

Ask Jon Eakes

Removing ceramic tiles from the wall

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Just how do you remove ceramic tiles from a wall with the least amount of damage. I lucked out and the tile had been glued to a second layer of wallpaper. Everything separated at the joint between the two layers of wallpaper, and it was disgustingly easy to remove the tiles. A couple of tips anyway. Work from an edge if possible. Use a piece of thin plywood as a prybar backup to avoid pressure on the drywall. Use very thin but ridged pry bars so you can force them between the tile and the wall. If there is a solid field of tiles on the wall, drill and break one out in the middle as in the photo, then work more gently from there. If you do damage the drywall behind the tiles, and it is local and minor, you can plaster it back up. If however you have effectively removed the paper facing over a large surface, the drywall itself has been structurally compromised and you really should remove it entirely and start over.

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