

How to Install MDF Wall Panelling Strips (DIY Guide)

Tools & Materials

- MDF strips (pre-cut or cut to size)
 - No-nails style grab adhesive
 - Decorator's caulk
 - Caulking gun
 - Tape measure
 - Pencil
 - Spirit level or laser level
 - Sandpaper (120–180 grit)
 - Filling knife or caulk smoothing tool
 - Paint (if required)
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Step 1: Plan the Layout

1. Measure the wall height and width.
2. Decide on the panel design and spacing between strips.
3. Mark the positions of all MDF strips lightly with a pencil.
4. Use a spirit level to ensure all vertical and horizontal lines are straight.

Tip: Double-check measurements before fixing anything to the wall.

Step 2: Prepare the Wall

1. Remove any nails, hooks, or loose material.
 2. Fill large holes and sand smooth.
 3. Clean the wall to remove dust and grease.
 4. Ensure the wall is dry before starting.
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Step 3: Prepare the MDF Strips

1. Cut the MDF strips to the required lengths.
 2. Lightly sand any rough edges.
 3. Test-fit the pieces against the wall before applying adhesive.
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Step 4: Fix the First Strips

1. Apply grab adhesive to the back of the MDF strip in a zig-zag pattern.
2. Position the strip on your pencil marks.
3. Press firmly against the wall.
4. Check with a spirit level and adjust immediately if needed.

Tip: Start with the outer frame pieces if your design includes a border.

Step 5: Install the Remaining Strips

1. Continue applying adhesive to each strip.
 2. Fix each piece according to your layout marks.
 3. Regularly check alignment with a level.
 4. Wipe away any excess adhesive before it cures.
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Step 6: Allow the Adhesive to Cure

1. Leave the panelling undisturbed for the time recommended by the adhesive manufacturer.
 2. Avoid putting pressure on the strips during this period.
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Step 7: Caulk the Gaps

1. Run a thin bead of decorator's caulk along:
 - The edges where MDF meets the wall.
 - Any small joints between strips.
 2. Smooth the caulk with a damp finger or caulking tool.
 3. Remove excess caulk for a neat finish.
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Step 8: Final Preparation

1. Allow the caulk to dry fully.
 2. Lightly sand any rough areas if necessary.
 3. Wipe away dust.
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Step 9: Paint

1. Prime the MDF if it is unprimed.
 2. Apply your chosen paint.
 3. Allow the first coat to dry and apply a second coat if required.
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Finished Result

Once the paint has dried, the MDF strips should appear as a seamless panelled feature wall with clean joints and a professional-looking finish. For the best appearance, take your time with measuring, levelling, and caulking, as these stages make the biggest difference to the final result.