

# Installing Drywall

Artwork hangs from them. Painted ones enhance the decor. They even help insulate a room. Obviously, walls are a key element of a home. So now that you are ready to complete the addition to your home, or you've finally decided to finish the basement, it's time to install the drywall? Here are some simple step by step instructions to get the job done right.

Tools and Materials you need:

- Drywall Jack (rental item shown)
- Wallboard
- T-Square
- Keyhole Saw/ Circle Cutter
- Crow-head Hammer
- Reinforcing Tape
- Joint Compound
- Screws
- Adhesive
- Drop Cloth
- Metal Corner Strips
- Sandpaper Block
- Steel Rule
- Sandpaper 80-100 grit
- Trimming Knife
- 8"-10" Drywall Knife
- Adhesive Gun
- Trowel
- Drywall Jack
- Nails
- 4" Joint Knife



## Step 1: Plan Ahead

Use a special water-resistant drywall where excessive moisture may be a problem. Use a special fire-rated drywall where building codes require the use of a fire-rated material. If a vapor barrier is needed, use special insulating, foil-backed wallboard, or create a vapor barrier with sheets of plastic material.

## **Step 2: Cut the Drywall**

You can easily cut wallboard with a scoring or trimming knife and a 4' straightedge. You may use a T-square for an even cut. Use a straightedge for accuracy, and score along your marks. Hold the knife at a right angle to the board and score completely through the face paper. The board will break easily at the point where it is scored. After it is snapped, trim the paper on the uncut side with a sharp knife. To cut holes in the wallboard for electrical outlets, light receptacles, or switches, carefully measure and mark the location of the opening of the face of the wallboard. Outline the opening in pencil and cut it out with a keyhole saw or circle cutter.

## **Step 3: Single- Or Double-Layer Installations**

A single layer wall of 1/2" or 5/8" drywall is a simple and fast type of wall construction. Use a double-layer installation where extra fire protection or sound deadening is important. This double-layer usually uses a 3/8" finish wallboard laid over a 3/8" backing board.

## **Step 4: Use a Vertical Or Horizontal Installations?**

If the ceiling is less than 8' in height, use a horizontal application. If the ceiling is higher than 8', install the drywall vertically. On a two-layer installation, lay the base boards either way - whichever requires the fewest cuts. Any seams in the finish layer should be offset at least 10" from the seams in the base layer, or set at right angles from seams.

## **Step 5: Applying to the Ceiling**

Apply drywall to the ceiling at right angles to the joists. If two layers are installed, set the bottom layer at right angles to the joists and the finish layer the way that leaves a minimum of seams. Holding the ceiling board in position can be difficult. If you are working alone, solve this problem by renting a drywall jack.

## **Step 6: Wall Application**

If the drywall is being applied horizontally, install all top boards first. Push it up firmly against the ceiling, do not force it, and nail lightly into place. In areas where ceiling boards are nailed to ceiling joists, start the first run of nails on the wallboards about 7" below the ceiling. If you're applying the wall board with nails only, place all nails about 7" apart to all studs. If you're using the adhesive and nail-on method, apply nails only at the edges of the

board with adhesive on the back to hold the boards to the studs in the center. If a board tends to bow out in the center, secure it with a temporary nail until the adhesive sets. Remove the holding nail after adhesive sets. If wallboards are applied vertically, place the long edges of the wallboard parallel to the framing members. Use a vertical application if your wall height is greater than 8c". Use the same nailing procedures as previously described.

### **Step 7: Around the Corners**

Special metal corner strips are available for outside corners. Insert a nail in these metal corner strips about every 5". Nail first through the edge of the strip, then through the drywall and into the wood framing.

### **Step 8: Get the Joints**

Use a good grade of joint compound to finish all joints, nail heads and corners. In most cases, you'll need two or three coats of compound at all taped joints. The number of coats depends on whether you are using regular drywall tape or one that has adhesive on the back. If you are using adhesive back tape, center the tape over the joint and press it into place with your knife. Apply two finish coats over the tape. If you are using regular tape, use an embedding coat to bond the tape at each joint. When the embedding coat has set, apply two finish coats over the tape. Allow each coat of joint compound to dry about 24 hours before applying the next coat.

### **9: Finishing Touches**

Use a 4" joint finishing knife to smooth out each coat of joint compound. Fill in the slightly recessed area created by the adjoining tapered edges of the wallboards, and smooth it off with the 4" joint finishing knife.

### **Step 10: Taping It Up**

Center the wallboard tape over the joint and press it into place if you are using the adhesive back tape. For the regular tape press it into the first layer of compound firmly, but not too hard. Hold the 4" knife at a 45 degree angle. Press just hard enough to squeeze out some of the compound from under the tape, but be sure you leave enough compound for a good bond. With adhesive back tape you can apply the fill coat right away. With regular drywall tape, allow the tape to dry in position for at least 24 hours and then apply a fill coat, extending it a few inches beyond the edge of the tape. Feather the edges of the compound for a smooth finish. After the fill coat

has dried, use a 10" joint finishing knife to apply still another coat of joint compound. Feather this coat about 1 1/2" beyond the edge of the first coat.

### **Step 11: Finish Up**

When the final coat is dry, sand it lightly to a smooth finish. Wipe off the dust with a clean rag to prepare the surface for the final coating of paint or paper. The total width of the compound at each joint should be about 12" to 14".

### **Step 12: Cover Up**

All nails should be dimpled just below the surface of the board. Conceal these areas by applying a first coat of joint compound with even pressure so the compound is level with the board. Press evenly, but not too hard - too much pressure on the knife may scoop the compound from the dimpled area. When the compound has thoroughly dried, apply a second coat. Let it dry thoroughly, then sand it lightly and apply a third coat. In areas where humidity is extremely high, apply a fourth coat of compound over the nail heads.

### **Step 13. Butt Joints**

The end or butt joints on wallboards are not tapered. Where these butt joints come together, be sure not to build up too much compound. It will create ridges in the wall, and may cause shadowing when the area is lighted. Feather the joint compound out on each side of the butt joints from 7" to 9". The final application of joint compound should create a joint approximately 14" to 18" wide where they come together.

### **Step 14: Metal Corner Strips**

After attaching the metal corner strips, nail them securely into position, and use a 4" finish knife to spread compound mix 3" to 4" out from the nose of the bead. When the first layer is completely dry, sand it lightly and apply a second coat, feathering the edges about 2" to 3" beyond. If a third coat is needed, feather it 2" to 3" beyond.

### **Step 15: Big Finish**

To finish off an inside corner with regular tape, apply joint compound with a 4" knife. Spread it evenly about 1 1/2" on each side. For both types of tape, cut it the exact length of the corner. Fold the tape lengthwise in the center and press firmly into the corner.