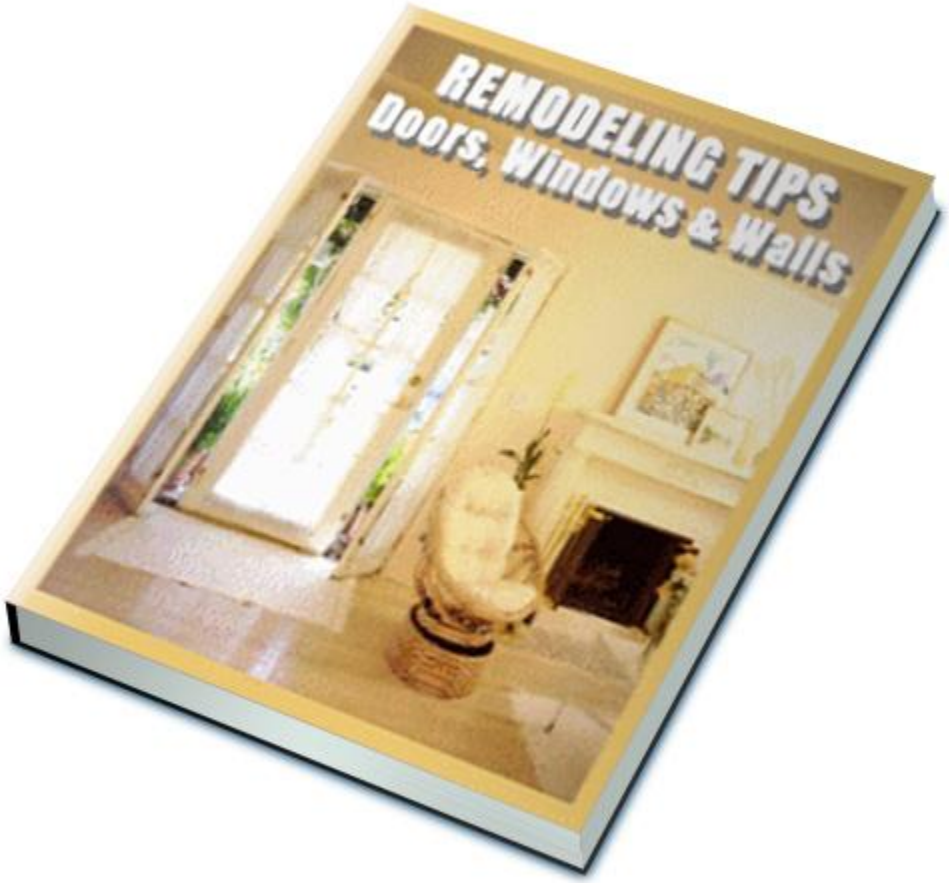
Remodeling Tips:
Doors, Windows and Walls



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Five Steps to a Brand New Door

Learning how to replace a door opens a whole new window of opportunity for a do-it-yourselfer. A new door can change the style of a room or brighten up the exterior of a house. In addition, a new door with a better seal can help prevent drafts and improve heating bills.

There are three types of doors: entry doors, interior doors, and combination storm/screen doors. The five steps below describe the technique for replacing an entry door. If you can master replacement of an entry door, replacing most interior doors is actually a simplified version of that process, as the locks are typically simpler or nonexistent.

Replacement of combination storm/screen doors can follow the same process as that of entry doors, or it can become more complicated. If you are unsure about the process for installing a combination storm/screen door, check your manufacturer's information for additional instructions or speak with a representative of the manufacturer or store that sold you the door.

Remove the old door

To remove the old door, open it and wedge under the outer corner to take weight off the hinges. Once the door has been removed, set it aside to use as a pattern in trimming the new door unless it is seriously warped or damaged.

To remove the door, follow one of the two options below.

A popular method for hanging doors is the use of loose-pin hinges. With loose-pin hinges, half the hinge attaches to the door and the other half to the doorframe. Both halves are held together by a pin. If this is the type of hinge you're dealing with, remove the pin by tapping it up and completely pulling it out. Start with the bottom hinge and work your way up. Once the hinges have been removed, you can take the door off the frame.

In some older homes, a different type of hinge may be used or the pin cannot easily be removed because it has been covered by layers of paint. In this case, unscrew the hinges from the doorframe (still working from bottom to top) and remove the door.

Remove hinge leaves

Remove the hinge leaves from the door and the frame. You can choose to either reuse the original hinges or hang new ones. If you reuse the original ones, you can buff them with sandpaper and spray them with a clear protective coating. For new hinges, simply insure that they are the same size as the old ones.

Once you have gotten the hinges in the shape you want them, install the new hinge leaves on the door frame. Be sure your screws are long enough to pierce both the frame and the stud-wall framing. This is an extra security measure.

Trim new door

If possible, use the original door as a pattern for the new one. Alight the top and side edges and see whether the new door needs to be cut down along the bottom. If you cannot use the old door as a pattern, measure the door opening and allow a 1/8" bottom clearance and 1/16" top and side clearance. If the door opens over carpet, increase the bottom clearance to 3/4" or more. Mark the appropriate dimensions on the new door.

Trim the bottom of the door with a fine-toothed saw. Alternatively you can work from the corners to the center of the bottom edge with a block plane. Also use a jack plane for edge trimming if necessary. To prevent binding when the new door is opened, bevel the latch edge inward.

Prepare new door for hinges.

