



# WORKING IN DRYWALL

A Workbook to Introduce you to the Basics

Developed for the Ontario Adult Literacy and Basic Skills Sector

Developed by:



Funded by:



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Metro Toronto Movement for Literacy

P.O. Box 43172, Sheppard Centre PO, Toronto, ON M2N 6N1, Canada

416-961-5557 | [info@mtml.ca](mailto:info@mtml.ca) | [www.mtml.ca](http://www.mtml.ca)

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# Unit 1: Introduction

There are many aspects to working in drywall. Becoming a skilled drywaller takes time and effort.

In unit 1, you will learn about:

- What is in this workbook
- Working in drywall
- Drywall: What it is



# About this Workbook

Welcome to this workbook! You don't need to know anything about drywall to read it. This workbook includes information to introduce you to the tools and skills in drywall work. You can print it or use it on your computer or phone and type in answers to the questions.

Drywall work involves many jobs. Each job uses different skills and tools.

You will learn about:

- The skilled trades and apprenticeship
- Safety at work
- Drywall basics
- Tools and skill in drywall work
- Communicating on the job
- Finding work



Brainstorm what you want to learn about working in drywall. Make a list below.

- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_

# Working in Drywall: An Introduction

Drywall workers work on walls and ceilings inside homes, schools and buildings. Their goal is to create smooth walls and ceilings that are ready for painting.

Drywall work involves different tasks. Each task requires different skills and tools.

When you begin working, you will likely start as a helper and gradually learn drywall skills. You may learn skills in installing drywall or in finishing drywall. Drywall finishing is a skilled job. It takes time to learn to do the job well.

## Helpers/Labourers

- Load and unload construction materials
- Clean up the work site
- Help to demolish old walls
- Assist in installing and finishing drywall

## Drywall Installers (or Hangers)

- Install metal or wood framing on walls and ceilings
- Measure, cut and fit drywall sheets
- Position and drill drywall sheets to metal or wooden framing
- Cut and install metal corner beads to protect corners

## Drywall Finishers (or Tapers)

After the drywall is installed, drywall finishers:

- Mix joint compound, or mud
- Use taping knives to cover the joints and screw holes on the drywall with the mud
- Sand the walls to create a smooth surface
- Paint the finished drywall with primer paint





A

It's important to understand work-related vocabulary. There may be words on the previous page you don't understand. List them below. Write or type what you think each word means. You will learn more about these words in this workbook.



**Drywall installing**

Word	What you think it means

**Drywall finishing**

Word	What you think it means



Discuss:

1. Have you ever worked as a labourer or construction helper?
2. What were your job duties?



A Write or type the correct word in each blank. Use the words from the box below.

Sand ■ Fill ■ Drill ■ Cut ■ Paint ■ Position ■ Measure



### Measuring and Cutting Drywall

- \_\_\_\_\_ drywall sheets to fit areas on walls
- \_\_\_\_\_ drywall sheets with a utility knife



### Installing Drywall

- \_\_\_\_\_ drywall on walls and ceilings
- \_\_\_\_\_ drywall to metal or wooden studs



### Finishing Drywall

- Apply tape to drywall seams
- \_\_\_\_\_ seams and holes with joint compound
- \_\_\_\_\_ the joint compound after it dries
- \_\_\_\_\_ the drywall with primer



# About Drywall



## What is drywall?

Drywall is a building material that covers interior walls and ceilings in homes and businesses. It comes in large flat boards. Drywall is also called other names, such as:

- gypsum board
- wallboard
- plasterboard
- sheetrock

Drywall is made mostly from gypsum. Gypsum is a mineral. It is combined with other materials to make a plaster, which is pressed between two sheets of thick paper to make drywall.

Drywall is a good building material. It is inexpensive, and easier to install than older methods of finishing walls.

## Types of Drywall

There are different types of drywall, used for different areas of a building. For example, it may be better to use moisture-resistant drywall in a bathroom or a kitchen.



A Write or type the correct drywall type on each line. Use the words from the box.

Fire-resistant ■ Moisture resistant ■ Lightweight ■ Standard

\_\_\_\_\_ This is the most common drywall. It is the least expensive.

\_\_\_\_\_ This drywall is water resistant and can slow the growth of mold. It is a good choice for kitchens, bathrooms and basements.

\_\_\_\_\_ This drywall helps slow the spread of fire. It is a good choice for furnace and laundry rooms.

\_\_\_\_\_ This drywall is lighter and easier to lift. It may be good for ceilings.

## Sizes of Drywall

Drywall comes in different sizes. It is often measured in inches and feet. Inches and feet are part of the imperial system of measurement. Canada switched to the metric system of measurement in the 1970s, but in construction, Canada still uses imperial measures.

Common sizes of drywall are 4' x 8', 4' x 10' and 4' x 12'. Common thicknesses are  $\frac{1}{2}$ " and  $\frac{1}{4}$ ".

These are the short forms and symbols for inches and feet. Remember, there are 12 inches in 1 foot.

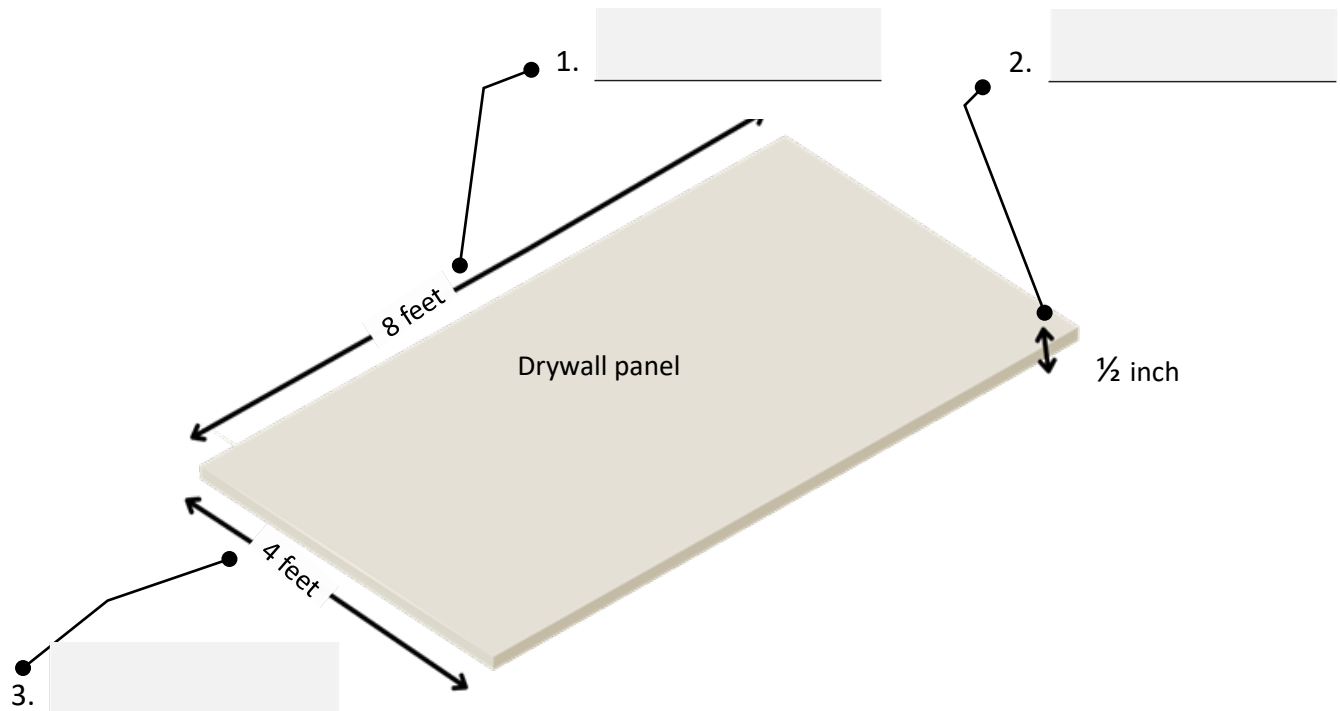
	Short form	Symbol
Feet	ft	'
Inches	in	"



B

Write or type the correct word on each line. Use the words from the box.

Thickness ■ Width ■ Length



## Unit 2: The Skilled Trades



Drywall finishing is a skilled trade. This unit will explain what a skilled trade is.

