MITREPLAN PROJECT PLANNER

Renew your architraves and skirting boards

- **An easy-to-follow guide to achieving a perfect result.**
- **Outlines all the tools you will need for the job.**
- **Includes a materials checklist.**

PLEASE NOTE:
Before starting this project or buying any materials, it is worth your time to read all steps thoroughly first to be sure you understand what is required.

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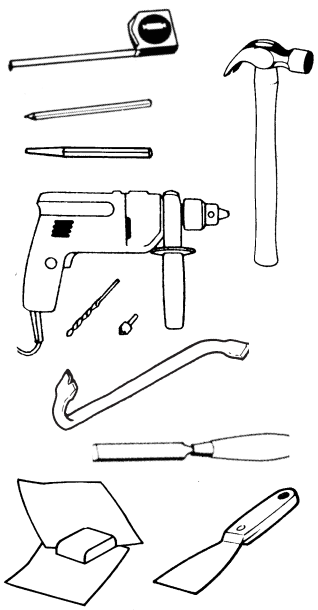
MIGHTY TOOLS FOR YOUR MITREPLAN



Measuring tape
Pencil
Drop, sliding compound or mitre saw
Cordless drill and fine bit
Claw hammer
Fine nail punch
Coping saw
Trestles
Pinchbar
32mm bevel edged chisel
Sanding cork
Putty knife

✓ MIGHTY HELPFUL CHECKLIST

		ORDER
	Timber	
	Moulding of choice in solid timber or MDF	
	Hardware	
	50 x 2.0mm bullet or finishing nails	
	PVA glue	
	Wood stop (putty): colour to match timber or stain	
	Other Materials	
	Wood stain (colour of choice)	
	Clear polyurethane	
	MDF primer	
	Paint (acrylic or enamel)	

Verbal quotes are indicative only. Written quotes on materials are available upon request from your Mitre 10 store.

Change the style of your home with trim mouldings

Modifying, re-arranging or just updating your home may require the changing of your home's skirtings and architraves. To obtain the desired finish, skirting and architrave mouldings are available in a wide variety of materials and profile types.

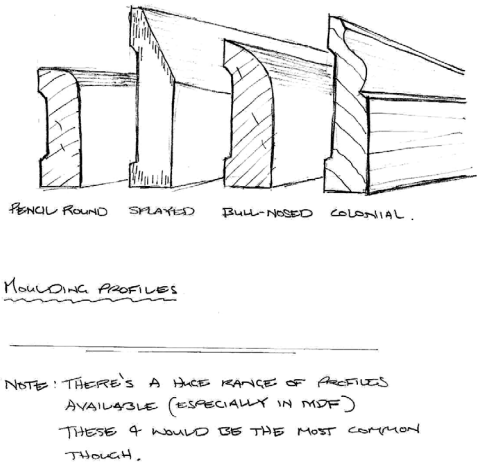
Cutting and fitting architraves and skirtings is not overly difficult to do, so generally is well within the capabilities of an average do-it-yourselfer. It does, however, require accuracy and patience to achieve a professional result.

A systematic approach is also necessary to ensure the economical usage of materials. All you need is the right tools and correct materials – and to follow this step-by-step guide from your Mitre 10 store.

Note: The following instructions are for timber framed construction only. Solid masonry and steel stud walls will require different fixing methods.

Step 1: Select the material and moulding profile

If possible, replace architraves and skirtings with profiles at least as wide (if not wider) than the existing material. Narrower pieces may mean additional patching or surface preparation before painting. The main materials used for architraves and skirtings are pacific maple, radiata pine or MDF (medium density fibreboard). If a painted finish is what you're looking for, MDF or radiata pine will generally do the job, but if a stained or clear-coated finish is required, pacific maple is suitable. There are many additional timbers available for mouldings (such as Tasmanian oak, western red cedar etc), but these often need to be specially machined to a customer's requirements, so can be relatively expensive.



Step 2: Calculating the correct amount

Measure a room by first recording the longest wall measurement for the skirting. Measure the remaining skirting, door and window architraves from the longest to the smallest sizes.