The first step in preparing the door for the hinges is to create the new mortises, which are carved or routed-out depressions where the hinge blades are placed, which keeps the surface even. Again using the old door for a pattern, mark hinge mortise locations. If you choose not to pattern after the old door, stick the new door in the opening and wedge it 1/8" from the bottom. Mark the hinge locations on the door.

Next, set the door on its latch edge. Use a square and pencil or knife to draw a line across the door edge at each hinge location. Outline the new hinge on the door by using the hinge leaf as a template.

Score marked edges for the hinge mortises with a wood chisel. Do not cut deeper than hinge leaf thickness. Angle the same chisel with beveled edge downward. Make several cuts in the scored area, again to the depth of the hinge leaf. Remove wood chips with a chisel. Insert the hinge leaf to double check fit, but do not affix it to the door.

Typically, doors taller than six feet require three hinges for weight distribution. Place the middle hinge halfway between the top and bottom hinges.

Coat door edges with wood sealant. Use wood screws to attach hinge leaves to the new door.

Hang new door.

Placing the newly sealed door in the frame, insert the top and bottom pins. If the fit is acceptable, close the door and mark where the middle hinge falls on the doorframe. If the old door had a middle hinge, the best case scenario would involve the new middle hinge falling in exactly the same place, necessitating no work on your part.

If the middle hinge falls differently on the new door, take down the door by removing the bottom hinge pin and then the top. Use the hinge leaf as a template to outline the middle

hinge's location on the doorframe. Cut the mortise in the same process used for door mortises. Attach the middle hinge to the doorframe.

Set the door in place and insert the hinge pins, working top to bottom.

Another project for another day is installing a new lockset. For now, open your new door and go out and celebrate your accomplishment!

Foolproof Ways to Install a New Doorbell

Whether you are waiting on guests or unexpected visitors drop by, you'll seem like a surly host if you don't answer the door because the doorbell doesn't work. Don't let your reputation suffer when fixing a doorbell is one of the easiest "do-it-yourself" (DIY) electrical projects of all! In just a few short steps, you will once again be known as the most attentive host on the block.

New Installation

I hereby declare this the DIY project for the complete and total non-DIYer. The easiest way to install a doorbell when there is not an existing one is to buy one of the wireless models. Talk about foolproof!

To get slightly more technical, a wireless doorbell is actually a transmitter. When a visitor pushes the button, a coded signal is sent to a receiver attached to the bell, and the doorbell chimes.

Some of the advantages of the wireless doorbells include:

If you have a hard time hearing the doorbell (even when it's working that is), you can purchase more than one chime unit and tune them all to the same button. This way, you can place chimes all around the house to hear the doorbell ring wherever you may be.

It involves no wires and no more electricity than that of a small battery. The button unit requires a battery, but most of the indoor chime units can be plugged into an electrical outlet, ridding you of the need to remember to change multiple batteries.

Although replacing a wired doorbell is a quick project by most DIY standards, this one is even quicker. Other than the time spent choosing between the brass or gold finish, this project can be accomplished during one commercial break.

Replacement Installation

If you are really pressed for time or not interested in dealing with wires, simply replace your wired doorbell with one of the wireless models mentioned above. Remove the old doorbell switch with a flat screwdriver, tape up the wires with electrical tape, and tuck them back in the doorbell hole. Affix the new switch to the doorframe, covering the hole. Indoors, plug in the chime unit(s).

However, even replacing a wired doorbell with a new wired model will typically not take more than a half-hour. The only materials needed are the new switch and a flat screwdriver. To make life easier or show off your well-stocked tool kit, you may also choose to have wire strippers handy.

Decide whether to turn off the power. Typically this is not a question, but the main commandment of electrical work. However, because a doorbell is a low-voltage device and operates on a mere 12 volts, you can do this repair without turning off the power. If you are uncomfortable with leaving the power on or suspect that your doorbell may run on a higher voltage, go ahead and turn off the power at the breaker box or service panel.

Remove the old switch. Take out the screws and set aside, as you may choose to reuse them. Disconnect the wires, securing them so they cannot slide back in through the hold, and discard the old switch.

Cut and trim wires, if necessary. If the termination ends look worn or frayed, pull the wire out so you have a bit of slack and trim the wires to equal length. Strip approximately a half-inch of insulation from each wire.

Connect wires to the new switch. Connect wires to the two screw terminals on the new switch. It doesn't matter which wire goes to which switch, It will work either way. Tighten the screws.

Install new switch. Feed the wires back through the hole and push the new switch so it is flush against the wall or doorframe. At this point, if the power is on, the new switch should be working. If you splurged and purchased a lighted model, look to see if it is lit. Test it and listen for the chime.

If you chose to purchase a new chime unit as well, find and replace the old chime unit using the same process. Pay attention to which wire goes to which terminal, however, because in this case they do need to be connected to the appropriate terminals on the new chime unit.

How to Change Your Locks in Five Simple Steps

Changing locks in your home sounds so simple, and it can be if you know what you're doing. Of course there are on the market different styles of handles, and certain styles have different locking mechanisms. Each style has its own unique function, so if you're going to change your lock, know what type works best and why. Read on and learn a little about how to change a basic lock, and other style issues and uses.

You need to know what you're using your lock for before changing out the lock. Here are a few styles that you'll want to consider.

Free through Passage Handles. If you need to change the handles in your house for a closet then you won't have to fool with locks on this one. It's free through exactly as the name sates. You can buy them in a knob type handle style, or a lever type that is very popular. Of course

make sure that you don't need one a lock before purchasing a free through handle. Any medications that are stored will need to be locked if you have small children around.