In unit 2, you will learn about:

- The skilled trades in Ontario
- Compulsory and non-compulsory trades
- The Skilled Trades Ontario website

# The Skilled Trades: An Introduction

## What is a skilled trade?

A skilled trade is an occupation that requires special skills that are gained mostly through on-the-job training and experience. There are 144 skilled trades in Ontario. Drywall Finisher is one of them.

## What is an apprenticeship?

An apprenticeship is a training program for a skilled trade. It is a combination of on-the-job experience and classroom learning. Each skilled trade has an apprenticeship program.

To be an apprentice, you need a sponsor. A sponsor is usually an employer who will make sure you get the training you need. You and your sponsor sign a training agreement and register it with Skilled Trades Ontario. Skilled Trades Ontario ([www.skilledtradesontario.ca](http://www.skilledtradesontario.ca)) is the organization that oversees the apprenticeship system in Ontario.

Most apprenticeships are 2-5 years long. During that time, you and your employer keep track of your training in an apprenticeship training logbook. Each trade has its own logbook. It outlines all the skills you need for the trade. When you finish the apprenticeship, you receive a Certificate of Apprenticeship from Skills Trades Ontario. Some trades have a licensing exam. When you pass the exam, you receive a Certificate of Qualification.



A

For each term below, find the term in the reading and underline it. Then copy the meaning of the term on the line.

1. Skilled trade

---

2. Apprenticeship

---

3. Sponsor

---

4. Skilled Trades Ontario

---

5. Logbook

---

6. Certificate of Apprenticeship

---

7. Certificate of Qualification

---

# The Skilled Trades: Compulsory and Non-compulsory

## Compulsory Trades

Some trades are “compulsory.” In those trades, you can only work if you are a registered apprentice or have a Certificate of Qualification. There are 23 compulsory trades in Ontario. Some examples are electrician, hairstylist, plumber, and auto body repairer. All compulsory trades have a licensing exam when the apprenticeship is complete. When you pass the exam, you receive a Certificate of Qualification.



## Non-compulsory Trades

Most skilled trades in Ontario are non-compulsory. That means that you do not *have* to be a registered apprentice to work in the trade. There are 121 non-compulsory trades in Ontario. Some examples are arborist, carpenter, cook, locksmith, painter and drywall finisher.



For non-compulsory trades, you can become an apprentice and earn a Certificate of Apprenticeship if you want to. However, you do not have to. You can legally work in the trade without an apprenticeship. You can start as a helper and gradually become a skilled tradesperson.



A Answer the questions.

1. How many compulsory trades are there in Ontario?

---

2. How many non-compulsory trades are there?

---

3. List two examples of a non-compulsory trade.

---

---

4. Explain the difference between a compulsory trade and a non-compulsory trade.



B Write or type the correct letter beside each term.

- |  |   |
|--|---|
| 1. _____ Skilled trade                 | A. The number of skilled trades in Ontario  |
| 2. _____ Apprenticeship                | B. You can only work in these trades if you are a registered apprentice or have a certificate of qualification. |
| 3. _____ Compulsory trades             | C. The organization in Ontario that oversees all apprenticeships.   |
| 4. _____ Non-compulsory trades         | D. You receive it when you pass a trade licensing exam. Not all trades have a licensing exam.                   |
| 5. _____ Certificate of Apprenticeship | E. You receive it when you finish an apprenticeship.  |
| 6. _____ Certificate of Qualification  | F. You can work in these trades whether you are an apprentice or not.   |
| 7. _____ Skilled Trades Ontario        | G. An occupation that requires special skills, usually gained through work experience.                          |
| 8. _____ 144                           | H. A training program that combines on-the-job experience with classroom learning to learn a trade.             |

# The Skilled Trades: Skilled Trades Ontario

Skilled Trades Ontario is the organization that oversees all apprenticeships in Ontario. The website includes:

- information about 144 skilled trades
- information about apprenticeship
- an Apprenticeship Training Logbook for each trade



Follow the steps below to find the list of 144 skilled trades.

## STEP 1

- Go to [www.skilledtradesontario.ca](http://www.skilledtradesontario.ca)

### On a phone:

- Tap on the menu (three horizontal lines in the top right corner)
- Tap on Trades Information

### On a computer:

- Hover your cursor over About Trades
- Select Trades Information from the dropdown menu

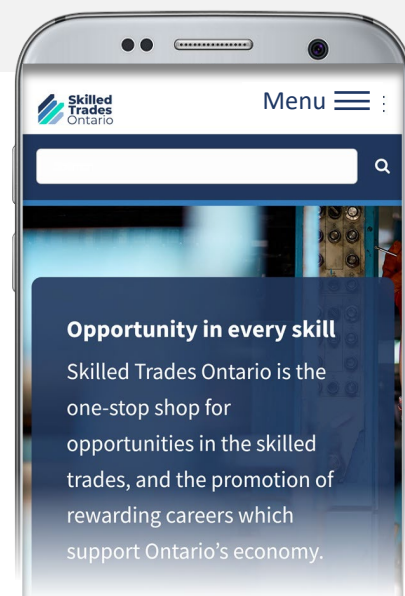
## STEP 2

- Scroll down to the list of 144 skilled trades.
- Type “drywall finisher” in the trades search bar. Tap on “Search.”
- Scroll down to find the chart for drywall finisher (see below).



A

Copy the information from the webpage onto the chart below.



Trade Name	_____
Code	_____
Classification	_____
Training	<a href="#">View Details →</a>

**STEP 3**

- Tap **View Details**.

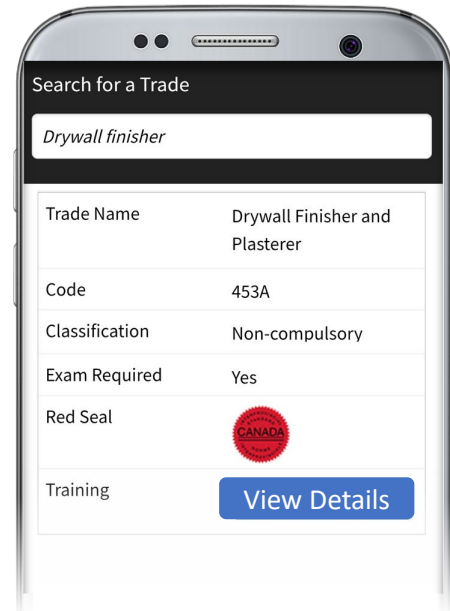
**STEP 4**

- Scroll down. Tap **Schedule of Training**.

You will see a link to the apprenticeship logbook for Drywall Finisher and Plasterer.

The logbook outlines all the training and skills for the trade. The logbook is long. You do not have to read the whole logbook, but it's helpful to know where to find it.

Each of the 144 skilled trades has it's own logbook.





## Unit 3: Safety at Work



Safety on the job involves being aware of the dangers at work and protecting yourself from those dangers.

In unit 3, you will learn about:

- Personal protective equipment (PPE)
- Asbestos
- Workplace safety: the law
- Getting injured on the job
- Hazard symbols

## PPE (Personal Protective Equipment)

Personal protective equipment (PPE) helps keep you safe on the job.



**Hardhat**

Protects your head from falling objects or bumps from overhead beams.



**Ear Muffs or Ear Plugs**

Protects your hearing from loud sounds, such as sawing or drilling.



**Steel Toe Boots**

Protects your feet from falling or sharp objects.



**Safety Glasses**

Protects your eyes from flying wood, dust or metal.



**Dust Mask**



**Respirator**

Protects you from inhaling fine dust from sanding drywall, mixing materials, and cleaning. N95 masks filter 95% of fine dust. A respirator offers even more protection.



**Gloves**

Protects your hands from cuts and scrapes from tools, and irritating materials.



A

Write or type the correct letter beside each picture.

1. \_\_\_\_\_



A. Safety glasses

2. \_\_\_\_\_



B. Steel toe boots

C. Respirator

D. Gloves

3. \_\_\_\_\_



E. Hard hat

F. Dust mask

G. Ear muffs

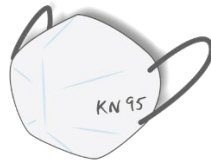
4. \_\_\_\_\_



5. \_\_\_\_\_



6. \_\_\_\_\_



7. \_\_\_\_\_



# Asbestos

Asbestos is a harmful building material. It was used before the 1990s. It may be in old walls, ceilings, floors, or drywall.