Calculate the lengths required by rounding each length up to the next multiple of 300mm – if 2294 is a measured length, you'll need a 2400mm length. Generally, the shortest timber length available is 900mm (increasing in multiples of 300mm) and the longest is around 6000mm.

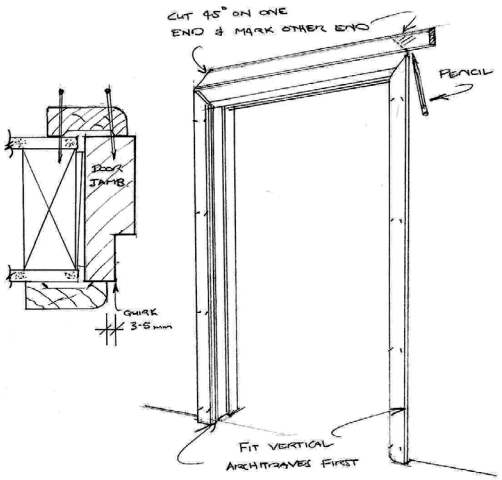
Often, a small sketch of each room with the respective pieces listed on it can be helpful. Also, combine smaller lengths if necessary e.g. 957mm, 1252mm and a 1425mm piece could all be cut from a single 3.9 metre long piece for example.

Step 3: Removal of existing architraves and skirtings

When removing architraves and skirtings, it's important that you don't damage the surrounding walls and reveals. Using a sharp utility knife, make a cut where the skirting joins the wall, doorjambs and window reveals – especially if there is several layers of old paint. Using a wide wood chisel (32mm plus), start by prying the moulding off the wall, keeping the flat part of the chisel against the wall or reveal. Once there is a gap between the moulding and the wall, you may need to use a small pinch bar with a wide piece of timber held underneath it to prevent damage to the wall – especially if it's plasterboard.

Step 4: Cutting and fitting architraves

Architraves will need to be fixed around the doorways (or any floor-to-ceiling windows) before the skirting can be fitted. Using an accurate drop, sliding compound or mitre saw, cut the vertical pieces first, allowing a 3mm 'quirk' from the inside edge of the door jamb or window reveal (see diagram). Fix the vertical pieces to each side of the door jamb first by using nails long enough to penetrate through the piece being fixed and into the timber of the door jamb and studs. Generally, 50mm x 2mm jolt head nails will be adequate for this job. Architraves thicker that 19mm may need longer nails. Use 2 nails every 400mm approx (one into the jamb and one into the wall stud). Tip: Leave the nails slightly proud at this stage – this is just in case you may need to make any adjustments.



Make a 45-degree cut on one end of the top piece leaving enough length to cut the mitre on the other end. Accurately mark the longest part of the mitre on the top piece and cut the 45-degree angle on it – the top architrave should be a neat fit with tight joints.

Nail the top piece using a minimum of 4 nails across the top of the doorjamb. To flush the mitre joints, drive a nail down through each end of the top architrave.

IMPORTANT: To prevent the timber from splitting, drill a small hole using a cordless drill and a drill bit slightly smaller than the nail diameter – or simply drill with one of the nails you're using by first snipping off its head with pincers. Also, for mitre joints less prone to movement, it's often a good idea to apply a small amount of wood glue to the joint before fixing.

Once fully satisfied with the fit of your architraves, punch the nails using a fine pin punch (or nail punch slightly smaller than the nail head).

Step 5: Cutting and fitting skirting

Before you commence cutting the skirting, identify all of the fixing points on the studs. This can be done by marking all of the previous nailing points just above where the new skirting finishes up the wall (or on the floor if necessary). Avoid mitre joints into internal corners – these should always be scribed (see diagram). Generally, it's best to cut the longest pieces square into the corners first.