Privacy Door Knobs. Commonly used in the areas of a bedroom or bathroom where privacy is most desired. The lock on these doors are made where you can unlock the door from the inside by turning an extra switch, or just by turning the knob.

Entrance Locks. This type of lock is very popular for a garage door or anywhere that you'll want limited access to areas that might have dangerous chemicals, or sharp machinery or tools. The style is not totally secure because if it's used on fencing around a pool someone can hop the fence, and get right into the area you're trying to keep closed. Consider enclosing any area like this with a much taller fencing system for better security.

Decorative Door Knobs. These types of knobs are used for spicing up the look of your house. Popular places for placement are on French doors. You can use them on pantries too as long as you don't have anything in there that's hazardous. There's no lock on these, so make sure that you'll use them in the correct way. Handles can be placed on both sides of the door, but you've got a choice of having them only on one side too. A cap in a matching color is on the other side with fake trim.

Security Single Deadbolt Lock. This lock is good for any entrance door to the home, such as a front or back door. You can put them on interior doors that lead from a garage to inside of the house too. It's advisable to use this type of lock with doors that don't have glass panes or side lights. It would be very easy to enter by just breaking the glass and reaching in to turn the knob. It has one cylinder on the outside. You'll enter by using a key from the outside of the door.

Security Double Deadbolt Lock. Use this type of lock when you want extra strength and security for you doors. This deadbolt lock can be locked from the inside or outside of the door using a key. Other types of locking mechanisms can be added for security such as a chain too.

Decorative Deadbolt and Latch Set. This type can be made as either a knob or handle type. It's a deadbolt lock and a door latch in one. You can use the two configurations by themselves too. It just depends on your needs.

Now that you've got an idea about the different types of styles and their locking mechanisms you'll need to figure out if the door handle that you've got now is appropriate, or if you just want a new style of lock and handle to replace the older one.

Considerations for changing your lock are below. If you're upgrading your lock these are a few tips that will come in handy when doing it.

Latch plate. The latch plate hole might not be deep enough for a better quality latch. The latch plate is on the interior part of your door. Open it and remove the existing latch plate.

Try fitting the new latch plate into the old hole. If it doesn't fit flush with the hole, you'll need to chisel out the old hole to a deeper depth.

Check to make sure that the plunger for the deadbolt matches up with the hole in the doorframe. The lock won't do any good for security if the holes don't line up.

For extra security add longer screws to the pre drilled areas on the plate.

Readjust if needed for security purposes.

Open and Shut Case: Mysteries of the Stuck Window and Door Revealed

Sometimes, when opportunity knocks, you can't get the door open. It's mysteriously stuck. You move over to open the window of opportunity, and after much huffing and puffing, you realize you can't get that open, either. What's going on here?

Learn all about how and why doors and windows stick and how to fix them, so you're not stuck the next time opportunity pays a visit!

Stuck Windows

Windows can stick for a variety of reasons. Often wood expands and contracts, moving parts have been painted over, or two surfaces may simply seem fused together. Some of the most common problems and fixes for stuck windows are:

Painted-over joint: Cut the paint with a window zipper (tool designed just for this purpose) or a putty knife. Hold blade flat against the sash and push the edge into the joint while drawing the tool along the surface.

Paint build-up: Similar to when joints are painted over, years of painting can also result in an accumulation that causes excessive friction. Use a paint scraper to remove excess paint from the window stop, parting strip, and blind stop. Raise and lower the sash throughout the process. For a lower sash, it is also a possibility to remove the window stop to sand and scrape the edges facing the window. If none of the easier solutions were successful, remove both sashes and completely strip the paint to the bare wood. Repaint the sashes and reinstall when the pain has dried.

Too much friction: Lubricate the sash channels with candle wax or talcum powder. This can also prevent painted surfaces from sticking together. If spring metal weather-stripping is found in the sash channels, reduce tension by using a hammer and block of wood to flatten the strip.

Just plain stuck: A sharp rap to the center rail, near the lock can sometimes break a bond between painted surfaces. The blow can be administered with the palm of your hand or a rubber mallet. Another option is to gently tap a wooden block again the sides of the sash.

New friction channels: If you have some extra time on your hands and are very concerned with preventing heat loss, another option is to install new friction channels. To do this, first remove sashes, weights and pulleys.

Push fiberglass insulation into the openings for the weigh cavities. Start at the top and work your way down with the aid of a flexible rod or stick.

Using a hammer and sharp chisel, notch the ends of the top parting strip to create the new channels.

Replace the sashes in the window frame between the two new channels. Tilt the entire assembly into the opening from the bottom inside.

Finally, reinstall interior stops according to the manufacturer's instructions for adjusting tension. If windows are too loose after the stops have been installed, increase tension by hammering a wood block against the stop at nail placements. When the tension seems right to you, drive in several nails.

Stuck Doors

Doors can stick for many of the same reasons as windows: too much tension, or painting over moving parts. However, with the addition of hinges, that also opens up a whole new area of possible reasons for stuck doors.

Door rubs against jamb. The solution to this problem differs according to which side the door is rubbing against the jamb on. If the door rubs against the jamb on the hinge side, you will need to shim the hinges out. Unscrew the hinge from the jamb and place a piece of cardboard behind it. Shimming out the bottom hinge may resolve the problem of a door binding at the top of the strike jamb.

If the door rubs against the jamb on the side without the hinge or against another part of the doorframe, the door may need to be modified so it will fit. Mark the door with scribe lines so you know where to plane and remove the door (removing bottom pin first and working your way upward). Lay the door on a flat surface and plane the appropriate edges.