If asbestos is not disturbed, it is safe. But if the walls, ceilings or floors are disturbed or broken apart, asbestos fibres can get into the air. If you breathe in asbestos fibres, you can get serious health problems later, like lung disease or cancer.

It is hard to tell if an older wall or ceiling is made with asbestos. If you are removing old walls or ceilings to install new drywall, be very careful. Ask if the building has asbestos or if it has been tested for asbestos.

In Ontario, there is training for working with asbestos safely. Workers who handle asbestos wear a respirator, protective coveralls, disposable gloves, foot covers, a hat or hood, and eye protection. This protects them from breathing in or coming into contact with asbestos fibres.



Complete the sentences.



Asbestos is safe when

\_\_\_\_\_



Asbestos is harmful when

\_\_\_\_\_



If you inhale asbestos fibres,

\_\_\_\_\_



C

Watch the short video about asbestos. Answer the questions.

[www.youtube.com/watch?v=PQd\\_UDBp8nA](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PQd_UDBp8nA)



1. The video mentions 5 areas that may have asbestos in older homes. List them.

- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_

2. Fill in the blanks with what the narrator says at the end of the video.

If you are working on an older home, \_\_\_\_\_.

Only remove it if \_\_\_\_\_.

1. List seven items in the picture.



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2. List four or more items in the picture.



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## Workplace Safety: The Law



In Ontario, the law that covers safety at work is called the *Occupational Health and Safety Act (OHSA)*. It is a set of rules that help to keep workers safe.

The OHSA gives these duties and rights to employers and workers.

### Duties of the employer

- Make sure workers know about dangers in the workplace
- Make sure workers wear the right protective equipment

### Duties of the worker

- Report hazards or dangers in the workplace
- Wear protective equipment

### Rights of the worker

- The right to know about hazards at work
- The right to help keep your workplace safe. You can ask questions about safety and give ideas
- The right to refuse unsafe work



In the table below, list two duties of employers and two duties of workers.

Duties of employers	Duties of workers
•	•
•	•

## Getting Injured on the Job

If you get hurt on the job, you may be able to get workers' compensation. Workers' compensation means you get paid while you are recovering from a workplace injury.

The pay comes from the Workplace Safety and Insurance Board (WSIB). The WSIB is an Ontario government agency. It provides injury insurance to Ontario employers. You may be able to get workers' compensation if:

- Your employer is registered with the WSIB. Employers of construction businesses are required to register with WSIB. However, not all employers register.
- Your injury or illness happened at work.

### What to do if you get Injured

- Tell your employer about your injury.
- Get medical help. Go to a doctor or a hospital.
- If you cannot work, fill out a Workers' Report of Injury/Disease (Form 6). Send it to the WSIB.

Your employer also must fill out a form.



Discuss with classmates or your teacher:

1. Have you ever been injured on the job?
2. What happened?
3. Did you need to take time off work?
4. Did you get paid while you were off work?



## Hazard Symbols: Consumer Products

Consumer products are things we buy for personal or household use. Many small businesses use consumer products, such as paint and drywall materials. There are four hazard symbols for consumer products, in two shapes.

A triangle shape means the container is hazardous. An octagon shape means the contents are hazardous.



A

Write or type the correct word beside each symbol. Use the words in the box.

Poison ■ Flammable ■ Explosive ■ Corrosive



\_\_\_\_\_

The product can burn your skin or eyes. If you swallow it, it can damage your throat and stomach.



\_\_\_\_\_

The product or its fumes will catch fire easily if it's near heat, flames or sparks.



\_\_\_\_\_

If you swallow, lick or breathe in the chemical, you can become sick or die.



\_\_\_\_\_

The container can explode if heated or punctured.



B

Look at a few cleaning or construction products in your home. Write or type details about the hazardous symbols or caution messages.

The first two are done.



Product	Hazard symbols	Caution message (on back of label)
<i>Binzer primer spray</i>	<i>Poison, explosive, flammable</i>	
<i>Drywall compound</i>	<i>none</i>	<i>Dust from sanding may cause irritation to eyes, skin, nose, throat and upper respiratory tract.</i>

## Hazard Symbols: WHMIS

Commercial products are things made for work, not for homes. WHMIS is a system for commercial products that helps workers understand the dangers of those products. It stands for Workplace Hazardous Materials Information System. WHMIS information includes labels, information sheets, training, and symbols. Each WHMIS symbol tells us about the danger of a product.

	<b>Flame</b> The product can catch fire easily.
	<b>Flame Over Circle</b> The product is oxidizing. Oxidizing materials make fires hotter.
	<b>Corrosion</b> The product can burn skin or damage eyes.
	<b>Exclamation Mark</b> The product may cause skin or eye irritation.
	<b>Gas Cylinder</b> The product has gas under pressure. It can explode if heated or damaged.
	<b>Biohazardous Infectious Materials</b> The product can cause diseases.
	<b>Environment</b> The product can cause damage to the aquatic environment.
	<b>Exploding Bomb</b> The product can explode.
	<b>Skull and Crossbones</b> The product can be very toxic.
	<b>Health Hazard</b> The product can cause long-term health problems.



C

Write the correct letter beside each picture.

1. \_\_\_\_\_



2. \_\_\_\_\_



3. \_\_\_\_\_



4. \_\_\_\_\_



5. \_\_\_\_\_



6. \_\_\_\_\_



7. \_\_\_\_\_



8. \_\_\_\_\_



9. \_\_\_\_\_



10. \_\_\_\_\_



A. Exploding bomb

B. Gas cylinder

C. Corrosion

D. Skull and Crossbones

E. Flame

F. Health Hazard

G. Exclamation mark

H. Flame over circle

I. Environment

J. Biohazardous Infectious  
Materials

## Unit 4: Drywall Tools and Skills



Knowing the names of the tools and the skills involved in drywalling is an important first step.

In any construction job, it is essential to know how to read a tape measure.

In unit 4, you will learn about tools and skills for:

- Measuring and cutting drywall
- Reading a tape measure
- Installing drywall
- Finishing drywall

# Measuring and Cutting Drywall

Drywall panels are large. Workers measure and cut them to fit on walls and ceilings.



**Tape Measure**

A tape measure measures length. It has a small metal hook that you can hook on the edge of a drywall sheet. It often lists both Imperial and Metric measures.



**T-square**

A T-square is a large ruler shaped like the letter T. Workers use it to measure and to draw a straight line on drywall panels (for making straight cuts).



**Utility Knife**

➡ Other name: box cutter

A utility knife is used to cut the upper surface of drywall. Workers cut the surface lightly (not fully). This is called scoring the drywall. Then they snap the drywall along the score line.



**Jab Saw**

➡ Other names: keyhole saw, drywall saw

A jab saw has a pointed tip. It is good for cutting small holes in drywall, such as a hole around a light switch.



1. List four items in the picture.



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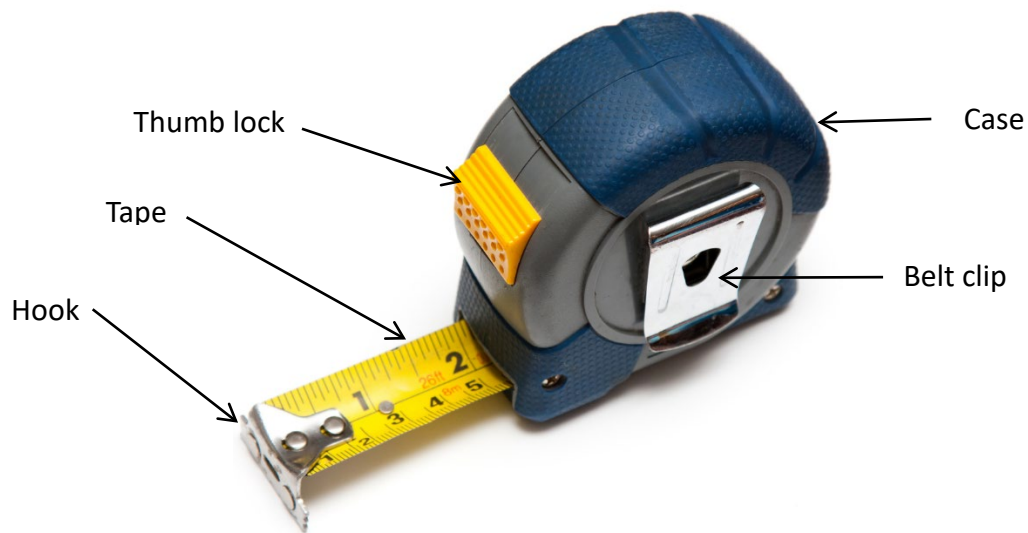
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2. Write or type in each box to describe what the worker is doing. Include the name of the tool, what the worker is doing with it, and any PPE the worker is wearing.



