electric Steamer

A steamer is easy to use and can be rented from most rental stores or hardware stores. Fill the steamer's tank with water and heat it electrically. Once the hand-held plate starts pumping steam, hold it against the paper until the paste becomes soft.



CAUTION: To protect your hands, always wear heavy work gloves.