

WALLPAPERING TECHNIQUES

SKILL LEVEL



Wallpapering is a skill that develops with practice. If you are a beginner, leave papering stairwells and ceilings until you are reasonably competent.

SAFETY FIRST

Take care when working on ladders, and do not overreach.

INTRODUCTION

Wallpapering is one of the most popular ways of changing the appearance of a room.

Modern materials make decorating much easier for beginners. The extensive range of wallcoverings available means that you can change the colour, pattern and texture of your walls with ease. With practice you will be able to paper even the most difficult areas of your home with confidence. Wallpapering is usually the final stage of decorating a room after painting. From solid colours to sophisticated prints to patterned papers for children's rooms, wallpapering is a simple, versatile and effective way of refreshing any space in the house.

- When planning your decor, don't forget we stock a wide range of coordinating borders, trims, blinds, lighting and tiles as well.
- B&Q wallpapers also come in easy-clean waterproof vinyl for high-splash areas like kitchens and bathrooms.

2 - Measuring

Use the chart below to estimate the amount of wallpaper you are going to need. Allow and calculate extra when using a paper with a large repeating pattern.

HOW MANY ROLLS FOR THE WALLS?

DISTANCE AROUND ROOM

WALL HEIGHT

(INCLUDE DOORS & WINDOWS)

10m (33ft)

12m (39ft)

14m (46ft)

16m (52ft)

18m (59ft)

20m (66ft)

2.3-2.4m

(7ft 6in-8ft)

5 rolls

6 rolls

7 rolls

8 rolls

9 rolls

10 rolls

2.4-2.6m

(8ft-8ft 6in)

5 rolls

6 rolls

7 rolls

8 rolls

9 rolls

10 rolls

2.6-2.7m

(8ft 6in-9ft)

6 rolls

7 rolls

8 rolls

9 rolls

10 rolls

11 rolls

For a more accurate estimate, calculate the area of your walls, using the method outlined below.

Step 1: A standard roll of wallpaper is approximately 10.5m (33ft) long and 530mm (1ft 9in) wide. If you measure the height of the walls from skirting to ceiling, you can work out how many strips of paper you can cut from a standard roll - four strips is about average.

Step 2: Measure around the room (ignoring doors and windows) to work out how many roll widths you need to cover the walls. Divide this figure by the number of strips you can cut from one roll to calculate how many rolls you need to buy. Make a small allowance for wastage.

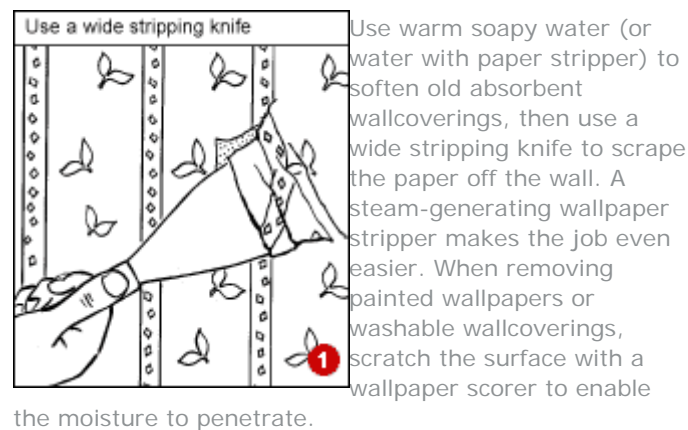
When buying wallpaper, ensure that all of the rolls have the same batch number to be certain that the colours match. Keep your receipts so that you can return unused rolls.

3 - Preparing the surfaces

Walls should be clean, dry and sound. You can paper directly over painted surfaces, as long as you have washed them thoroughly with sugar soap.

Remove peeling or damaged wallpaper

Stripping wallpaper is a messy job, so take up carpets or cover them with dust sheets. Take all the furniture out of the room or group it together in the middle of the floor and protect it with more dust sheets.



You can peel vinyl wallcoverings off the wall, leaving the backing paper behind. If it is sound, just paper over the backing, or strip it like ordinary wallpaper.