Loose hinge screws. To fix loose hinge screws, wedge the door open and remove the screws. Fold back the hinge, being careful not to lose any existing shims. Buy or whittle wood pieces to fit the holes. Add glue and push the wood pieces into the holes. Scrape the wood plugs until they are flush, fold the hinge back into place, drill pilot holes and drive in new screws.

Moving a stop. Sometimes it's easier to move the stop than unwarp a door. If a door is binding against the hinge-side stop or will not close properly because of an improperly placed stop on the latch side, pry off the offending stop. Close the door and draw a line, along the doors inside edge, on the jamb. Nail the stop on this line.

Moving a strike plate. A latch and strike may get out of alignment because a house had settled. If the strike plate is too far away, shim it out with cardboard. If it is too close, unscrew the strike, chisel out a new mortise, drill pilot holes, and replace the strike. If necessary, use wood putty to fill the old mortise hole and sand until smooth.

Screened In: How to Replace the Screens in Your Windows

In many parts of the world, window screens are an important necessity of comfortable living. While extremely helpful in keeping out unwanted intruders and letting fresh air flow in, screens are by nature delicate and often need repair or replacement. Particularly if you have a rambunctious dog and a sliding screen door, as my parents do. In their case, they have learned to keep a roll of fresh screening handy. In your case, hopefully this won't be quite as regular of a task!

On the "do-it-yourself" (DIY) scale, repairing or replacing screens is relatively easy and requires little elbow grease. The only materials required are:

- new screening or screen patches
- scissors
- household cement
- screen rolling tool
- razor knife
- square
- 1x2 and 1x4 stock to stretch the new screening
- stapler
- brads
- wood putty

Screen Repairs

If you have noticed a small hole in your window screen, less than about 3" in diameter, you can simply repair the hole. Plastic screens are difficult to patch and should probably replaced. Fiberglass screens can go either way, while metal screens are easy to patch.

Measure the hole(s) and buy ready-made patches or cut them from new screening. For small holes, the patch should have a minimum diameter at least a half-inch larger than the hole. Larger holes require a full inch extra diameter of replacement screening.

To insert the patch into the screen, unravel quite a few strands around the patch‚Äôs edges. Interweave these strands with the screening and bent until the patch is held tightly in place. The stands can usually be bent by hand, but if the screening is heavier you can use long-nosed pliers. Plastic patches also require some household cement on the strand ends after they have been woven into the screen.

- Small holes (less than 3/8") with some household cement.

Screen Replacement

Replacing screens in metal and wooden frames can require different procedures. Because replacing screens in metal frames is easier, I will discuss that process first and then move on to replacement of screens in wood frames.

Replace screening in a metal frame

Remove the screen from the window and lay on a hard, flat surface large enough to support the entire frame.

Remove rubber edging from the old screen. Set aside for reuse if it is in good shape. If not, discard it. Measure and cut new rubber edging.

Remove the old, damaged screening. The damaged screening and any scraps can be saved for future repairs.

Using the old screening as a pattern or measurements of the window, measure out the new screening from a replacement roll. Be certain to leave sufficient excess screening on all sides, typically enough to reach the outsides of the frame and a bit more.

With a screen rolling tool, start in a corner of the frame to tighten the screening into place. Press the rubber edging into the groove and secure the screening in the frame. Work your way slowly and with a steady hand around the screen. This helps avoid the errors of bending the screen frame, which is often made of thin aluminum, and ripping the screening with the screen rolling tool.

If you are finding the process difficult, try tacking the material to the frame first (recommended for fabric but not aluminum) or use a spreader to support long screens.

When the screening is pressed tightly into the frame, trim excess material with a razor knife.

Replace the screen in the window. Sit back and relax in your insect-free home!

Replace screening in a wood frame

Replacing the screening in a wood frame can be more challenging because of the care necessary in affixing the screening to the frame.

In the existing frame, start in the center of a strip of screen molding and work toward the ends, prying slowly along the way. Be careful not to break it.

For wood frames, the wedge method of stretching ensures tight screening for a quality finished product. For this method, have some 1x2 stock that is slightly wider than the frame handy. Also use 1x4 stocks to make the wedges.

Cut new screening from a replacement roll. Be certain to leave sufficient excess screening on all sides, typically enough to reach the outsides of the frame and a bit more.

Staple screening across top edge. Nail the bottom cleat to a bench or flat surface and install the 1x2 cleats. Roll the new screening over the cleats and nail to the top cleat.

Between the cleats and screen frame, insert the wedges. Tap wedges until the screen is pulled taut.

Every few inches, put a staple in the screening along the bottom and then the sides.

Trim excess screening. Countersink brads to refit screen moldings and fill holes with wood putty.

Finally, staple the entire screen tightly in place working from the center brace outward. Remove the wedges and the screen should stay taut. Use a screen rolling tool or putty knife to replace the screen moldings. As with the metal-framed screen, relax and enjoy the peace and quiet your hard work has afforded you!

Happening Hinges: How to Choose the Right Hinge for Your Project

The array of hinges found in a local hardware store can be dizzying. How do you know which hinge is the right one for your project?

First and foremost, you may be able to narrow down the selection by some major factors. Based on the size, weight, and shape of your work materials, does the hinge need to be small and delicate or heavy and durable?

