

## STRIPPING WALLPAPER

There are two basic methods of stripping wallpaper, depending on the type of paper.

### Soak And Strip

Is the cheapest and still the most effective method for most wallpapers.

Soaking the paper loosens the paste, causing it to peel away - a process which you can speed up by adding washing up liquid or wallpaper stripper to the water. Another trick is to score the paper first, helping the water to penetrate the outer surface.

### Steam Stripping

Using a hired steam stripper is faster and more effective on heavy and painted-over papers, but care should be taken not to over steam and cause damage to the underlying wall, and the hire cost mounts up if you don't tackle the work in one go.

### STRIPPING TOOLS

A decent stripping knife is essential. Spend a little more on one with a rigid blade which won't flex and dig into the plaster. You'll also need a bucket of warmish water and a sponge to remove residue paste ... don't forget to change the water regularly.

### KNOW YOUR WALLPAPER

#### TYPE

**Uncoated** - plain, non-washable paper

**Coated** - washable paper coated with thin film of PVC

**Vinyl** - plastic washable coating on thin paper backing

**Plain lining paper** - usually painted, but may be found under surface paper

**Embossed** - textured relief paper containing plaster and other additives. May be printed or emulsion painted.

#### METHOD

Soak and scrape. Ready pasted types peel off easily if left to soak. Other types need scraping as well, depending on thickness.

Score, soak and strip. Water must be given time to penetrate outer water resistant coating.

Peel off. Vinyl layer separates easily from backing and can be peeled off in whole lengths. If necessary, strip backing by soaking and scraping.

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### Hand Stripping

Stripping wallpaper is a messy business, so cover up the floor even if you've cleared the room. The debris will be sticky and wet, so if you're using cloth dust sheets, place a plastic sheet or an opened-out bin liner directly-underneath the patch you're working on. (Don't cover the whole floor in plastic sheets ... they become slippery and unsafe.)

### Steam Stripping

Nearly all papers that need steam stripping benefit from being scored thoroughly first. The art of using a steam stripper is to work two-handed, holding the plate against the paper just long enough to soften it, then scraping off the debris before it dries out. It takes a while to judge this correctly, so don't overdo the steam to start with or you risk damaging the wall.