# The Parts of a Tape Measure



## **Case**

The case is the exterior shell of the tape measure.

## **Thumb Lock**

The thumb lock is a button on the case. When workers extend the tape, they can press the lock button so the tape stays extended. They can release the button to retract the tape back into the case.

## **Belt Clip**

The belt clip is a clip on the side of the case. Workers use it to hang the tape measure onto their belt or pocket.

## **Tape**

The tape is the extendable part of the tape measure. It comes in various lengths, from 6 feet to 30 feet long or longer. The length of the tape is printed on the case. It often includes both imperial and metric measures.

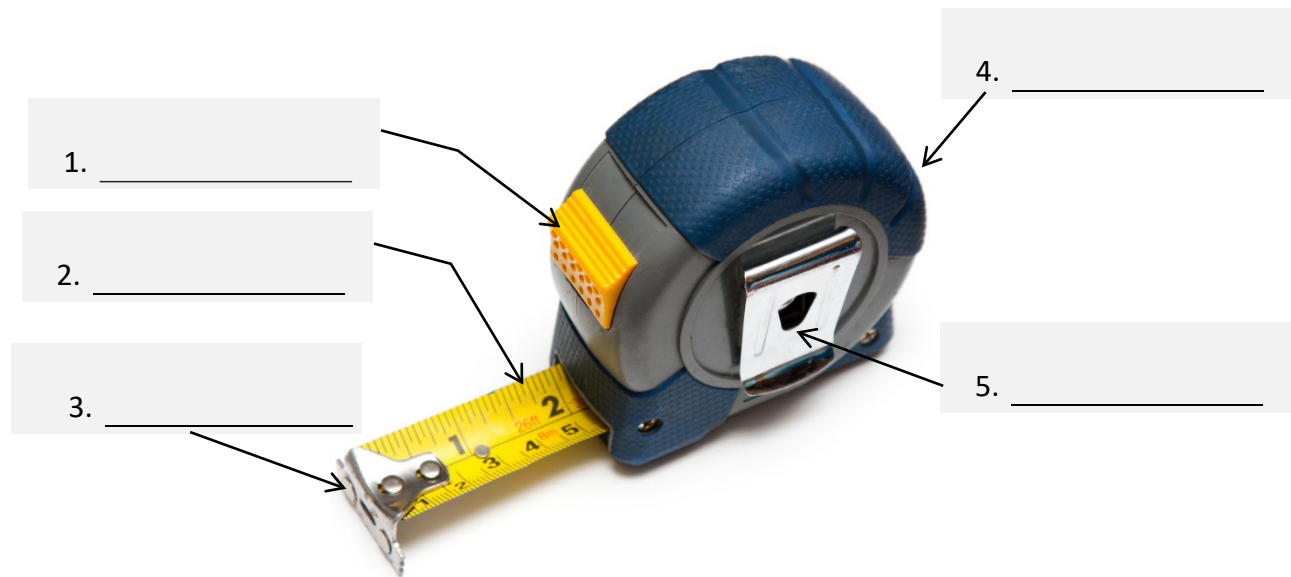
## **Hook**

The hook is on the end of the tape. Workers use it to hook onto the edge of what they measure.





A Write the correct name on each line.



B

The length on each tape measure below is in imperial and metric. The symbol for feet is '. What is the length of each tape? Check the correct answer.

1.



- ☐ a) 25 inches
- ☐ b) 25 feet
- ☐ c) 25 metres

2.



- ☐ a) 16 metres
- ☐ b) 5 metres
- ☐ c) 5 feet

3.



- ☐ a) 2 metres
- ☐ b) 2 feet
- ☐ c) 6 metres

## Estimating Lengths



In the construction industry, Canada still uses imperial measures.

Drywall materials are usually measured in inches and feet.

There are 12 inches in one foot.

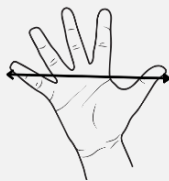
Even if you know how to read a tape measure, it's a good idea to practise estimating measurements. This will help you to estimate lengths on the job.

You can use your own body to estimate inches and feet. For example, an inch is about the width of two fingers. Use a tape measure to measure the following body parts. Knowing these measures will help you estimate other objects at work.



Width of two fingers

\_\_\_\_\_



Hand span

\_\_\_\_\_



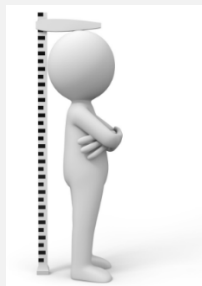
Finger and thumb span

\_\_\_\_\_



Your foot

\_\_\_\_\_



Your height

\_\_\_\_\_



A

Estimate the objects. Check the correct answer.

1. Estimate the size of the drywall panel.

- ☐ a) 4 feet by 6 feet
- ☐ b) 4 inches by 6 inches
- ☐ c) 4 feet by 12 feet



2. Estimate the length of the screw.

- ☐ a) 6 inches
- ☐ b) 4 inches
- ☐ c) 1 inch



3. Estimate the height of the stepladder.

- ☐ a) 1 ½ feet
- ☐ b) 4 feet
- ☐ c) 6.5 feet



# Reading a Tape Measure: Information on the Tape



## Length of the Tape

The length of the entire tape is printed near the start of the tape, in red print.

## Numbers for Inches and Centimetres

Numbers for each whole inch and centimetre are printed on the tape. The numbers on the top half of the tape are for inches (imperial). The numbers on the bottom half are for centimetres (metric).



- 1. What is the length of the entire tape in imperial? \_\_\_\_\_
- 2. How many inches can you see on the tape above? \_\_\_\_\_
- 3. What is the length of the entire tape in metric? \_\_\_\_\_
- 4. How many cm can you see on the tape above? \_\_\_\_\_

## Numbers for Feet

On the top portion of the tape, each foot is marked in black. There are 12 inches in a foot. At the 12-inch mark, instead of the number 12, it says **1F**.



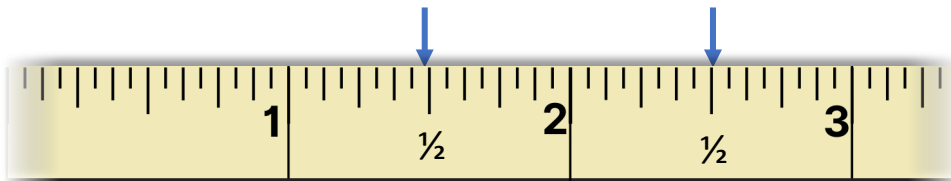
- 1. How many inches are there at the 2F mark? \_\_\_\_\_
- 2. How many inches are there at the 3F mark? \_\_\_\_\_

## Lines Between Each Inch

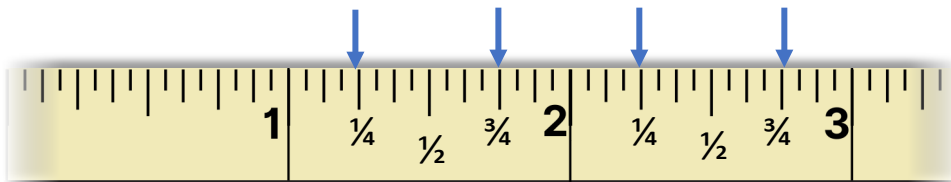
Each inch is divided into 16 parts. The lines between each inch represent fractions of an inch. The lines are different heights.

