

Moulding Installation Guide

CHAIR RAIL

CHAIR RAIL INSTALLATION

Step 1: Plan and Measure

1. **Decide on the height:** Chair rail moulding is typically installed 32–42 inches from the floor or one-third of the wall's total height. Adjust based on room proportions and personal preference.
2. Use a measuring tape to mark the desired height at several points along each wall.
3. **Connect the marks:** Use a level or laser level to draw a straight line around the room where the chair rail will go.

Step 2: Locate Studs

- Use a stud finder to mark the locations of wall studs. This is where you'll drive nails for a secure installation.

Step 3: Cut the Moulding

1. **Measure each wall:** Measure the length of each wall section where the moulding will be installed.
2. **Inside Corners:**
 - Coping Method
 1. Cut one piece at a 90° angle to butt against the wall.
 2. For the other piece, cut a 45° angle with a miter saw, then use a coping saw to trim along the cut edge, creating a tight fit.
 - Miter Method
 1. Miter each piece at a 45° angle creating a tight fit.
3. **Outside Corners:**
 - Cut both pieces at 45° angles so they meet cleanly at the corner.
4. **Scarf Joints:**
 - For sections that meet doorways or windows, make straight 90° cuts.

Tools and Materials Needed

- **Chair Rail moulding**
- Measuring tape
- Level or laser level
- Miter saw (or hand saw with a miter box)
- Nail gun or hammer with finishing nails
- Stud finder
- Caulk
- Wood filler
- Sandpaper
- Paint or stain
- Painter's tape

TIPS

- ✓ Work in sections, starting with the longest walls to minimize joints.
- ✓ Use scarf joints (angled joints) for long walls where two pieces of moulding must meet. Cut each piece at opposing 45° angles for a seamless fit.
- ✓ For irregular walls, use a contour gauge or scribe the moulding to ensure a snug fit.

Step 4: Attach the Chair Rail

1. **Position the moulding:** Hold the base molding against the wall, ensuring it sits flush with both the wall and the floor.
2. **Nail into studs:** Use a stud finder to locate the studs and drive finishing nails into the wall studs every 16–18 inches. Use a nail gun for faster, cleaner results, or hammer nails by hand and countersink them slightly.
3. **For extra hold:** Use construction adhesive on the back of the molding, especially if studs are hard to locate.

Step 5: Fill Gaps and Nail Holes

1. **Fill nail holes:** Use wood filler to hide nails and seams. Sand smooth once dry.
2. **Caulk gaps:** Apply caulk to fill any gaps between the moulding and the wall for a seamless finish.

Step 6: Paint or Stain

1. Sand any rough spots or joints to ensure smoothness.
2. Paint or stain the molding as desired. Pre-painting before installation can save time on touch-ups.
3. Touch up caulked areas or gaps after painting.

Step 7: Inspect and Finalize

1. Check for any visible gaps or imperfections and fix them with caulk or filler.
2. Clean the area and enjoy your updated look!