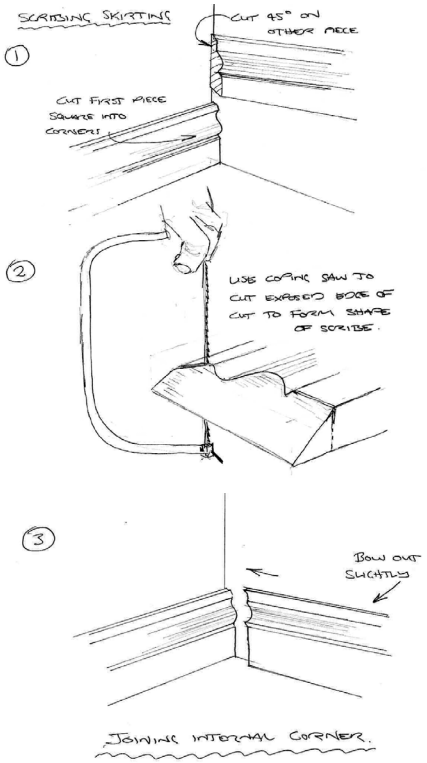
To scribe the internal corner joint, first cut a mitre on each end that requires scribing. If one end is square (say, against an architrave), cut the mitre on one end and leave the piece slightly long for re-cutting later.

Using a coping saw, follow the exposed face of the mitre joint to create the scribing (see diagram).

TIP: Cut a couple of test pieces from scrap to familiarise yourself with cutting this form of joint. Also, if there is a scribed joint at each end of the piece, cut the 45 degree angles so they are 2-3mm longer than required to help form a tight joint.

Fix the skirting using 50mm x 2mm bullet head nails at the marked positions. If fixing to an existing finished floor (eg timber or tiled) you may need to fit the bottom edge neatly to the floor to ensure a neat finish. If the floor is to be carpeted (with new underlay), it's OK to keep the skirting up off the floor a maximum of 10mm.

TIP: If the plasterboard wall sheeting is up off the floor, the skirting may have a tendency to roll inwards at the bottom edge. Cut small pieces of scrap the same thickness as the wall lining and place behind the skirting below the plasterboard before nailing.



Step 6: Preparing the architraves and skirtings for finishing

The type of finish you select will determine the level of preparation necessary to obtain a professional result on your architraves and skirtings.

SOLID TIMBER:

Painted finish: A painted finish will generally only require light sanding on the bare timber with 150 grit sandpaper. A good sealer or primer should be used then lightly sanded once dry. Two coats of acrylic can now be applied. For a tougher finish, many people still prefer an oil based enamel, but it's more difficult to apply and gives off a stronger solvent smell.

Stained finish: Raw timber should be fine-sanded with 180 or 220 grit paper before the staining. Care should also be taken to sand carefully with the grain to prevent cross-grain scratching. The stain should be applied evenly to maintain a continuity of colour. Once dry, a sanding sealer should be applied then lightly sanded back in preparation for the topcoats. One coat of clear (either water or oil based) should be applied. Often one coat will be adequate, but two or more coats may be preferable.

MDF:

Staining MDF is extremely difficult for a novice, so generally MDF should only be painted. A light sand with 150 grit sandpaper will suffice, and then a good coating of sealer (there's a number on the market specifically designed for MDF) should be applied. Once dry, a thorough sanding back with 180 grit sandpaper is required. This process may need to be repeated to obtain the best results on some porous MDF mouldings. Topcoats can be either acrylic or enamel paint.

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MIGHTY HELPFUL HINTS TO MAKE THE JOB EASIER

- For the best results when sanding, use aluminium oxide paper. It will outlast garnet or glass paper.
- When architraves are removed, it's a good time to adjust that sticking door.
- Less accuracy is required if the architraves and skirtings are to be painted, as any small gaps can be easily filled with a flexible gap filler. Stained or clear-coated timber needs to be accurately fitted as gaps and badly fitted joints are difficult to disguise.
- Don't drive any nails home until you're completely satisfied with your work. Having to remove and re-fit mouldings is time consuming and often damages the walls.
- Take care not to put 'two-bobs' into the timberwork by over zealous hammering. This damage will become very obvious once painted (especially with a gloss finish). Drive nails to within 2mm of the surface then use a fine nail punch.
- In detailed mouldings, you can make the fixings less obvious by careful nail placement (say in a groove) on the moulding.
- If you have a lot of architraves and skirtings to fit, consider hiring a nail gun specifically designed for 'fixing-out'. Your hammering hand will be grateful.
- Protect your eyes and ears when you use power tools. Protect your helpers too.
- Some Mitre 10 stores can refer you to trustworthy local tradespeople.

Your local MITRE 10 Store is: