

DO-IT-YOURSELF

Allow A Shrinkage Space For Large Plaster Patches

By J. RALPH DALZELL
In older houses and apartment buildings it is often necessary to patch rather wide plaster cracks or other areas where plaster is in poor condition. Where wide patches are involved, a special procedure should be followed so when the patching material shrinks its surface will be flush with the surrounding plaster.

Picture W shows a cut-away view of a typical plastered wall. The area to be patched is lettered ABC. Scrape out all plaster down to and including the keys. Make the edges such as AB, in the shape of an inverted V. This helps to make a

cardboard shim. The thicknesses of shims must be determined by trial.

If a crack exists between a basement floor or sidewalk and the foundation, water can seep up through the crack. To remedy this, clean out all dirt and broken pieces of concrete from the crack. Use a blowtorch to dry the crack thoroughly. Ram oakum into the crack as shown in picture Z, and fill the crack completely with caulking compound.

Q.—Can I make any wood into a light-colored finish?
A.—For these finishes the wood

Tips To Homeowners On Weatherstripping

If you sweltered during the warm summer season, consider this chilling thought: The same leakage around windows that causes increased use of electricity for air conditioning and fans can cause exorbitant fuel bills in the winter — unless your home is properly weatherstripped.

Without metal weatherstripping the clearance around each window is equal to a hole four inches square. Tests have shown that air leakage or infiltration can account for 37 per cent of the total loss of heat in your home and that weatherstripping can save as much as 24 per cent on fuel bills.

If your home is equipped with weatherstripping, here are some tips, furnished by the Weatherstrip Research Institute, that will help you reap maximum benefits from the weatherstripping.

1. Keep Windows Locked—Keeping windows locked during cold weather will increase the "sealing" efficiency of weatherstripping. Window locks should be set so that they close the sash tightly. While locked windows are always a good practice, it is an absolute

necessity for windows that are not weatherstripped.

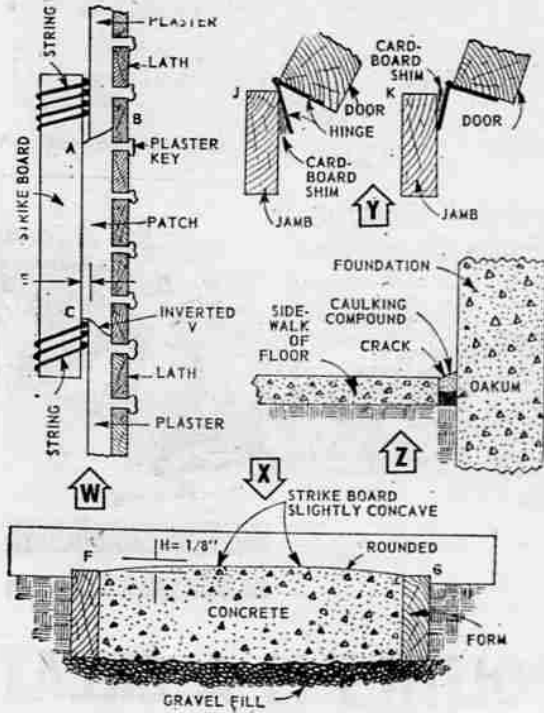
2. Caulk Outside Joints — Leakage at windows does not necessarily mean that the weatherstripping needs adjustment. Leakage may be coming from cracks between the window frames and the masonry walls. This leakage can be reduced by caulking the exposed joints. Leakage may also occur through pulley holes, around loose glass or broken putty, and even through the wood joints of the window if the paint is in poor condition.

3. Don't Paint Weatherstrips — The smooth rust-proof finish of metal weatherstripping should never be painted as paint will cause windows to stick or bind. If paint accidentally gets on them, remove it with fine steel wool and rub on paraffin wax to restore the finish. The "don't paint" rule applies also to sash cords and pulleys. Paint on sash cords hardens them and causes breakage; paint on pulleys impairs the action of windows and makes them hard to operate.



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good joint between the old plaster and the patching material. Use any commercial plaster patching compound available at hardware and paint stores. Mix as directed on the container.

Before applying the patching material, wrap ordinary string around the two ends of a straight piece of wood, as shown in picture W. Apply sufficient plaster so its surface extends beyond the surface of the plaster about one-eighth of an inch. Then use the strike board to level the patch.

When the patching material starts to harden, use a trowel or putty knife to blend the edges at A and C with the surrounding plaster. As the patch dries it will shrink, and the amount of shrinkage will make the surface of the patch flush with the surrounding plaster.

When concrete sidewalks are placed make their surfaces slightly rounded as shown in picture X. As it dries and shrinks, the surface will slope enough so water drains off quickly. Use a 2x4 for the strike board. Between F and G (sides of the walk) make the strike board slightly (an eighth inch) concave. This can be done with a small plane. When placing the concrete make the top surface about a quarter inch higher than the tops of the forms. Then use the strike board as shown. Pull the strike board back and forth until the concrete is smooth. When the concrete assumes a dull color trowel it smooth.

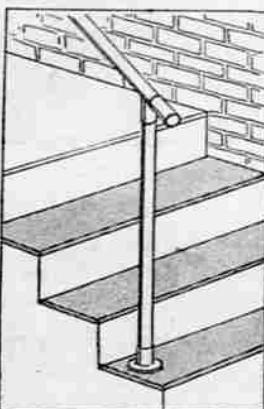
If a door binds or sags, loosen the top hinge at the jamb, as shown at J in picture Y and insert cardboard shims. Then tighten the screws. If this leaves too much space above the door and at the outer edge, loosen the bottom hinge, as shown at K, and insert

itself must be light in color. If the wood is dark, use a chemical bleach to remove the dark color from the wood.

Q.—Is it possible to use varnish without changing the color appearance of wood?

A.—Yes; use clear varnish, or get varnish almost matching the color of the wood. Paint stores have samples.

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