Another factor to consider is that, while most hinges are reversible (either end can be mounted in the upright position); some are made for either a right- or left-hand door. One example of this is the loose-pin hinge. With this hinge, common for hanging doors, the pin must be removed from the top; therefore, you cannot reverse a loose-pin hinge.

You can tell if you need a right- or left-hand hinge by standing on the outside of the door. If the door opens from you toward your right-hand side, you need right-hand hinges. If it opens from you toward your left-hand side, you need to stock up on left-hand hinges.

Also think about how much of the hinge you would like to be showing when the door is closed. If the hinge is showing, should it be decorative in nature or can it be simple and functional in design? If you would prefer most of the hinge to be concealed, will this affect the functionality and ease of use in any way?

Below is an alphabetical list of some of the most popular hinges and their common uses. If you have any questions, speak with a salesperson when you go to purchase the hinges. And happy hinging!

A version of the butt hinge, the back flap hinge is smaller and mostly used for furniture.

The main advantage of a ball bearing hinge is its status as permanently lubricated. They are a more expensive hinge and are typically used for heavy-duty door mountings, such as doors opening to a building's exterior. They can also be useful for any doors that see excessive use.

Butt hinges are usually between 13 and 150mm in size. They come in two varieties: rigid pin (pin cannot be removed) and loose pin (pin can easily be tapped out with a screwdriver). They are used for mounting regular doors and cabinet doors. The rising butt hinge is designed for

use on doors that rest on shag carpeting.

The benefits of the butterfly hinge, used on light-weight doors, lay in the variety of shapes and patterns available and their ease to fit.

The double acting hinge opens in either direction and is used mostly for folding doors.

The flush hinge is not as strong as a butt hinge, and is used mostly as a cabinet hinge. The flush hinge is recommended for use on light doors and in situations where you would prefer to conceal the entire hinge except the barrel.

Knuckle hinges are loose joint hinges that are decorative in nature. Although they can hold a significant amount of weight, their design ensures that a closed door shows only the knuckle of the hinge. Knuckle hinges are recommended for door mountings.

Offset blind hinges are designed to allow a full opening and swing-away such as that typically found on screen or storm doors.

Parliament hinges are recommended when the hinge pin must project beyond the door face.

The pivot hinge is versatile, being used for recessed doors, overlay doors, or flush doors. A benefit of the pivot hinge is that it doesn't need a doorframe for mounting.

As the name indicates, the spring-loaded hinge contains a spring-loaded mechanism to automatically close the door. Models with adjustable tension features are available.

Tabletop hinges are recommended for situations where one leaf in a section of wood must be dropped.

Concealed hinges typically come in sizes of 25mm and 36mm. The concealed hinge's benefits include being adjustable once fitted. It was designed for use with chipboard and MDF.

Specialty hinges include strap hinges, T hinges, and continuous hinges. Strap and T hinges are available in several sizes and are recommended for heavy installation situations. The continuous hinge, on the other hand, is used mostly on chest lids, cabinets or where a long hinge is necessary. Also called a piano hinge, the continuous hinge comes in brass or steel and in many sizes.

Drywall Dilemmas: Ten Do's and Don'ts to Make Your Job Easier

If you're new to drywalling, then there are some basic tools and methods that you need to familiarize yourself with. Here are the ten top things you should know to make your next drywalling project as easy as can be.

1. Do the proper preparation

Before beginning any new project, you should have an inspection done to make sure that your work will comply with local building codes. You also want to measure your space carefully so you buy the right amount of drywall.

2. Maintain a consistent climate

You may be surprised to hear it, but the climate of your space can have an impact on your drywalling job. Both temperature and humidity can affect joint treatment. You want to make sure that the area you are working in is at 55 degrees for two days before you start the project and two days after it is completed.

3. Wear protective gear

The dust that comes off of drywall (gypsum dust) can cause a great deal of irritation to your eyes and lungs. You want to make sure that you wear goggles and a mask to protect yourself from any health issues. The air you are working in should also be well ventilated.

4. Know Your Tools

The first thing you'll need is a basic utility knife to cut the drywall. A T-square will also be useful when making square cuts and a drywall saw will come in handy when you have to make cuts around obstacles in the room. A keyhole saw will help make cuts for smaller obstacles (like electrical boxes).

You might find that getting drywall up on the ceiling is challenging. If so, then you might look into renting a drywall lift. This tool is used by professionals to hold drywall in place while it is nail or screwed to the joists.

To put those nails and screws in place, there are two tools you can use. First, there is a drywall hammer. This hammer is made so that it makes a dimple around the nail without actually breaking the surface of the paper. Second, you can use a drywall screw gun. This tool (like the drywall hammer) allows you to sink in the screw without damaging the surface of the paper.

There are also specific tools for finishing. Taping knives of different sizes will help you get a smooth joint. With each layer, you'll want to use a taping knife that is one or two inches longer than the previous one you used.

5. Know Your Fasteners

You can't use just any old screws or nails you have lying around to install drywall. There are nails and screws specifically made for drywall that you will need to purchase at your local hardware or home improvement store. You should be using ring shank nails, which will hold the drywall in place and will prevent the nails from popping out later. There are also different size drywall screws depending on the thickness of your drywall.

6. Cutting and Framing

Whenever possible use a full sheet of drywall. When you need to make a cut, start by scoring

the drywall with your utility knife. You should then be able to snap the drywall back and have it break away at the cut.

You want to make sure that all of your studs are securely in place and that they are spaced out evenly. No edge should be unsupported by a distance of more than two feet and all corners should be nailed.