Repair damaged plaster

Repair damaged plaster with a fine surface filler. Rake loose material from deep cracks and holes, then pack filler into all the crevices, using a flexible filler knife.

When the filler is dry, sand it smooth with medium-grade abrasive paper.

Size newly plastered walls with a 'proprietary size' or diluted wallpaper paste to make sure paper will adhere.

4 - Cutting and pasting wallpaper

Step 1:

Mix wallpaper paste in a bucket. Instructions on the packaging will give you a guide to the strength and amount of paste you need for the type of paper you are hanging.

Use fungicidal paste to prevent mould from growing behind vinyl or blown vinyl.

Step 2:

Measure the height of the wall to ascertain the length of the first strip, adding about 100mm (4in) for trimming top and bottom. Cut similar lengths from the roll. If your paper is patterned, you may have to allow extra for matching the pattern on adjacent strips - check before cutting.

When cutting wallpaper strips from a roll, first mark or nick the edge of the paper at the required length. Then fold the paper over at this point, aligning the side edges carefully, and slit along the crease with a metal ruler or wallpaper scissors.

Step 3:

Lay the cut strips face down on your pasting table. To prevent the strips curling while you apply the paste, tuck the free ends of the paper behind a piece of string tied between the legs of the table.

Step 4:

Align the top strip with the front edge of the table and, using a wide pasting brush, apply the paste evenly, first down the centre of the strip, then brush it out towards the front edge. Slide the strip across to align with the back edge of the table and brush on more paste towards that edge. Make sure both edges are well covered.

Try not to get paste on the front side because it can leave marks.

Fold the pasted section over, pasted side to pasted side, and

slide the paper along the table to paste and fold the other end in a similar way. Use this method to paste subsequent strips of paper and keep your pasting table clean.

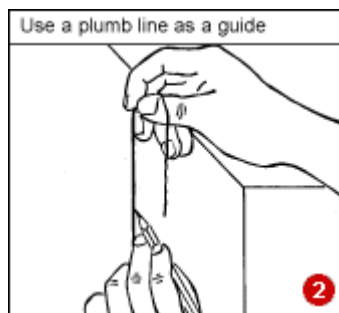
Keep your pasting brush clean by resting the bristles on string tied across the top of the paste bucket.

You may have to leave some heavyweight papers to soak for a short while before hanging them. Check the manufacturer's instructions.

5 - Hanging wallpaper - Basics

Step 1:

If possible, start by papering a wall that contains neither door nor window. Begin at one corner, working away from the window. When hanging paper with a large regular pattern, start at a central feature such as a chimneybreast.



Walls and corners are rarely true or square, so they cannot be relied upon as a guide. The trick is to mark a vertical guideline on the wall, using a plumb line.

Mark the line on the wall, slightly less than one roll width away from the corner.

Step 2:

Unfold the top half of the paper and lightly press it to the wall using a paperhanger's brush.

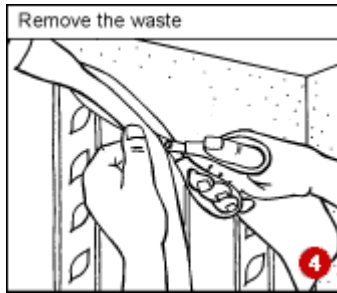


Step 3:

Slide the strip to align its edge with the plumbed line on the wall. Allow the paper to overlap the ceiling by about 50mm (2in). Brush out from the centre to exclude air trapped under the paper.

Unfold the bottom half and

brush it into place in a similar way.



Step 4:

Using the back of your wallpaper scissors or sharp knife, score a line along the corner between the wall and ceiling. Peel back the paper and cut along the crease to remove the waste, then smooth the paper back into place. Use the same method

to trim the strip to length at skirting level.

To avoid tearing wet wallpaper, put a new blade in your craft knife or scalpel.