**Inches** The longest lines are whole inches. They are numbered.

**Halves** The second longest lines are halves of an inch.



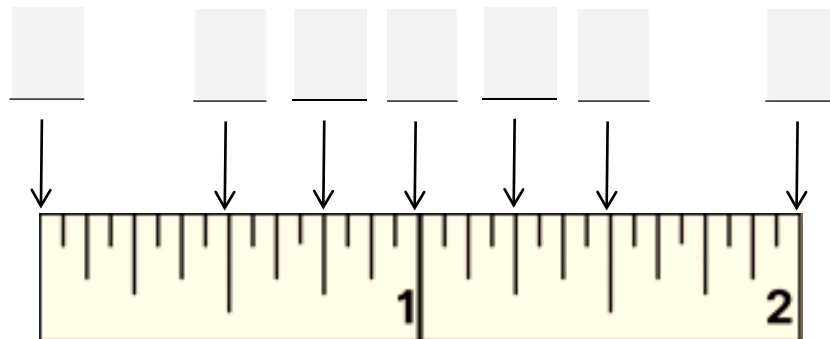
**Quarters** The third longest lines are quarters of an inch.



C

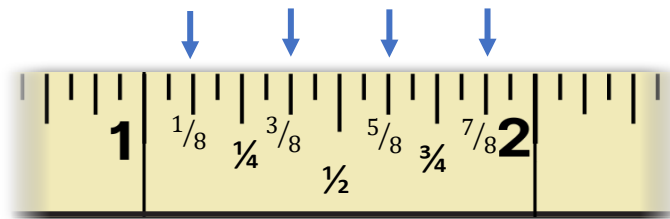
Write the correct number or fraction on each line below. Use the numbers in the box.

$1\frac{1}{4}$    ■   2   ■    $\frac{1}{2}$    ■    $1\frac{1}{2}$    ■    $\frac{3}{4}$    ■   1   ■   0



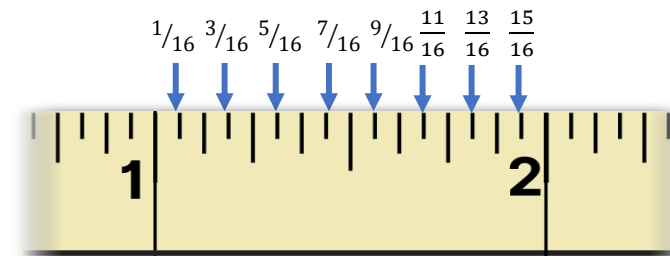
Eighths

The next longest lines are eighths of an inch.



Sixteenths

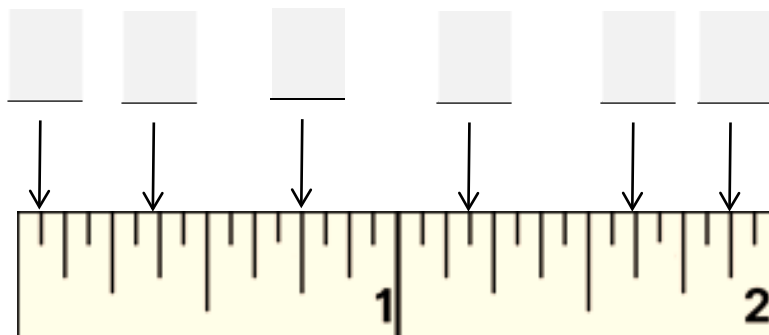
Finally, the shortest lines are sixteenths of an inch.



D

Write or type the correct fraction on each line. Use the fractions in the box.

$1 \frac{3}{16}$    ■    $1 \frac{7}{8}$    ■    $\frac{1}{16}$    ■    $\frac{3}{8}$    ■    $\frac{3}{4}$    ■    $1 \frac{5}{8}$





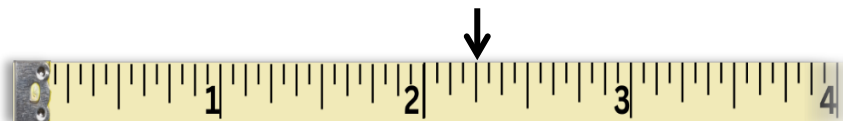
E

For 1-4, check the correct fraction. For 5-7, write the correct fraction.  
There are no sixteenths.

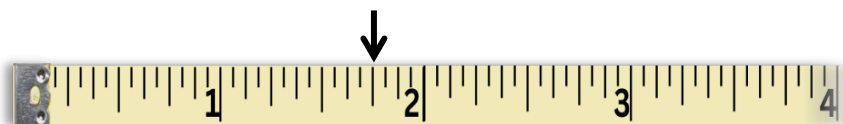
1. ☐ a)  $1\frac{1}{2}$  inches  
☐ b)  $\frac{1}{2}$  inch  
☐ c)  $1\frac{1}{4}$  inches



2. ☐ a)  $2\frac{1}{2}$  inches  
☐ b)  $2\frac{3}{8}$  inches  
☐ c)  $2\frac{1}{4}$  inches



3. ☐ a)  $2\frac{3}{4}$  inches  
☐ b)  $1\frac{3}{4}$  inch  
☐ c)  $1\frac{5}{8}$  inches



4. ☐ a)  $3\frac{5}{8}$   
☐ b)  $3\frac{1}{4}$   
☐ c)  $2\frac{1}{4}$



5. \_\_\_\_\_



6. \_\_\_\_\_



7. \_\_\_\_\_





Look at each tape. Write or type the correct word from the box on the first line.  
On the second line, list the fractions for each arrow. Refer to pages 34-35 for help.

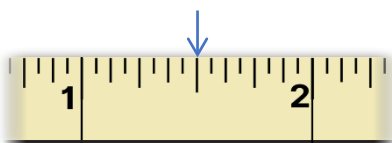
whole numbers ■ eighths ■ halves ■ quarters

1. Whole numbers

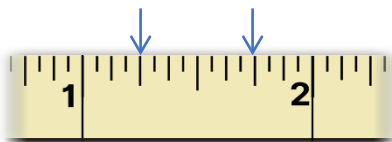
1, 2



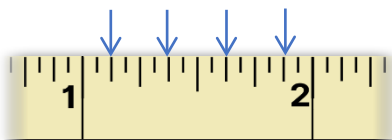
2. \_\_\_\_\_



3. \_\_\_\_\_



4. \_\_\_\_\_







WATCH

Watch the video **Learn How to Use a Tape Measure.**

[www.youtube.com/watch?v=mKarbrOme\\_Y](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=mKarbrOme_Y)



1. Did the video help you understand how to read a tape measure? Why?

2. Search for other videos about how to read a tape measure. In the browser search bar, you can type "How to use a tape measure." Copy the URL for the video you liked best below.

---

What did you like about this video?

## Installing Drywall: Tools and Skills

Installing drywall involves positioning and drilling the drywall panels to the wall framing. The wall frame can be made of metal or wood studs.



### Wood Studs

➡ Other names: wall studs, framing studs

Wood studs are pieces of lumber that provide support for drywall. Wood studs are usually 2 x 4 inches.

The studs are usually spaced 16 or 24 inches apart on the wall. Drywall is screwed to the studs.



### Metal Studs

➡ Other name: steel studs

Metal studs are metal strips that provide support for drywall. They are much lighter than wood studs. They are also more resistant to fire and moisture. However, they are more expensive than wood studs.

The studs are usually spaced 16 or 24 inches apart. Drywall is screwed to the studs.



A

List two advantages of metal studs.

---

---

## Installing Drywall: Tools and Skills



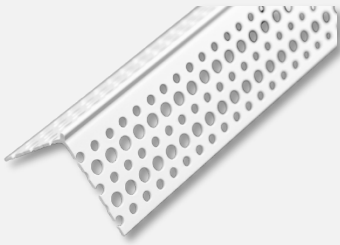
**Drywall Panels**

➡ Other names: Drywall sheets, gypsum board, wallboard, sheetrock



**Drywall Joint**

➡ Other names: drywall seam, butt joint  
A joint is the space between two drywall sheets on a wall.



**Corner Bead**

A strip of metal or plastic that protects the corners of drywall from damage.



**Drill**

A power tool with a rotating drill bit.



**Drill Bits**

Drill bits fit on the end of a power drill. They come in various shapes and sizes. Workers use a drill bit that fits the screws they are using.



**Screws**

Screws come in various shapes and sizes. Drywall screws usually have a Phillips head screw. The top of a Phillips head screw has a cross shape.



B Write or type the correct letter beside each picture.