7. Ensure proper insulation

Before sealing up your walls, you want to make sure that you have inserted the proper insulation. Moisture or vapor barriers are also important to consider.

8. Know Your Compounds

Once your drywall is in place, you'll want to move on to taping and finishing. Joint compounds come in powder form or they come in a pre-mixed state. If you are using a powder compound, there are two different textures. The first kind is a taping compound, which is used when at the taping stage. It is stronger and courser than topping compound, which is used for the finishing, coats. There is also all-purpose compound, which is halfway between a taping and topping compound.

9. Finish the Joints

Before you start taping ensure that all fasteners are sunk down below the surface. You also want to make sure that corner beads are installed on all of your outside corners.

The taping process is actually a four step process that should take you about four days. You start with the tape coat, which is when you apply compound to the seams and insert paper joint tape. That first tape coat should level off everything. Your next two layers should smooth the surfaces and you should be using a slightly wider taping knife for each application. Your final coat is a finishing one.

10. Sand, Prime and Paint

Now that your drywall is up, you can sand the room and then prime and paint. People are often quick to skip over the sanding process, but to ensure smooth walls; you‚ÄôÎll want to devote as much attention to this stage as any of the other.

Spackle, Shmackle: Five Easy Tips to Patch a Hole in the Wall

It's easy to make a hole in a wall, but how easy is it to fix one? It's easier than you might think to fix any size hole in your wall. Here are five easy tips to follow.

1. Determine the Size of Your Hole

Different size holes require slightly different repair methods. If you have a nail or small hole all

you need to do is patch it with compound. After it has dried; sand the spot for a smooth finish.

If you're hall is slightly larger (about the size of a switch box opening), you can fill the hole with newspaper before applying the compound so provide more stability and so you can use less compound.

For medium size holes (those approximately 30" x 30"), you will need to use a technique called the "hot patch". In this case, you will need to fill the hole with some drywall with a flap on each edge.

For really large holes you will need to treat them as entirely new areas to be covered. You should remove any nails or screws that are showing in the framing and then cut a brand new piece of drywall. You will need to secure the drywall and then tape, sand and finish the new wall.

Measure your hole and then go from there. You want to make sure you are using the proper patching technique for the size hole you have.

2. Preparation

Once you've decided on the technique you need to use to fill your hole, make sure that you have all the supplies you need at your disposal. It will save you precious time later on making sure you have enough compound mixed and the right tools to apply it. You will need to work somewhat quickly once the compound is mixed and ready so you don't want to risk it drying because you forgot to lay out all of the tools you need.

If you are filling a larger hole, make sure that you have the drywall cut and ready before you even think about mixing compound. At this stage it might be good to double check the size of your hole so you are absolutely sure that the technique you've decided to use is the correct one for a hole of that size. You don't want to get halfway through filling the hole and then decide that you need backing material like newspaper to hold the compound in place.

3. Don't Over Spackle

Though you many assume that applying enough of your compound will solve all of your problems, that won't necessarily be the case. If you have a medium or large hole, only using compound won't be effective because it has nothing to grip onto to. The result will be a very unstable patching that will likely crack or fall apart. Even on small patch-ups, you don't want to apply too much compound. The secret with compound application is to apply as little as possible and as smoothly as possible. If you apply too much compound or it is applied unevenly, you will have a fair bit of sanding work ahead of you and in some cases the compound can still be seen once painted over. Remember that moderation is the key.

4. Have a little patience

When trying to complete a new home project, you are often anxious to get moving. In this case, you do need to take your time and make sure that your compound is completely dry before moving on to the sanding and finishing stages. If you try to sand before the compound

is dry you may make more of a mess than you had at the start or you may need to start from scratch. Follow the directions on the compound you are using, particularly in terms of drying time. Take a bit of time away from the project: remember a watched pot never boils. This is a really good time to clean all of your tools so the compound doesn't have a chance to dry on them.

5. Sanding and Finishing

Even though your hole may seem smooth, you don,Äôt want to skip the sanding process. There may be little ridges that you cannot see, but which will become more obvious once you begin painting. Sand the area lightly so that you do not take off too much compound. Clean the area of all dust from the sanding and then proceed to the painting stage.

Grown-ups Can Play with Mud Too: Three Basics to Know When Mudding Drywall

After installing and fastening your drywall, you need to move on to the taping and compound stage. This is an important stage because the final look of your walls will really be determined by how well you apply the mud or compound to your drywall.

Here are three of the most basic things you need to know about mudding drywall.

1. Know Your Compounds and Your Tools

Preparation is the key in anything, particularly in home improvement projects. Take the time to familiarize yourself with products and techniques before you begin a project will save time down the road and will also result in a better-finished project.

Jointing compound comes in both a powder and pre-mixed form. There are also different textures. Taping compound is coarse and should be used for the initial taping layer. Topping compound is much thinner and smoother than taping compound and should be used for finishing the surface. There is also all-purpose joint compound on the market, which is halfway between taping and topping compound in terms of both texture and thickness.

To apply the mud, you should be using taping knives. These tools come in different lengths and you should use one that is slightly longer than the previous one for each new layer.

At this stage, you also want to make sure that all of your nails and screws are properly sunk in and that none of them are sticking out. You check this by running a taping knife along the edges and seams. If you feel or hear anything against the metal, then you need to go back and sink the nail or screw further into the drywall.

2. Follow the Proper Steps

Mudding drywall is a four-step, four-day process. You need to make sure that you allow at least twenty-four hours of drying time between each application of compound.

