

HOW TO INSTALL CROWN MOULDING

1. Preparation

1. Take measurements to get the linear footage needed to span the distance to be trimmed out. Add 10 percent to this figure for waste and mistakes.
2. Select the style and finish you want for your new crown molding. There are many shapes and sizes available.
3. Pick a style that suits your decor and personal taste. The finish that you put on should be purchased and applied before you start any cutting and fitting.
4. Try to buy your trim in lengths that will need as few splices as possible. In some cases splices are unavoidable but the fewer there are the better the finished job will look. (Very long walls may have to be spliced — 14 to 16 feet is about the longest you will find in most trim pieces and these longer pieces are more susceptible to warping and damage.)
5. Stain or paint all the molding then allow it to dry thoroughly.
6. Doing trim work is easier and more accurate with a comfortable place to work. This should consist of a long bench set up at a comfortable height. Note: This can be as simple as several long 2-by-4s laid out on top of saw horses. This will hold your miter saw ([electric](#) or manual) and support the trim as you work on it.
7. Cutting the needed angles for the corners of your trim is handled most accurately with a miter saw.
8. Set your work station where there power readily accessible and plenty of light.
9. Working over your head is tiring and awkward; a solid working platform makes the work much safer and easier. Use a heavy plank and two sturdy sawhorses or rent scaffolding on wheels to use as a platform to stand on while installing the molding.

2. Trimming and Joining

1. Overcome not-quite-square corners — and most of them are not square — with a "coped" joint:
2. Run the first piece of crown molding tightly into the corner. Cope-cut the second piece that will form the other leg of the corner angle in the shape of the profile of the molding so that it can butt neatly against the face of the first piece. Here's how:
3. Use a deep miter box and a fine-toothed saw to make a cut that reveals the profile of the molding. Position the molding so that it is upside down in the miter box. The face of the molding that goes against the ceiling will be on the bottom of the miter box. Remember, for inside corners, the bottom of the crown molding will be the longest edge.

4. Cutting the proper miter will reveal the profile of the molding. Cut away the excess wood along the backside of the molding following that profile line with a coping saw. Err on the side of removing too much rather than too little; only the outermost edge of the coped molding will be seen.
5. Use a utility knife to remove any excess material you missed with the coping saw. Be careful that you do not cut into the exposed face of the molding. Hold the piece in place to test the fit. Take it down and do more carving if necessary. This will sometimes take several fittings and trimmings to get the cleanest-fitting joint.
6. Planning out the job will [help](#) save work and material. Work out a pattern in which one end of each piece of crown molding will always be cut straight and one end will be mitered and or coped. Use scarf joints for long runs (where the pieces meet, cut the ends at 45 degrees so they will overlap). Layout the work so joins are on top of studs. Save the most visible parts of the job for last, when you've honed your coping skills.

3. Attach and Finish

1. Determine the location of the joists. Drill pilot holes to keep the molding from splitting.
2. Attach the molding with only a few nails. (Use 6d or 8d finish nails for this, depending on the thickness of the molding). Take a good look at the positioning before completing the nailing.
3. Provide a solid nailing area where the joists run parallel to the crown molding by using a 2 x 2 cut on a 45-degree bevel. Cut the 2-by-2 to length then screw it to the wall so that it's in the corner where the ceiling and wall meet. The 2-by-2 provides a solid surface sitting at an angle, to which you can nail the molding.
4. Countersink all nails using a nail set.
5. Use wood putty to fill all visible nail holes help cover any small gaps at the joints to give things a more seamless appearance. Wait for the putty to dry and sand it smooth with fine sand paper.
6. Finish the nail holes and small fill-ins to match the rest of the molding, and enjoy your new look.