

Removing asbestos-containing mastic, sealant, beading, filler, putty or fixing

This information sheet sets out safe work practices for removing asbestos-containing mastic, sealant, beading, filler, putty or fixing.



If the amount of asbestos product to be removed is more than 10m², the removal must be done by a licensed removalist.

Read this information sheet alongside the [Asbestos removal – good practice guidelines](#). Make sure you are familiar with the general requirements for asbestos removal as explained in these guidelines before doing any asbestos removal.

Before you start

Tools and equipment you will need

You will need the following equipment:

- warning tape and notices
- heavy-duty polythene sheeting
- strong adhesive tape
- H-Class vacuum cleaner
- sealant, such as PVA
- scraper, trowel, hand drill, paintbrush
- infrared lamp, solvent or dry ice (needed for removing some mastics)
- bucket of water and rags
- disposable paintbrush
- asbestos waste bag
- clear, heavy-duty polythene bag
- PPE and RPE.



See [Section 12 of the Asbestos removal - good practice guidelines](#) for more information about tools and equipment, including prohibited tools.

See [Section 17 of the Asbestos removal - good practice guidelines](#) for detailed PPE and RPE requirements.

Isolate the work area

Take steps to stop unauthorised people from entering the work area while the removal is underway and until the area has been decontaminated at the end of the job:

- put barriers and signs up to keep people away from the work area
- close all access points - such as doors, windows or gates
- move items out of the way or cover and seal them with heavy-duty polythene sheeting. This will save you having to decontaminate the items later
- lay down heavy-duty polythene sheeting on the ground around and under the work area
- set up your decontamination area
- for removing non-friable asbestos less than 10m² an enclosure is not normally required. See [Section 9.3 of the Asbestos removal - good practice guidelines](#)
- see [Section 8.0 of the Asbestos removal - good practice guidelines](#) for more detailed written instructions.

Put on your PPE and RPE

Make sure you are wearing the right PPE and RPE.

- For PPE and RPE requirements see [Section 17 of the Asbestos removal - good practice guidelines](#)
- [Video: How to wear a disposable respirator safely](#)
- [Video: How to wear a reusable respirator safely](#)

Doing the job

Safe removal procedures

Step 1

Gently scrape up adhering mastic/sealant. You can soften mastic or sealant with solvent by warming with an infra-red lamp, or embrittle it with dry ice. Make sure you have good ventilation if you are using solvent or dry ice.

Step 2

Scrape off mastic/sealant into the asbestos waste bag.

Step 3

Dampen plaster-based materials thoroughly with water and scrape off using 'shadow vacuuming'

Step 4

For asbestos 'Rawlplugs', dampen and drill out using 'shadow vacuuming'.

Step 5

Paint newly exposed surfaces with sealant.

Once you have finished

Clean up and waste disposal

Put all disposable materials used during the removal (such as polythene sheeting) in the asbestos waste bag then double bag it and tape it closed with a gooseneck tie. Clearly label it as containing asbestos.

- [Video: Disposing of asbestos waste and PPE safely](#)
- See [Section 14 of the Asbestos removal – good practice guidelines](#) for detailed written instructions.

Thoroughly decontaminate the work area and all reusable tools and equipment used during the work.

- [Video: How to decontaminate tools safely](#)
- See [Section 16 of the Asbestos removal – good practice guidelines](#) for detailed written instructions.

Personal decontamination

You must thoroughly decontaminate yourself.

- [Video: Taking off your respirator and PPE safely](#)
- See [Section 15 of the Asbestos removal – good practice guidelines](#) for more detailed written instructions.

Final checks

- Visually inspect the area to make sure it is clean.
- Clearance air monitoring is not normally required for this task.