1. \_\_\_\_\_



2. \_\_\_\_\_



3. \_\_\_\_\_



4. \_\_\_\_\_



5. \_\_\_\_\_



6. \_\_\_\_\_



7. \_\_\_\_\_



- A. Screws
- B. Drill bits
- C. Drill
- D. Steel studs
- E. Wood studs
- F. Phillips drill bit
- G. Phillips screw head

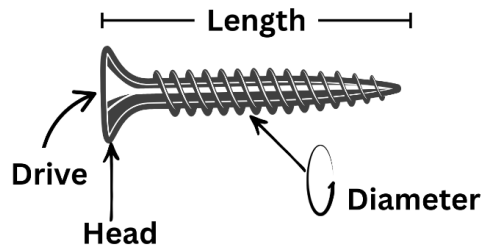


C

For each picture, write or type in the box to describe what the worker is doing. Include the name of any tools and what the worker is doing with them.



## Parts of a Screw



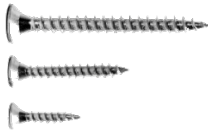
### Head types

Screw heads come in various shapes, such as rounded head, flat head and dome head. Drywall screws usually have a flat head.



### Drive types

The drive is the shape of the hole on the head of the screw. Common drive types include a Phillips head drive, slotted head drive, square drive, 6-point star drive, and Hex drive. Drywall screws usually have a Phillips drive.



### Lengths

Screw lengths range from very short (for example  $\frac{1}{4}$  inch) to very long (for example 5 inches). The lengths are usually in inches. Common lengths for drywall are  $1\frac{1}{4}$  to 2 inches long.



### Diameter

Diameter is the thickness of the screw. It is listed as a number (or gauge size) from 0-24. The larger the number, the thicker the screw. Drywall screws are usually 6, 7 or 8.



A Look at the container below. Fill in the blanks with information from the container.



Screw length: \_\_\_\_\_

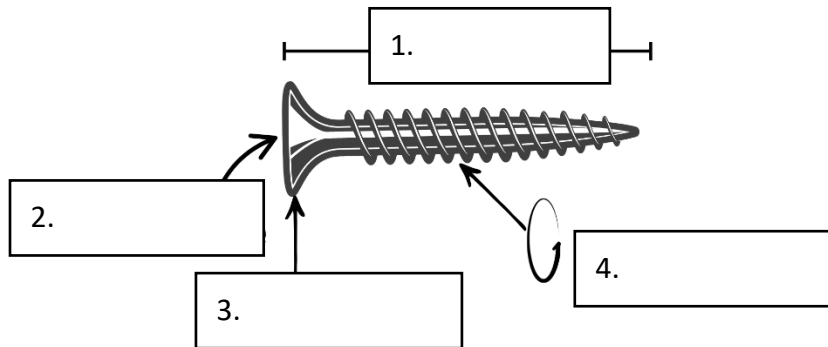
Screw diameter/gauge: \_\_\_\_\_

Screw drive type: \_\_\_\_\_



B Label the screw with the correct names.

Diameter ■ Drive ■ Head ■ Length

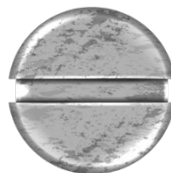


C Write the correct type of screw drive under each image. Use the words in the box.

Phillips ■ Hex ■ Square ■ Star ■ Slotted



1. \_\_\_\_\_



2. \_\_\_\_\_



3. \_\_\_\_\_



4. \_\_\_\_\_



5. \_\_\_\_\_

# Finishing Drywall: Tools and Skills

## Taping and Mudding

After drywall is installed, drywall finishers make the walls smooth. They tape, mud and sand.



**Joint Compound**

➡ Other names: drywall compound, mud

Workers use joint compound (mud) to fill joints holes and imperfections. It is a paste made from gypsum dust and water.



**Taping Knives**

➡ Other names: drywall knife, joint knife

Workers use tapping knives to spread mud over joints and holes on drywall. The knives are wide and flexible and come in various widths, such as 4", 8" and 10".



**Joint Tape**

➡ Other name: drywall tape

Workers use joint tape to reinforce the seams between drywall sheets. There are two types of joint tape.



**Putty Knives**

Workers use putty knives to spread joint compound on smaller areas of drywall. Putty knives come in various sizes, and are narrower than tapping knives.



**Hawk**

A flat metal platform with a handle underneath. Workers use it to hold mud as they work.



**Drywall Pan**

➡ Other names: mud pan

A metal or plastic pan. Workers use it to mix or hold joint compound (mud).



## Sanding

Drywall finishers create smooth and even surfaces that are ready for painting. They sand after they apply the tape and the first coat of drywall compound dries, and again after applying another coat. They sand until the surface is smooth.



**Sanding sponge**



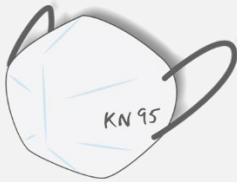
**Hand sander**



**Pole sander**



**Electric sander**



**Dust mask**



**Respirator**

Workers use a dust mask or a respirator to protect themselves from inhaling fine dust when they are sanding. Inhaling dust can cause coughing, breathing problems or lung damage. N95 masks filter 95% of fine dust. Respirators are more effective.



**Safety glasses**

Workers use safety glasses to protect their eyes from fine dust when they are sanding.



A

Write the correct letter beside each picture.

1. \_\_\_\_\_



2. \_\_\_\_\_



3. \_\_\_\_\_



4. \_\_\_\_\_



5. \_\_\_\_\_



6. \_\_\_\_\_



7. \_\_\_\_\_



- a) Dust mask
- b) Putty knives
- c) Hand sander
- d) Taping knives
- e) Drywall tape
- f) Pole sander
- g) Joint compound



B

List four items in the picture.



---

---

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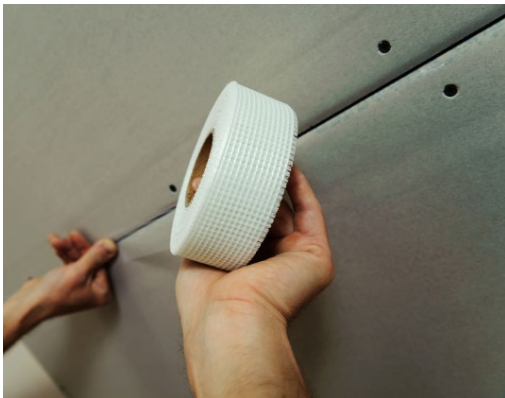
---



C

For each picture, write or type in the box to describe what the worker is doing in as much detail as you can.

1.



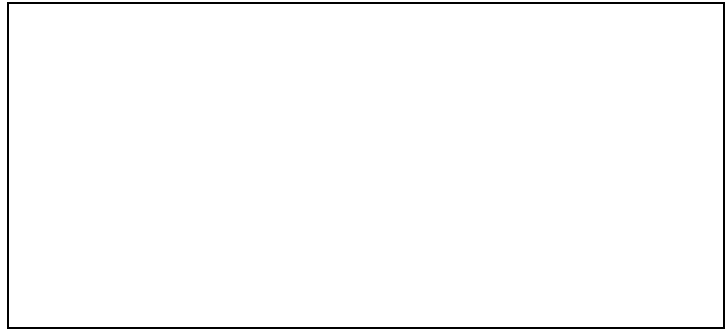
2.



3.



4.



WATCH

Watch the video **How to Finish Drywall – The Basics for Beginners.**

[www.youtube.com/watch?v=Tfl7rjkxPJO](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Tfl7rjkxPJO)



Did the video help you understand how to finish drywall? Why?

A large empty rectangular box with a black border, intended for a response.

Search for other videos. Use the search terms “How to finish drywall for beginners.”  
Copy the URL for the video you liked best below.

---

## Unit 5: Working



Finding a job in drywalling is not easy, especially if you don't have experience. But there are entry-level jobs you can apply for.

When you get a job, it's important to have good communication skills.

In unit 5, you will learn about:

- Communicating at work
- Finding work in drywalling

# Communicating at Work

Good communication is important at work, for many reasons.

- It prevents mistakes and injuries on the job
- It helps you work well with others
- It helps you learn how to do the job well
- It creates a respectful work environment

Here are six tips for communicating at work. Tips 1, 2 and 3 are related to understanding instructions.



1

## Show that you understand

- *Okay, I understand.*
- *Got it. I'll get started right away.*
- *Sounds good.*



2

## Ask questions to get clarification

- *What do you mean?*
- *Can you explain that?*
- *Can you repeat that? I'll take notes so I don't forget.*
- *Can you demonstrate how to do that?*
- *Do you want me to hang the drywall now, or later?*
- *Are these the kind of screws you mean?*
- *I'm not sure I understand. Can you go over that again?*



3

## Repeat instructions in your own words

- *Okay, so you want me to sand this part first?*
- *You said to get a 4 x 8 drywall sheet, right?*
- *So, you're saying I should arrive at 7 am?*
- *Let me know if I understand correctly. I should ...*





4

### Update others about your work tasks

- *I'm finished the sanding. What can I do next?*
- *I'm finished taping this wall. I'm going to take my lunch break. I'll be back at 1.*
- *I'm finished cutting the drywall, then I can help you with the installation.*
- *It's taking longer than expected, but I'll be done by the end of the day.*



5

### Ask for and offer help

- *Can you help me? These drywall sheets are heavy.*
- *Can you show me how to do this?*
- *Can you watch me and tell me if I'm doing it right?*
- *Do you want help with that?*
- *Feel free to use my drill.*
- *I'll give you a hand.*



6

### Be respectful and polite

Greet coworkers:

- *Good morning. Hope you had a nice weekend.*
- *See you tomorrow. Have a nice evening.*

Show appreciation:

- *Thank you.*
- *I appreciate you showing me how to do this.*

Apologize for mistakes:

- *I made a mistake on measuring. I'll need to do it again. I'm sorry about that.*

Notice when others do a good job:

- *You're really good at finishing drywall.*





Jane is a construction helper. A supervisor is giving her detailed instructions on her work for the day. Write or discuss examples of what Jane could say for each tip below.



1

Show that you understand

---



2

Ask questions to get clarification

---

---



3

Repeat instructions in your own words

---

---



4

Update others about your work tasks

---



5

Ask for and offer help

---



6

Be respectful and polite

---



## Think About It



Think about your communication skills. Fill out the chart below.

	I do this well.	I need to work on this.
Show that you understand.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Ask questions to get clarification.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Repeat instructions in your own words.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Update others about your work tasks.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Ask for and offer help.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Be respectful and polite.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

## Looking a Job

Drywall finishing is a good job. You can earn a good wage if you are skilled at it. There are a lot of jobs available in Ontario, mainly because of these reasons:

- **Population growth:** Many cities in Ontario are growing, especially Toronto. New houses, buildings and condos are being built. They need drywall.
- **Renovations:** Older buildings are being renovated. This work usually involves drywall.
- **Shortage of skilled tradespeople:** There are not enough skilled drywallers to fill all the jobs.

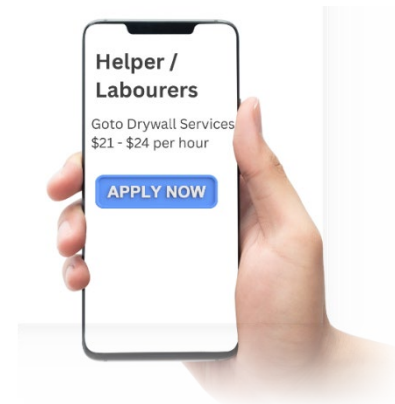


It can be hard to find a job or become an apprentice if you don't have drywalling experience.

It's a good idea to look for work as a drywall or construction *helper* and gain drywall skills on the job. Then when you have experience, you can ask your employer if they will take you on as an apprentice.

Look for jobs with these titles:

- Drywall helper
- Construction labourer
- General labourer



Discuss:

1. Have you ever looked for work as a labourer or construction helper?
2. How did you look for jobs (e.g., talking to friends or family, looking at job ads)?
3. Describe your experience looking for work.

## Job Postings



There are many ways to look for work, such as:

- **Job listing websites:** You can look for job postings on job-listing websites, such as Indeed (<https://ca.indeed.com>), the Job Bank ([www.jobbank.gc.ca](http://www.jobbank.gc.ca)) or Monster ([www.monster.ca](http://www.monster.ca)). On the websites, you can search for drywall helper or construction helper jobs.
- **Construction sites:** You can go to work sites or construction companies and talk to a supervisor.
- **Friends and family:** You can ask friends or family if they know of any job openings.

Look at the job ads below. Answer the questions on the next page.

### Job 1

#### Drywall Helper

GL Renovations | GTA, ON

\$19 - \$26 an hour

Mon-Fri, 7:00am -4:00pm (some weekends)

Looking for a reliable and hardworking helper. No experience needed.

##### Responsibilities:

- Help prepare job sites
- Assist with cleanup
- Learn patching, taping, and painting
- Load and unload tools
- Ability to handle heavy loads and repetitive tasks
- Must have own tools and safety equipment

Apply by email to [GL\\_reno@yahoo.ca](mailto:GL_reno@yahoo.ca)

### Job 2

#### Construction Helper

Gus's Renos | North York, ON

\$20 - \$22 an hour

40+ hrs a week

[Apply now](#)

Looking for a helper with experience in residential renovations. Also willing to train the right candidate.

##### Responsibilities:

- General construction labour
- Job site cleanup
- Moving materials
- Rough demolition, carpentry and drywalling tasks

##### Experience an asset in:

Demolition, framing, insulation, drywall, taping, painting, hardwood, tiling, stairs, trim, doors, etc.



When you are looking at job postings, it's a good idea to keep notes on the jobs you are interested in. Fill out the chart below with details from the job postings on page 56.

	Job 1	Job 2
Job title →		
Employer name →		
Job location →		
Pay →		
Work hours →		
Experience needed →		
Main responsibilities →		



When you apply for a job, you may need to apply by email. In your email, it's a good idea to say why you are good for the job, and to attach a resume. Fill out the chart below.

	I can do this.	I need help.
Create a resume	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Email an employer about a job ad	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Describe why the employer should hire me	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

**B**

Look at the job ad below. It is for more experienced workers. Answer the questions.

### Drywall Finisher Apprentice

LG Tapers | Toronto, ON

**Apply now**

We want to hire a drywall apprentice. If you have experience in the drywall industry and you have a good attitude, apply!

#### Key responsibilities:

- Follow instructions from foreman
- Clean the job site
- Move materials
- Follow safety rules and regulations
- Assist in installing drywall as required
- Apply joint compound, sand and prepare walls for painting

#### Job Qualifications:

- Previous experience installing or finishing drywall
- WHMIS and Working at Heights Training
- Physically able to lift heavy tools and materials
- Effective communication skills
- Ability to take direction from others
- Punctual and willing to learn
- Must have own tools and safety equipment

1. What is the job title?

---

2. In the “job details” paragraph, list two things the employer is looking for in an applicant.

---

---

3. In the “key responsibilities” list, what is the first job responsibility?

---

4. In the “job qualifications” list, which two certifications are needed?

---

---

5. Read all the job qualifications in the list. Which ones do you have?

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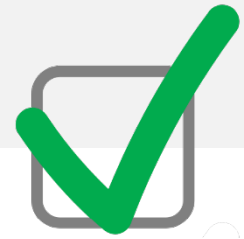
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## Unit 1: Introduction

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### Working in Drywall: An Introduction (p. 3-5)

- A**
- Measure drywall sheets to fit areas on walls and ceilings
  - Cut drywall sheets with a utility knife
- Installing drywall
- Position drywall on walls and ceilings
  - Drill drywall to metal or wooden studs
- Finishing Drywall
- Apply Tape to drywall seams
  - Fill Seams and holes with joint compound
  - Sand The joint compound after it dries
  - Paint The drywall with primer

### About Drywall (p. 6-7)

- A**
- Standard
  - Moisture resistant
  - Fire-resistant
  - Lightweight

- B**
1. Length
  2. Thickness
  3. Width

## Unit 2: The Skilled Trades

---

### The Skilled Trades: An Introduction (p. 9)

- A**
1. Skilled trade: An occupation that requires special skills gained mostly through on-the-job training and experience
  2. Apprenticeship: A training program for a skilled trade
  3. Sponsor: An employer who makes sure you get the training you need.
  4. Skilled Trades Ontario: Organization that oversees the apprenticeship system in Ontario
  5. Logbook: Outlines all the skills you need for a trade
  6. Certificate of Apprenticeship: A certificate for finishing an apprenticeship
  7. Certificate of Qualification: A certificate for passing a trades licensing exam

### The Skilled Trades: Compulsory and Non-compulsory (p. 10-11)

- A
1. 23
  2. 121
  3. Answers will vary s
  4. For compulsory trades, you must be a registered apprentice or have a Certificate of Qualification. For non-compulsory trades, you can legally work without either.