You start with a taping layer. At this stage, you apply compound and then insert paper-jointing tape into the joins and then smooth with more compound. You also need to cover up all of the nail and screws with compound (ensuring first, of course, that they are properly sunk in). After completing the taping layer, your surfaces should be all filled and everything should be leveled.

The next step is to apply two layers of compound that will smooth out your surfaces. With each application you'll want to use a taping knife that is one or two inches longer than the previous one. For the second and third coat, you'll want to use a taping knife that is anywhere from seven inches to a foot long.

You want to try and apply the compound on the joint and then smooth it by stroking each side and then one last stroke right down the middle.

It can be tricky to apply this compound. You'll need to apply the mud in different thicknesses and with different pressure in different spots. When doing the side strokes, you want to apply more pressure to the outside of the knife, whereas when you do the center stroke, you'll want to keep the pressure evenly distributed. This will take a bit of practice and a lot of patience.

The final coat is a finishing coat. This is where you will have to be most fussy to ensure a smooth finished product. Start by scraping a wide taping knife over the joints to ensure that all ridges and bumps are removed.

You can thin out the compound for this last stage. Some people do and some people don't; it is just a matter of personal preference.

3. Have a Little Patience

When mudding drywall, the key is patience and consistency. Though you may be eager to get through this stage and on to the priming and painting, this stage is crucial and will make all the difference in terms of the appearance of your finished walls. You need to make sure that you leave the proper amount of drying time between coats. You also want to take the time to check for bumps and ridges between coats and then sand the room after your final coat. This sanding will smooth out any remaining little ridges. This can be a messy process so make sure you lay down plastic to seal off the room and also wear protective gear to eliminate the threat of eye and respiratory irritation.

How's it Hanging? Your Wallpaper That Is

For many people, hanging wallpaper is a complicated and frustrating experience. Though there are rooms that pose more challenges than others (a bathroom, for example), it doesn't have to be a stressful experience for you.

The first step is to choose wallpaper. Today there are all sorts of wallpapers out there for you to choose. If you are new to wallpaper hanging, you may want to choose a pattern with little or no matching. This will make things easier for you and may save you some money on the amount of paper you need since an intricate match often leads to more paper wastage (and

thus more money wastage).

When thinking about choosing wallpaper, you want to think about what sort of room it is being used in and what it might come into contact with. For example, vinyl-coated wallpaper is suitable for a kitchen and bathroom because it has a higher tolerance for grease and moisture. On the other hand a coated fabric covering makes more sense for living rooms and bedrooms because it is more breathable and has a lower moisture tolerance.

You will need to make sure you measure your room carefully so you order the right amount of wallpaper. You don't want to get halfway through your room and then realize you don't have enough. There are online tools that will help you calculate how many rolls you might need or you can consult with someone at your local home or decorating store.

Now that you've selected your paper, you want to make sure that you have the right tools. You should have a knife and scissors for trimming the paper. You should also have a measuring tape or a ruler. Sponges and a seam roller are really important because they help you remove bubbles from the paper before it dries. A ladder, buckets, seam sealer (or vinyl adhesive) are also useful to have on hand.

Before you hang the wallpaper, you should make sure that your surface is properly prepared. Start by removing outlet and light switch plates. Clean the surface to remove any grease or stains. You should also try to fill any holes and repair imperfections in the wall's surface. All of this preparation will help you in the long run.

You will need to pick a spot to begin hanging the wallpaper. Two things should be taken into consideration when picking this spot: the layout of the room and the pattern of the wallpaper. You want to select a shorter space if possible so any mismatch will be inconspicuous. Usually a door or a window is a good place to start, especially a corner behind a door.

Once you've picked a spot, you'll want to draw something known as a plumb line. This is a straight vertical line that you will line up your first strip of wallpaper with. Making this plumb line will ensure that your paper is straight right from the start.

Now it's time to hang. If you have purchased pre-pasted paper, then you need to activate the paste by dunking it is water. There are special wallpaper trays that will help you with this process and will prevent your paper from becoming creased. If your paper is not pre-pasted then you will need to apply paste and book the strips (fold paste to paste without creasing the paper). It is really important that you not crease the paper at this stage because those creases can be seen when the paper is hung. If you do happen to crease the paper, there is very little you can do to remove those creases.

Next, you hang your first strip. Use the plumb line to ensure that your paper is hanging straight. Use your sponge to remove any air bubbles and ensure that the paper is pressed firmly against the wall. Once it is up, you want to trim the top and bottom of the paper using a razor knife.

After you have this first strip up, you can move on to the next strips. With each piece, you want to make sure that you are sliding it into place so there is no overlap or gap between the

two pieces. You also want to watch carefully for matching points. When you have three strips up, you can run over all of the seams with a seam roller, but don't press too hard. This will cause excess glue to seep out and your paper will not stick as well to the wall. You should also have adhesive on hand to put on any spots that are sticking. You can also use this in the future if sections or seams start to lift.

Ways to Hide That Ugly Wood Paneling in Your Home

You hate the old paneling in your home, and it's to expensive to replace it, but you can't stand living with it any longer. In fact it's so bad that it depresses you, and you've actually thought about selling the house just to get away from it. Don't despair you're not alone with that ugly wood paneling; there are a million others that live with it too. There are a few repair tricks that you can do that will get rid of the ugly wall paneling in your home. Take some time and learn about some steps to solve your wall paneling dilemma.

The list below is just a few of the ideas that you can use to brighten up your dingy 70s wall paneling situation. Be prepared for some elbow grease, but it'll be better than looking at the wall paneling.