Step 5:

Hang the next strip beside the first, making a neat butt between them. At the same time, slide the strip up or down to align any pattern motif. Keep checking that the match is accurate as you brush the strip into place.

As you proceed, wipe excess paste from the ceiling and skirting, using a damp sponge. Similarly, wipe smears of paste off the surface of the paper. Run a seam roller along the butt joints to make sure they are stuck down, and that your wallpaper is flat.

Disguise a less-than-perfect line at the ceiling by pasting a narrow, patterned border along the top of the wall

6 - Hanging wallpaper - Around switches



When you get to a light switch, make two diagonal cuts across the centre of the faceplate, running from corner to corner. Tap the paper in around the faceplate and trim off most of the waste with scissors.

Turn off the electricity at the consumer unit and loosen the faceplate so that you can tuck the paper behind it. Turn the power on again when the paste is dry.

Paper around flush wall sockets in a similar way: cut the wallpaper to butt against the mounting box of a surface-mounted socket or switch. Cut the diagonals with scissors and use a sharp knife to trim off the waste.

Use the pasting brush to stipple the paper down firmly

around the edge of the mounting box.

7 - Hanging wallpaper - Papering around doorways

When hanging the strip of paper next to the door, butt it against its neighbour in the usual way, allowing the other edge to overlap the doorframe.

Make a diagonal cut in the waste towards the corner of the doorframe.

Brush the paper down against the side of the frame, make a crease with your scissors and cut off the waste.

Smooth down what's left of the strip above the door, then trim off the waste, leaving a 12mm (1/2in) overlap pasted to the top of the frame.

Continue with short strips over the door, hanging the next full strip down the other side of the doorframe. Crease and trim off the waste as before

8 - Hanging wallpaper - Papering around windows

If your windows are more or less flush with the internal face of the wall, paper up to the window frames as if you were papering around a door.

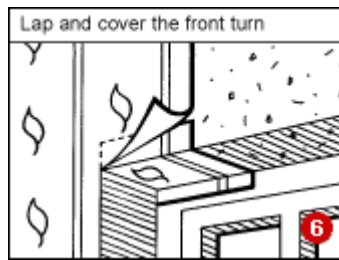
When a window is set back into the wall, it leaves a narrow strip of wall all around, known as the 'reveal'. There is a specific technique for papering a reveal:

Step 1:

Hang the full strip of wallpaper adjacent to the window and make two horizontal cuts in the paper overlapping the reveal, one just above the top and another along the underside of the sill. Fold and brush the flap of paper onto the side of the reveal. Crease and trim off the waste at the window frame.

Step 2:

Brush the paper into place below the window, trimming to fit as required.



Step 3:

At the top, cut a small piece of wallpaper to match the width of the overlap above the reveal. Paste this to the underside of the reveal and wrap it around the front corner, tucking it under the paper pasted above. Trim off

the waste next to the window frame.

Where one piece of thick paper overlaps another, cut through both layers with a sharp knife to make a matching butt joint. Remove the waste and press down the joint with a seam roller.

9 - Hanging wallpaper - Papering corners

Papering internal corners

Trying to wrap a wide strip of wallpaper around a corner invariably results in unsightly creases. The answer is to cut the strip of paper lengthwise, allowing 12mm (1/2in) only to turn the corner.

If the offcut is wide enough, paste it onto the adjacent wall, covering the overlap in the corner. Mark a plumb guideline on the wall to make sure the offcut is vertical.

Papering external corners

When taking wallpaper around an external corner, cut the strip to width, leaving a 25mm (1in) overlap to wrap around the corner. Hang the offcut on the adjacent wall so that it overlaps the turned edge by about 12mm (1/2in).

10 - Hanging wallpaper - Papering behind radiators

Ideally, you should drain a radiator and take it off the wall so that you can paper behind it. If that is not possible, first turn off the heat and wait for the radiator to cool. Paste the strip of paper to the wall above the radiator. Then slit it from the bottom edge so that you can smooth it down on either side of the radiator's fixing brackets. Press the paper into place behind the radiator, using a narrow radiator paint roller.