From the JLC Forums

Patching for Smaller Recessed Lights

Tips from a January 2013 thread about patching holes in drywall to accept smaller-diameter recessed fixtures.

I have a homeowner who wants to replace 6" recessed light fixtures with 4" fixtures. Some but not all of the smaller cans will be in the same spots, and I can't think of a good way to patch a 6" hole and then put a 4" hole in the same spot. — *htroberts, North Carolina*

Cut out the existing hole to something near a 10"–12" square. Take a piece of 3/8" plywood about 10"x 20" — adhesive on the ends — prop it up in the hole — pull it down against the back of the existing DW while you put screws up through it from the room side. Put your new hole in —tape and finish. — *Happy Home, Greensboro, N.C.*

How I repair them (I have repaired many): I cut the mixing sticks for 5-gallon paint buckets in half, place them in the hole, and secure them [with screws]. I have a hole saw for 6" recessed lights, so I cut new slugs out of scrap drywall, place the slug into the hole, and secure to mixing sticks. I tape with FibaFuse (not FibaTape) — it is very thin and lays down really nice — use Easy Sand, then Plus3. That solves the abandoned light locations.

For the locations where you will be putting 4" cans in the same spot: [Create a custom slug from scrap drywall using] a drywall circle cutter, set it to 4" (8" circle), score both sides. On the same center point, reset the cutter to 3" (6" circle), score only the back, then carefully break off the 1" [ring of gypsum] leaving the face paper intact. Using Easy Sand, secure the slug to the ceiling by the [face paper] flange, tape as normal. Bore the hole for new light.

You do know that if there is insulation in the [ceiling], you need IC-rated lights, or keep the insulation 3" from the luminary. I know of no 4" IC recessed luminaries that are a remodel configuration.

One more thing. If you remove the can, you should be able to remove the frame in the ones that get the new luminaries by disassembling the frame through the hole. — *tjbnwi, Northwest Indiana*

Built-Up Exterior Trim

In this October 2012 thread, contractors provide a variety of solutions for building up exterior trim to better complement the thickness of cedar shingles.

I have used plenty of 5/4 trim with shingle siding, but would rather use thicker trim. I was thinking of going with 4/4 material (3/4" net) boosted out with some scrap 7/16" OSB. With this arrangement, my casings ... would be about 1/4" proud of the shingle butts. What do you think? — *IamTheWalrus*

I've done buildups like this before. Normally rip cedar instead of using OSB. — *tjbnwi, Northwest Indiana*

Bad idea. OSB swells and rots like crazy. Good idea: Space 1/4" plastic shims along the back of your trim pieces and tack them in place with stainless staples. Orient them so that the inside 1" of your trim does not have any shims on it ... Presto, you have padded out your trim, made a rainscreen detail, and corrected for the material buildup on window flanges. — *NW Architect, Portland, Ore.*

We commonly use 1/2" treated plywood as a packer behind window surrounds. — *Nate E, New Jersey*

I would add strips at the edges only. This gives the finish piece of trim the ability to dry on the back side. — *Calvert, Dallas, Pa.*

We used to rip one side of the 1x4 corner trim down to 2 3/4" so that the corner was 3 1/2" wide on both sides once you butt the ripped piece to the full piece. Then we would [rip the waste] into two equal pieces and use that as a buildout shim. All of the jobs we did were lapped siding that would come out with beat-up 1x cedar on the bottom for packaging, so we made use of that stock as well. — *Dlhunter, Chester County, Pa.*

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