- B
1. G Skilled trade
  2. H Apprenticeship
  3. B Compulsory trades
  4. F Non-compulsory trades
  5. E Certificate of Apprenticeship
  6. D Certificate of Qualification
  7. C Skilled Trades Ontario
  8. A 144

### Skilled Trades Ontario (p. 12-13)

- A
- Trade name: Drywall Finisher and Plasterer
- Code: 453A
- Classification: Non-compulsory

## Unit 3: Safety at Work

---

### Personal Protective Equipment (p. 15-19)

- A
1. E
  2. G
  3. D
  4. A
  5. B
  6. F
  7. C

- B
- Asbestos is safe when it is not disturbed.
- Asbestos is harmful when the walls, ceilings or floors are disturbed or broken apart.
- If you inhale asbestos fibres you can get serious health problems later.

- C
1. Vinyl tiled floors, wrapping on pipes, drywall mud, drywall with sprayed-on texture, insulation in attics
  2. If you are working in an older home, test for asbestos.  
Only remove it if you are trained.

- D
1. gloves, steel toe boots, hard hat, ear muffs, dust mask, safety glasses
  2. At least four of: respirator, protective coveralls, gloves, hood, foot covers, safety glasses

#### Workplace Safety: The Law (p. 20)

A	Duties of Employers	Duties of Workers
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Make sure workers know about dangers at work.</li> <li>• Make sure workers wear protective equipment.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Report hazards or dangers at work.</li> <li>• Wear protective equipment.</li> </ul>

#### Hazard Symbols (p. 22-25)

A

Corrosive

Flammable

Poison

Explosive

- C
1. E Flame
  2. H Flame over circle
  3. C Corrosion
  4. G Exclamation mark
  5. B Gas cylinder
  6. J Biohazardous infectious materials
  7. I Environment
  8. A Exploding bomb
  9. D Skull and crossbones
  10. F Health hazard

## Unit 4: Drywall Tools and Skills

---

#### Measuring and Cutting Drywall (p. 27-28)

- A
1. Tape measure, T-square, jab saw, utility knife
  2.
    - The worker is measuring drywall with a tape measure. She is wearing safety gloves.
    - The worker is using a jab saw to cut drywall.
    - The worker is using a utility knife and a T-square to cut drywall.



### The Parts of a Tape Measure (p. 29-30)

- A
1. Thumb lock
  2. Tape
  3. Hook
  4. Case
  5. Belt clip

- B
1. B
  2. B
  3. A

### Estimating Lengths (p. 31-32)

- A
1. A
  2. C
  3. A

### Reading a Tape Measure: Information on the Tape (p. 33-38)

- A
1. 16 feet
  2. Two
  3. 5 metres
  4. five

- B
1. 24 inches
  2. 36 inches

- C
- |   |               |               |   |                |                |   |
|---|---------------|---------------|---|----------------|----------------|---|
| 0 | $\frac{1}{2}$ | $\frac{3}{4}$ | 1 | $1\frac{1}{4}$ | $1\frac{1}{2}$ | 2 |
|---|---------------|---------------|---|----------------|----------------|---|

- D
- |                |               |               |                 |                |                |
|----------------|---------------|---------------|-----------------|----------------|----------------|
| $\frac{1}{16}$ | $\frac{3}{8}$ | $\frac{3}{4}$ | $1\frac{3}{16}$ | $1\frac{5}{8}$ | $1\frac{7}{8}$ |
|----------------|---------------|---------------|-----------------|----------------|----------------|

- E
1. A
  2. C
  3. B
  4. B
  5.  $1\frac{1}{8}$
  6.  $1\frac{1}{4}$
  7.  $2\frac{5}{8}$

- F
1. whole numbers  
1, 2
  2. halves  
 $1\frac{1}{2}$
  3. quarters  
 $1\frac{1}{4}$ ,  $1\frac{3}{4}$
  4. eighths  
 $1\frac{1}{8}$ ,  $1\frac{3}{8}$ ,  $1\frac{5}{8}$ ,  $1\frac{7}{8}$

#### Installing Drywall: Tools and Skills (p. 39-42)

- A
- They are much lighter than wood studs.
  - They are more resistant to fire and moisture.

- B
1. C Drill
  2. A Screws
  3. G Phillips screw head
  4. F Phillips drill bit
  5. B Drill bits
  6. D Steel studs
  7. E Wood studs

- C
- Answers will vary, but should include answers similar to those below.
- The workers are positioning drywall. They are wearing hard hats and gloves.
  - The worker is drilling a piece of drywall to a metal stud. The worker is wearing gloves.
  - The worker is putting corner bead on a corner.

#### Parts of a Screw (p. 43-44)

- A
- |                       |          |
|-----------------------|----------|
| Screw length:         | 1 ¼ inch |
| Screw diameter/gauge: | 6        |
| Screw drive:          | Phillips |

- B
- |           |             |
|-----------|-------------|
| 1. Length | 3. Head     |
| 2. Drive  | 4. Diameter |

- C
1. Hex
  2. Slotted
  3. Phillips
  4. Square
  5. Star

## Finishing Drywall: Tools and Skills (p. 45-49)

- A
1. E Drywall tape
  2. G Joint compound
  3. D Taping knives
  4. B Putty knives
  5. C Hand sander
  6. A Dust mask
  7. F Pole sander

B Drywall tape, sponge sanders, taping knives, hawk

C Answers will vary, but should include answers similar to those below.

1. The worker is applying drywall tape to a joint.
2. The worker is using a taping knife to spread joint compound.
3. The worker is using an electric sander to sand joint compound on the ceiling. He is wearing gloves and safety glasses.
4. The worker is using a hand sander to sand joint compound. He is wearing a dust mask.

## Unit 5: Working

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### Looking for a Job (p. 55-58)

A

	Job 1	Job 2
Job title:	Drywall Helper	Construction Helper
Employer name:	GL Renovations	Gus's Renos
Job location:	GTA	North York
Pay:	\$19-\$26 per hour	\$20-\$22 per hour
Work hours:	Mon-Fri 7 am-4 pm	40+ hours a week
Experience needed:	No experience	Residential renovations; willing to train
Main responsibilities:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Prepare job sites</li><li>- Assist with clean up</li><li>- patching, taping, painting</li><li>- Load and unload tools</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- General construction labour</li><li>- Job site cleanup</li><li>- Moving materials</li><li>- Demolition, carpentry, drywalling</li></ul>

- B
1. Drywall Finisher Apprentice
  2. Experience in the drywall industry and a good attitude
  3. Follow instructions from foreman
  4. WHMIS and Working at Heights
  5. Answers will vary.

# OALCF Alignment



This information is for practitioners who work with adult learners in Ontario Literacy and Basic Skills programs. It outlines how this workbook is aligned with the Ontario Adult Literacy Curriculum Framework (OALCF).

This workbook is relevant to learners with the goal paths of Employment or Apprenticeship, with a particular interest in drywall work. It is aligned to the following OALCF competencies:

## Competency A – Find and Use Information

- A1: Read Continuous Text (level 1, 2)
- A2: Interpret documents (level 1)
- A3: Extract Information from films, broadcasts and presentations

## Competency B – Communicate Ideas and Information

- B1: Interact with Others (level 1)
- B2: Write Continuous text (level 1)

## Competency C – Understand and use Numbers

- C3: Use measures (level 1)

## Competency D – Use Digital Technology (level 1, 2)

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### Task based Learning

Many of the learning activities in this workbook are skill-building in nature, designed to help learners recall understand what they are reading. However, learners can complete various tasks to demonstrate and apply their learning in real life contexts. For example:

- Task related to Competency A3 and Competency D:
  - Locate a short video related to a topic in this workbook; view the video and describe something you learned from it.
- Task related to Competency A1:
  - Read a job ad for a drywall helper. Identify key details in the ad and determine whether you meet the qualifications.
- Task related to Competency A2:
  - Read the hazard symbols on a product and determine how to safely work with it.
- Task related to Competency B1 and B2:
  - Approach or write to an employer to ask if there are jobs available; describe your skills and why you would be good for the job.