Painting the Paneling

The number one rule to remember with painting paneling is that you just can't slap some paint on it and expect it to look professional. It will look tacky if you do. Paint will run and paneling will show through as it absorbs the paint, which could also cause yellow streaks to run in the paint. Surface preparation is the key to all of the paneling in your house. Begin with a good cleaner that will degrease the muck and build-up on the paneling. You'll need a gloss remover after you apply the degreasing solution to the paneling. Never apply the gloss remover over large areas.

Rub the area in the direction of the wood grain over smaller sections. Let set for about 30 min. and then apply the primer. Don't try to remove the gloss remover. This will need to stay on. Next apply the primer over frame areas and baseboards. If the wood paneling is showing through after the first coat, let it dry, and go back over it with a second coat. If you don't it will come through your regular paint, and your effort is wasted. Keep applying the gloss remover over small sections and priming until you're finished. Let it dry over night and then add the caulking in the unsightly grooves of the paneling. Remove excess with a putty knife. Let dry completely over night. You're then ready to start painting your first coat of paint. Let dry according to directions and then put a second coat on.

Painting Wallpaper

In some of the nicer wallpaper stores you can find wallpaper that can be painted. This will give the appearance of a painted wall. It's a wonderful idea to be able to pick what color you want and get rid of that dingy awful looking wood paneling. You can add other colors to give it a 3-D effect too. First clean with a good degreaser and let dry. After drying go in and fill in each groove with a caulk to get rid of wall paneling ridges. Clean excess caulk with a putty knife and

dispose of it.

It's necessary to do this because your lining and wall paper will not have a firm surface to stick too. Next buy a good primer at your local hardware store, and prime all of the paneling. An extra step is needed when papering your walls by applying and sizing to them. It's sticky and will keep the wallpaper sticking to the paneling. Hang your wallpaper according to directions. You'll need to soak the paper in water, and then hang after a few minutes. You're ready then to paint your wallpaper with your favorite color or colors. Take note of special instructions for painting wallpaper from the paint manufacturer.

Glazing the Paneling

You can add a nice shine to your paneling too by glazing it. First clean the paneling with a degreaser. Next add a color that you like and paint it. Let it dry overnight. Secondly mix a satiny top color with a glaze in the correct proportions. Read instructions with your paints for a correct mixture. Paint over small sections of the paneling, preferably one or two sections at a time. Depending on how much shine you want wipe off excess glaze with a clean rag. When done always clean your brush with mineral oil, and let drive over night before storing them for future projects.

Five Reasons to Use Oil-Based Paints for Home Projects

Learning to paint in your home can be an easy project and provide a quick way to beautify your home. When painting, there are two basic types of paints that can be used inside the home. Water based latex paints are good for using on the walls. Oil based paints are the other choice. Oil based paints are the best choice for painting trims, doors and areas of high traffic.

Oil based paints are sometimes a little more difficult to use that water based latex paint. Oil based paints are thicker than latex paint so it will require different kinds of brushes and rollers. Also, when using oil based paints, it is a good idea to paint in a well ventilated area. It does have a stronger odor. The good thing about oil based paint is that it can be bought at any paint store and tinted to almost any color. Oil based paints are also called solvents and made from a mixture of resin and oils.

When looking at oil based paints, it is important to remember that most of the time you will need to prime the area first. Oil based paints have a tendency to peel if the area is not primed properly. This can happen if the base coat is already oil based paint. When priming the area, you must clean the area first. Then you can apply a primer. Primer can be bought at any home improvement or paint store. Primer can be applied like spray paint or brushed on with a brush. If you are painting over a very dark color, or using a dark color with the new paint, you should consider having the primer tinted first.

If you get ready to paint and are not sure whether you are dealing with a wall or area that already has oil paint or latex, there is an easy way to tell. When water is applied to oil based paint, it will usually bead up. It will not soak in as it does with latex paint. When applying oil based paints, it has the tendency to bubble during painting. Make sure that you never shake oil

based paints. Stirring is recommended. Also when using oil based paint, try using only one coat of paint, instead of several. After applying the oil based paints to your project, it will take longer to dry than latex paint. Provide plenty of ventilation during the drying process.

It is also important to remember that when using oil based paints, that they are considered toxic and hazardous waste. Caution should be used when disposing of oil based paints.

There are several projects that will benefit from using oil based paint.

Trim: When painting indoor trim, such as bead board, window trim, crown molding, chair rails and trim around doors, oil based paints are generally used. This is because oil based paints can withstand more wear and tear than latex paints. As a general rule, oil based paints are also easier to clean than latex paint.

Doors: Indoor doors are usually painted with oil based paints. It is very simple to clean fingerprints, smudges and dirt off of doors when painted with oil based paint. An outside door is often painted using oil based paints, as well.

Decorating projects: If you are working in small projects, such as painting shelves or raw wood, oil based paints can be a good option. Proper preparation is required. Raw wood will need to be sanded and primed before using oil based paints. Remember that primer should be dried thoroughly before using any oil based paints. This will give you better coverage.

Exterior: Some projects outside can be good for using oil based paints. Oil based paints are perfect for trims, such as around windows, and other trim around the outside of the house.

Metal: Projects that are made out of metal can also benefit from oil based paints. It is important to remember that oil based paints should never be applied directly to fresh masonry or on iron. As with any projects, proper prepping and primer will be required.

Oil based paints can be a good choice for many projects because it is often longer lasting and easy to clean. Proper preparation is always needed when painting with oil paints.