



METALCEILING

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**INSTALLATION GUIDE**

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For more information, please visit:

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If you have any questions, or require further assistance on your project, you can call us at **(412) 419-2600**, or send us an e-mail at **[sales@metalceilingexpress.com](mailto:sales@metalceilingexpress.com)**. Thank you for choosing Metal Ceiling Express.



# NAIL-UP CEILING TILE PRE-INSTALLATION

## TOOLS AND MATERIALS:

- Measuring tape
- Level
- Screwdriver/power drill
- Screws
- Hammer
- Nails
- String
- Shims
- Handsaw
- Ladder
- 3/8" or 1/2" plywood/1" × 2" or 1" × 3" furring strips

Metal ceiling tiles require a soft, wood substrate in order to be nailed into place. There are two common methods to achieve this:

- Cover your entire ceiling in sheets of 3/8" or 1/2" plywood.
- Build a grid pattern of 1" × 2" or 1" × 3" furring strips.

## Furring Strip Installation:

1. Using a screwdriver or power drill, screw the first furring strips into place around the perimeter of the ceiling. **Note:** to compensate for any variations, leave all screws slightly loose.
2. Attach the remaining strips perpendicular to ceiling joists from the center of the room outward at 6" or 12" intervals.
3. To determine if the strips lie perfectly flat on the ceiling, create a loop at each end of a piece of string and then slip the loops over a nail placed at each end of the ceiling. The furring strips and the string should be parallel along the entire length of the room.
4. If at any point the board and the string are not parallel, you will need to lower the furring strip. Loosen the screws in the furring strip, and using a hammer, tap in a shim (wedge-shaped piece of wood). **Note:** the further the shim goes in, the more the furring strip will move downward.
5. Once all the furring strips are level, ensure that the screws are fully tightened.
6. Attach blocking strips between the furring strips at 2' intervals. This will provide a nailing surface on all four sides of each 24" × 24" ceiling tile.



# NAIL-UP CEILING TILE INSTALLATION

## TOOLS AND MATERIALS:

- Measuring tape
- Level
- Chalk line
- Hammer
- Cone head nails
- Ladder
- Silicone caulking
- Caulking gun
- 24" × 24" ceiling tiles

1. Using a chalk line, mark lines diagonally across the ceiling from corner to corner. The meeting point of these two lines will indicate the ceiling's center point.
2. Using a measuring tape, find the center point of each perimeter wall. From these points, snap chalk lines perpendicularly across the ceiling and through the ceiling's center point to divide the room into quarters.  
**Note:** during installation, you may want to snap additional chalk lines on the ceiling based on tile widths to simplify the process.
3. Place a corner of the first ceiling tile at the center of the ceiling, ensuring that it is lined up with the perpendicular lines that you previously marked. Using a hammer and cone head nails, nail the first tile in place along the border of the tile, which is known as the nail rail. **Note:** nails should be driven in every 6" and will become part of the overall pattern.
4. Subsequent tiles should be installed in parallel rows and each tile should be aligned so that its edges overlap with the edges of the adjacent tile. **Note:** where possible, exposed overlapping edges should be oriented away from the room's entry point to reduce the visibility of any gaps at the seams.
5. Repeat #4 until you have covered the desired area of your ceiling.
6. If necessary, apply a bead of clear silicon caulk to all overlapping joints in the ceiling tiles.



# DROP-IN CEILING TILE INSTALLATION

## TOOLS AND MATERIALS:

- Measuring tape
- Level/laser level
- Chalk line
- Pen/marker
- Screwdriver/power drill
- Screws
- Hammer
- Nails
- String
- Ladder
- Wall angles
- Hanger wires
- 12' main runners
- 2' Cross T-Foot
- Hold-down clips
- 24" × 24" ceiling tiles

