

a4

asbestos essentials

Non-licensed tasks

Essential information

Important: You must read sheet a0 *Introduction to asbestos essentials*

Also read the following sheets:

em0 Risk assessments and plans of work

em1 What to do if you discover or accidentally disturb asbestos during your work

em2 Information, instruction and training

em3 Building and dismantling a mini-enclosure

em4 Using a Class H vacuum cleaner for asbestos

em5 Wetting asbestos materials

em6 Personal protective equipment (including RPE)

em7 Using damp rags to clean surfaces of minor asbestos contamination

em8 Personal decontamination

em9 Disposal of asbestos waste

Removing a single asbestos insulation board (AIB) panel, less than 1 m², fixed with nails or screws

What this sheet covers

This sheet describes good practice when you need to remove a single AIB sheet less than 1 m² in area.

This sheet is *not* appropriate:

- when the AIB has more than minor damage or is heavily painted so its removal could damage adjacent panels;
- when the AIB is in the form of ceiling tiles or slats;
- for removing heavily nailed or centre-nailed panels;
- for soffits;
- for a panel larger than 1 m²;
- for removing more than two small panels a week;
- if work lasts more than one hour for one worker in a seven-day period, or exceeds two hours for two or more workers in a seven-day period.

Use an HSE-licensed contractor for such work.

Please note: If the AIB starts to deteriorate on removal of the nails then the work may be notifiable non-licensed work (NNLW); see sheet a0 *Introduction to asbestos essentials*.

Preparing the work area

- Ensure safe access.
- Restrict access – minimise the number of people present.
- Close doors. Use tape and notices to warn others.
- Ensure adequate lighting.

Equipment

- 500- and 1000-gauge polythene sheeting and duct tape
- Warning tape and notices
- Class H vacuum cleaner (BS 8520) – see sheet em4
- Thick paste, eg wallpaper paste or shaving foam
- Sealant, eg polyvinyl acetate (PVA)
- Permanent sealant
- Magnet

Caution

If the panel has nails in the centre, the job needs an HSE-licensed contractor.

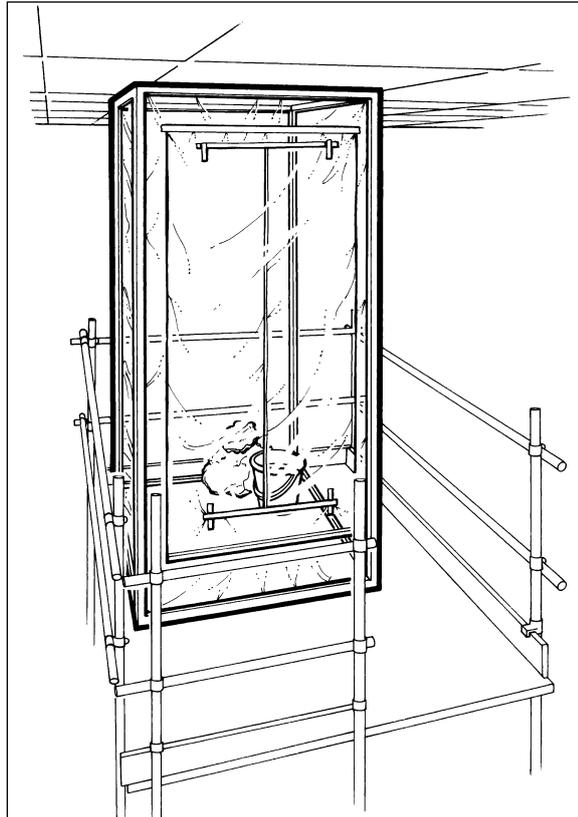
Other hazards

Work at height – see www.hse.gov.uk/work-at-height. Take precautions to avoid falls.

Manual handling – see www.hse.gov.uk/msd. Plan how to remove and handle heavy material and articles safely.

There may be other hazards – you need to consider them all.

