

# Repairing Small Cracks

Small cracks often appear in plaster walls and ceilings, and are usually nothing to worry about. Small cracks (up to 2mm) in random directions are probably just 'drying out' cracks and don't usually indicate any structural problems.

Cracks which go in definite horizontal or vertical straight lines and are greater than 2mm wide, or which go in a stepped pattern could indicate something more serious and you should contact Together Housing.

## Tenant Responsible Repairs

Together Housing will carry out repairs and maintenance to the structure of your home, including the outside and shared parts of your home, which are caused by normal wear and tear. Tenants are responsible for doing some simple repairs and home maintenance. A full list of tenant responsible repairs is available on our website [www.togetherhousing.co.uk](http://www.togetherhousing.co.uk)

## Safety!

The Royal Society for the Prevention of Accidents says:

*“Be realistic and don't tackle a job unless you really have the ability. A competent, qualified person should always carry out gas and electrical renewal or repair work.*

*Keep any tools clean and in good repair, and give each one a quick check over before you use it.*

*Always plan ahead - accidents happen more easily if you are unprepared and rush.”*

Further DIY safety advice is available at [www.rosipa.com](http://www.rosipa.com)



**Watch our online video** in the Caring for your Home section and follow these instructions to repair small cracks.

Please dispose of all rubbish responsibly and recycle it where possible.

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## Repairing small cracks in walls and ceilings

**Tools you will need:** plastering scraper, plastering filler, sandpaper.

Using a plastering scraper, scrape along the line of the crack to remove any loose dust and dirt. Apply filler along the line of the crack and press the filler into it - leave the filler higher than the surrounding surface.

Allow to dry and then sandpaper down to make a smooth, flat surface ready for painting.

## Repairing small holes in plasterboard

If you feel confident and have basic skills and tools, you can fill a hole in plasterboard.

**Tools you will need:** wire detector, hobby knife, scrap piece of plasterboard, a screw, plastering filler, sandpaper

### Check for wires or pipes

Check the area with a wire detector to make sure there aren't any wires or pipes that you might accidentally cut through.

### Square-up the hole

Trim the edges of the hole with a hobby knife to make it square. Be careful using the knife.

### Cut a repair patch

Use a scrap piece of plasterboard. Hold it up to the base of the hole and mark its width. Measure and cut the patch to the correct width and then check that it passes through the hole nicely.

Hold the patch to the side to mark its height but add 2.5cm (an inch) top and bottom. This is what you will use to stick the patch to the rear side of the wall. Once marked, cut to the correct size.

### Push screw through centre

Push a screw through the centre of the patch. The screw will be used to position and hold the patch in place until it dries.

To keep the patch in place, add some filler to the overlap that you left on the patch and around the sides.



## Insert patch into the hole

Pick up the patch by holding the screw and insert it into the hole. Even the patch up until there is some overlap top and bottom so it will be held firmly in place once the filler has set.

Once the filler has dried enough to hold the patch, push the screw out into the wall space.

### Fill the hole

Now fill the hole with filler. Add until the hole is over-filled. Use the scraper to make the surface as smooth as possible. Allow to dry and sandpaper down ready for papering or painting.

## Using sealant to keep bathrooms and kitchens watertight

It's important to keep sealant in bathrooms and kitchens in good condition, otherwise water will get underneath and cause damage. Sometimes black spots will appear on sealant caused by dampness forming mildew.

**Tools you will need:** silicon sealant (mould resistant sealant is also available), Stanley knife

*Don't apply new sealant on top of old. You must remove all old sealant.*

Cut along the length of old sealant with a sharp Stanley knife and gently peel it off. Remove any last pieces by scrapping it off.

Prepare the tube of sealant using the manufacturer's instructions.

Carefully apply the sealant. The trick is to squeeze the trigger slowly and smoothly.

After you've applied it, wet a finger and smooth down the sealant to achieve an even line.