## Ceiling Grid Installation:

1. Using a chalk line, mark lines diagonally across the ceiling from corner to corner. The meeting point of these two lines will indicate the ceiling's center point.
2. Using a measuring tape, find the center point of the walls that run parallel to the ceiling joists. From these points, snap chalk lines perpendicularly across the ceiling and through the ceiling's center point to indicate where the first main runner will be located.
3. Measure down from the ceiling joists or existing ceiling to determine the height of the new, drop-in ceiling. **Note:** between 4" and 6" below the joists or existing ceiling surface is an ideal height.
4. Using a laser or a level and either a pen or a marker, draw a line around the perimeter of the room at your desired ceiling height.
5. Nail or screw the wall angles into the perimeter walls along the line that you previously marked. **Note:** wall angles can be overlapped at inside corners but should be mitered for outside corners.
6. To determine the height where the first main runner will be installed, run a string across the room from wall angle to wall angle. **Note:** the string, and subsequently, the main runners will be perpendicular to the ceiling joists.
7. Using nails or screws, attach hanger wires to the bottom of the ceiling joists or existing ceiling at 4' intervals. **Note:** these hangers should extend below the string line by approximately 12".
8. Secure the first main runner to the wall angle and thread the wire hangers through the holes in the runner so that it is level with the string line. Twist the end of each wire around itself to support the runner as it extends across the room. **Note:** main runners may need to be spliced together depending on the width of the room.



9. Repeat #6, #7, and #8 to install the rest of the main runners. **Note:** main runners should be installed every 2' or 4'.
10. Install 2' Cross T-Foot in between the main runners by inserting the end tabs into the desired slots on the runners. **Note:** Cross T-Foot should be installed at 2' intervals, creating a grid of 2' × 2' squares that will support your ceiling tiles.

**Special note:** if main runners are installed at 4' intervals, you will need to install 4' T-Grid between them before you can install the 2' Cross T-Foot. A hanger wire will also need to be installed wherever a 4' T-Grid is located between the main runners.

### **Drop-In Ceiling Tile Installation:**

1. To install a ceiling tile into the previously installed grid, turn the tile on a slight angle and slide it through the 2' × 2' opening.
2. Once the ceiling tile is through the opening, ensure that the pattern is facing downwards and lay the tile down with its edges resting along the ceiling grid.
3. Attach hold-down clips on sides where two tiles are installed on the same section of ceiling grid. These clips will prevent the tile from bowing and ensure that no gaps appear between the grid and the tile.
4. Repeat #1, #2, and #3 until the entire grid or the desired area is filled.

**Special note:** most likely, the grid openings around the perimeter of the room will be smaller than 2' × 2'. In these instances, it will be necessary to cut the ceiling tiles to ensure that they fit correctly. For tiles with a deep-profile pattern, you may consider using filler tiles around the perimeter, as they will prevent gaps appearing between the cut ceiling tiles and the grid.



# FILLER TILE INSTALLATION

## TOOLS AND MATERIALS:

- Construction adhesive (Liquid Nails)
- Tin snips
- Hammer
- Cone head nails
- Ladder
- 24" × 24" filler tiles

Most people do not incorporate filler tiles into their metal ceiling tile layout and simply use their desired pattern across the entire ceiling. However, there are some instances where filler tiles should be utilized:

- When drop-in ceiling tiles have a deep-profile pattern and do not sit flush on the wall angle.
- When filler tiles are specified in the design layout.

### Filler Tile Installation for Nail-Up Ceilings:

1. Using tin snips, cut the filler to fit the desired area on the ceiling. **Note:** if filler tiles are being used to finish the perimeter of the ceiling, cut them so that they fit flush against the wall.
2. Install the filler tile by applying Liquid Nails, or a comparable construction adhesive, to the back of the tile and set it into place.
3. Once in place, use a hammer and cone head nails to nail the filler tile into the ceiling. **Note:** nails should be driven in every 6" along the nail rail of the tile.
4. Subsequent tiles should be installed in parallel rows and each tile should be aligned so that its edges overlap with the edges of the adjacent tile.
5. Repeat #3 and #4 until the desired area has been filled.

### Filler Tile Installation for Drop-In Ceilings:

1. Using tin snips, cut the filler to fit the desired area on the ceiling.
2. To install a filler tile into the previously installed grid, turn the tile on a slight angle and slide it through the 2' × 2' opening.
3. Once the filler tile is through the opening, ensure that the filler pattern is facing downwards and lay the tile down with its edges resting along the ceiling grid.
4. Repeat #2 and #3 until the desired area has been filled.



