Common Problems when Hanging Wallpaper

Sometimes when you're wallpapering you might encounter different effects or problems. Below we've listed some of the most common issues people have with wallpaper. If you've come up against something we haven't covered, contact the team at your local store - we've all been there and can offer invaluable advice on wallpapering. The most important rule when hanging paper is to take your time to get it right. You have about 15 minutes before the strip needs to be in its exact position, which gives you plenty of time to get its positioning spot on.

Wet strip doesn't match dry

If you have hung a wet strip against a dry strip on the wall and the pattern doesn't match, the reason is simply because the dry strip expanded when it was wet. When wallpaper soaks it can expand as much as 2% to 3%. Once on the wall the paper will never shrink back to its original state. So to make an accurate comparison of the pattern, you must wait for both strips to dry.

Cleaning wallpaper

Little hands with crayons can cause all sorts of problems with wallpaper. But wallpaper can also be hit with food, lipstick, fly spray etc. When it comes to durability there are three different types you can choose. Washable papers can handle cleaning with a mild detergent and water. You can't scrub this paper, so you should use them in low traffic areas. Scrubbable papers can handle pretty abrasive scrubbing with a brush and detergent, so are ideal for heavy traffic areas. Delicate wallpapers cannot be cleaned at all, and are there purely for decoration.

Trimming Problems

Overtrimming

When a wallpaper has been trimmed excessively, it loses some of the pattern at the edge. If the missing pattern is really noticeable, bring the paper back to the shop and we'll replace it.

Undertrimming

Here not enough paper has been trimmed at the edge. Again if it is very obvious, bring the paper back to the shop and we'll replace it.

Scalloped edges

Here the edges of the paper have been trimmed erratically and the edge is not straight. It will be easy to see when this occurs and you can bring the faulty paper back to the store.

White edges

Darker papers tend to show this problem up more clearly. You can resolve the problem yourself by trimming the edges (if the paper has a non-matching pattern). Alternatively, you can colour the roll ends with similar coloured chalk before opening the roll. Or you can return the paper to our store.
Stains

Paste on seams

Any adhesive on the surface of the paper will leave an unsightly mess on your walls. Try not to put too much pressure on the seams and do not use a seam roller, as this will force adhesive out. If you do get adhesive on the exterior, just wipe it away while it is still wet. You might be able to remove paste once it is dry, try brushing it off with a soft, dry brush. Alternatively use a natural sponge soaked in a mixture of five parts warm water to one part ammonia or vinegar.

Ink flaking off

If a wallpaper surface has been affected by moisture or adhesive, it may start to flake. It can take between one to six weeks to set in. Wash each strip with clean water to remove any adhesive as you go. On glossy paper, you also need to wipe the paper dry to remove any residue.

Mould

Mould can show on wallcoverings in a range of colours - grey, blue, green, black, pink and yellow. Black spots, normally towards the ceiling indicate that a lack of ventilation is the culprit. If the surface of the wallpaper starts to discolour, it could mean that dormant mould spores have been re-activated by moisture. To treat this, remove wallpaper, then wash the surface with pigmented sealer, this will seal in the spores and stop them growing.

Bleed through

Discolourations on wallpaper are caused by something seeping through from the walls. These can be caused by oil, old and yellowed plasterboard, old stained wallpaper that has not been removed properly. Put simply, good preparation can prevent these problems.

Bubbles in the paper

These can occur for a range of reasons. The most common culprit is extreme porosity of the wall surface. To combat this problem, apply a pigmented sealer before you hang. Bubbles can also be created by dust particles on the wall surface, these bubbles are usually oval shaped. Again good preparation prevents these problems.

Expansion bubbles

The soaking and relaxing period is critical to all wallpaper. If you do not go through this procedure, the wallpaper will continue to expand once it has been applied to the wall surface, which will cause expansion bubbles to form. If you find this is a problem, remove the strip from the wall and leave it to relax for a little longer.