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Add Texture to Walls and Ceilings for Visual Appeal

It used to be that if you had an imperfection or damage to a wall or ceiling, options were limited: either you'd replaster it or cut out the damage and put in a new piece of drywall. That's because other ideas, such as paneling and wallpaper, weren't always so pleasing to the eye.

Lately, homeowners are catching on to the convenience and camouflaging properties of texture products. Everything from raised-print wallpapers to embossed tin or copper panels is available to transform rooms.

Apart from the visual appeal these items offer, they're very effective at hiding imperfections in walls. This is particularly advantageous for owners of older homes who have plaster walls that require the skills of a specialist to repair. Minor cracks or chips can be easily covered with some of these versatile materials:

• **Beadboard or wainscoting:** Depending upon the pattern and style of this product, wainscoting can be used to elicit a formal or country feel in a room. In many cases, wainscoting is installed on the lower part of a wall and capped with molding. This wood paneling is often sold in prepackaged kits that make installation that much easier for the do-it-yourselfer.

• **Textured wallpapers:** These papers come in many varieties, from grass papers to flocked paper to textured vinyls. There are also patterned papers that are extra thick and designed to be installed over dated paneling or damaged walls. Some papers are beautiful on their own or can be painted or enhanced to allow the pattern to show through even more.

• **Easy-application products:** While the popcorn ceilings of the past are no longer in vogue, spray- or roll-on texture products along the same vein are cropping up in many homes. Some paint manufacturers sell products with sand or texture already built into the mix so that walls and ceilings are given a granular effect during application. Other products are professionally sprayed on or hand-applied by plasterers. Some fiber texture products combine texture and pigments in one mix. Water is added and the product is applied according to the directions. It dries to an appealing and sound-conditioning finish. Should repairs be needed, a homeowner simply wets the fibrous material and smooths out the imperfection.

• **Embossed or acoustical ceiling panels:** Metal ceiling panels have become au courant as of late. They can help define a space, such as a dining room, by partitioning off entertaining areas from other rooms. They're also very common in older homes where they enhance architectural accents already found in the home. Acoustical panels can be used on walls or ceilings to reduce the echo associated with cavernous spaces. Sometimes they're installed in place of old drop-ceiling panels in finished basements or garages. Sold in a wide variety of patterns, these panels can be painted or used effectively as stand-alone elements.

Faux painting: The look of texture can often be created without actually creating raised surfaces on walls or ceilings. By using sponges, brushes and other media while painting, patterns can be created that add depth and interest.

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