# CROWN MOLDING INSTALLATION

## TOOLS AND MATERIALS:

- Tin snips
- Pen/marker
- Speed square
- Hammer
- Cone head nails
- Ladder
- Crown molding

1. Starting in any corner of the room, use a hammer and cone head nails to nail the first piece of crown molding to the ceiling, ensuring that the nails are driven in every 6" along the top nail rail.
2. With the top edge of the crown molding nailed into place, nail the bottom edge of the molding to the wall, with nails driven in at 6" intervals along the bottom nail rail.
3. Continue installing the crown molding, repeating #1 and #2 until you reach the next corner of the room.  
**Note:** each piece of molding will overlap with the adjacent piece by 1/4".

## Inside Corner Installation:

1. Using tin snips, cut the piece of crown molding that leads into the corner so that it fits flush against the wall. Nail the molding into place using the method outlined above.
2. Hold the piece of molding that will lead out from the corner against the previously installed corner piece and, using a pen or marker, trace the curve that will need to be cut.
3. Using tin snips, cut the second section of molding along the line that you just traced.
4. The newly cut angled section of molding should sit flush against the previously installed section and can be nailed into place.

## Outside Corner Installation:

1. Place your desired piece of crown molding against the wall so that it overhangs the outside edge of the wall and, using a pen or marker, mark this point on the molding.
2. From this newly marked point, use a speed square to trace a 45° angle on the crown molding, with the bottom edge of the molding aligned with the outside corner of the wall and the top edge of the molding extending out past the corner.
3. Using tin snips, cut along the 45° line on the crown molding to create one side of the outside miter.





4. Repeat #1, #2, and #3 to the second piece of crown molding.
5. Both pieces of crown molding should fit flush together at the outside corner of the wall and can be nailed into place.

## BACKSPLASH INSTALLATION

### TOOLS AND MATERIALS:

- Measuring tape
- Pen/marker
- Tin snips
- Construction adhesive (Liquid Nails)
- Level
- Silicone caulking
- Caulking gun
- 18" × 24" backsplash tiles

1. Measure and mark 24" in from your desired starting point to indicate the position where the first backsplash tile will be installed.
2. From the countertop, measure the height of the wall that you are installing your backsplash tiles onto.  
**Note:** if the wall between your countertop and cabinet is less than 18", you will need to mark this height on your tile and cut it so that it fits flush under the cabinet.
3. Install the backsplash tile by applying Liquid Nails, or a comparable construction adhesive, to the back of the tile and set it into place. **Note:** cone head nails can be used instead of a construction adhesive to install backsplash tiles.
4. Repeat #1, #2, and #3 as you move across the wall, making sure to overlap the edges of adjacent tiles.  
**Note:** check the level of the tiles periodically to ensure that they are straight and aligned correctly.
5. After all the tiles are in place, apply a bead of clear silicon caulk to all overlapping joints and along the edge where the tiles meet the countertop to prevent water from getting in behind the tiles.



## FIXTURES

### TOOLS AND MATERIALS:

- Measuring tape
- Pen/marker
- Power drill
- Tin snips

Our metal ceiling tiles can accommodate a wide range of fixtures, including lights, vents, recessed lighting, and chandeliers.

### Accommodating for Fixtures:

1. Remove the fixture.
2. Measure the distance from the edge of the tile to the edge of the fixture and mark this point of the back of the tile.
3. Lay the fixture on the mark at the back of the ceiling tile and trace around its perimeter with a pen or marker.
4. Using a power drill, drill a pilot hole into the center of the traced area.
5. Cut out the rest of the tile inside the traced area with a pair of tin snips.
6. Install the ceiling tile using one of the above methods.
7. Reinstall the fixture over the installed ceiling tile.

## PAINTING

If you choose to paint your metal ceiling tiles, be sure to use oil-based primer and paint, as the steel will rust if any water-based products are used. Unfinished steel must be cleaned with wax and grease cleaner before painting. Take care not to scratch pre-painted finishes when nailing up tiles. You can touch up any nail heads using our wide range of touch-up paint.