- Screwdriver
- Garden-type sprayer containing wetting agent
- Paint brush
- Bucket of water and rags
- Asbestos waste bag
- Clear polythene bag
- Asbestos warning stickers



Use a mini-enclosure if you need to remove a panel fixed with nails

Personal protective equipment (PPE) – see sheet em6



- Provide:
 - disposable overalls fitted with a hood;
 - boots without laces (laced boots are hard to decontaminate);
 - respiratory protective equipment (RPE).

Procedure

- Inspect carefully. If the AIB is in good condition and is unlikely to get damaged upon removal, follow this sheet.
- If the board is badly damaged or likely to get damaged, use an HSE-licensed contractor.

Panel with nails

- Erect a mini-enclosure – see sheet em3.
- If you can remove nails with the claw, do so with ‘shadow vacuuming’ – see sheet em4.

- If this is not possible, you need to break the panel across one corner. Cover the intended break line with pastel foam.
- Deeply score the panel across one nailed corner through the paste/foam.
- Lever to break the panel at the scored line – hold the vacuum nozzle near to the break to collect as much dust as possible.
- Ease the panel away to loosen other nails, and remove these with shadow vacuuming.
- Remove the panel and vacuum all newly-exposed surfaces.

Panel with screws

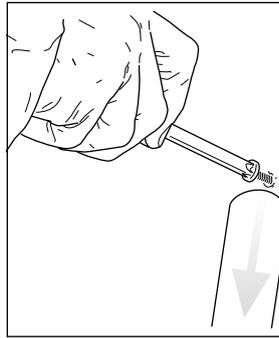
- Protect nearby surfaces from contamination. Cover with 500-gauge polythene sheeting and fix with duct tape to non-asbestos surfaces.
- Locate steel screws with the magnet. Locate brass screws by careful paint scraping.
- Use ‘shadow vacuuming’ to control dust – see sheet em4.
- Unscrew – put the screws in the waste bag.
- Ease the panel away. Vacuum its newly-exposed surfaces and screw holes.

All panels

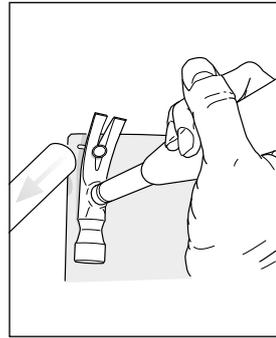
- Spray the panel with PVA.
- Double-wrap large panels with 1000-gauge polythene sheeting; place smaller boards in the waste bag.
- Attach asbestos warning stickers.
- Gently paint newly-exposed surfaces and screw holes with sealant paint.

Cleaning and disposal

- Clean any newly-exposed surfaces with the Class H vacuum cleaner.
- Clean a mini-enclosure with the Class H vacuum cleaner and dismantle it as advised in sheet em3.
- Clean the area and equipment with the Class H vacuum cleaner and damp rags.
- Put debris, used rags, polythene sheeting, paintbrush and other waste in the asbestos waste bag and tape it closed.
- Put the asbestos waste bag in a clear polythene bag and tape it closed.
- Disposal – see sheet em9.



Panel with screws: Use shadow vacuuming to control dust as you remove screws



Panel with nails: If possible, remove nails with a claw and shadow vacuuming. If this is difficult without damaging the board, apply paste to one corner and make a deep score line so you can lever the corner away first

Personal decontamination

See sheet em8.

Clearance and checking off

- Visually inspect the area to make sure that it has been cleaned properly.
- Clearance air sampling is not normally required.
- Get the premises owner, dutyholder or client to check off the job.

For information about health and safety, or to report inconsistencies or inaccuracies in this guidance, visit www.hse.gov.uk/. You can view HSE guidance online and order priced publications from the website. HSE priced publications are also available from bookshops.

This guidance is issued by the Health and Safety Executive. Following the guidance is not compulsory, unless specifically stated, and you are free to take other action. But if you do follow the guidance you will normally be doing enough to comply with the law. Health and safety inspectors seek to secure compliance with the law and may refer to this guidance.

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