

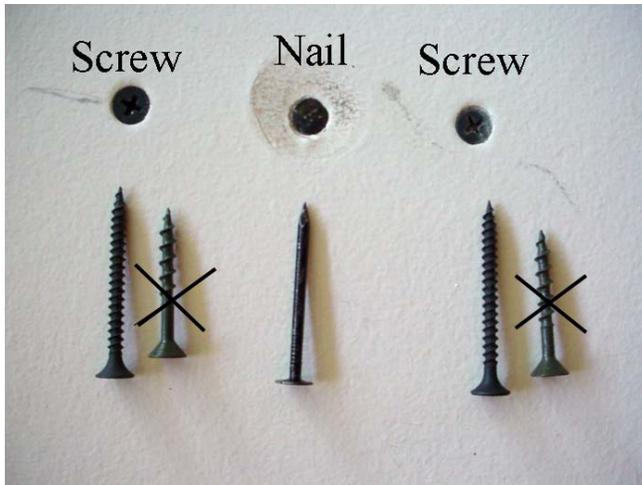
Nail Pops – October 2006

Are those little nail pops in your wallboard annoying you? Tired of looking up at the ceiling or along a wall and seeing those bumps? Well, until the wood framing in your house is just about completely dry it may still happen but maybe you can prevent most from coming back. Now-a-days wood is grown like a crop. They grow the trees fast and harvest it right away. This wood is not close grained; it is soft and still has a lot of moisture in it. When wallboard or sheetrock nails are driven into the wood the ridges on the nail do a pretty good job of keeping the nail imbedded in the wood. In a lot of cases though, as the wood dries, especially with hot air heat, it compresses and squeezes the nail out a little. This causes the bump or bumps you see.

To check to see if you located most of them, take a drop light (sometimes called a trouble light) and shine it across the drywall surface when the room is dimly lit. You will see every minute imperfection in the wall or ceiling. Mark them with a soft lead pencil so you can wash the mark off when you are done. Do not use a magic marker as it will bleed through the paint and you will have a different problem.

To tackle these pops, peel away any loose paint and joint compound and look for a Phillips screw head buried in plaster. If it's a screw, drive it in a little tighter by hand. If it's a nail, use a nail set and a hammer to drive it in about 1/8 inch deeper. Push on the wall to see if it flexes. The drywall could have separated from the studs. If so, you can drive in some 1-1/4" or 1-5/8" drywall screws, above and below the nail pop, to better secure the drywall. In any case, add at least one sheetrock screw about 1 to 2 inches from the pop. Drive the screw or screws in to just below the surface, but not far enough to tear or go under the paper surface. Make sure they are sheetrock screws and not wood or deck

screws as the threads are too coarse on deck screws and will pull right through the wallboard paper surface. Using a 4" trowel, apply light weight wall board compound flush to the wallboard pressing it into the depressions from the nails and screws. The first coat will shrink a little so sand as described below and add a second coat when it dries.



If you do a lot of pops it may be easier to use sandpaper to sand the areas smooth. There is a special mesh sanding cloth available just for this if you want. However, it makes quite a mess. What I do is get a block of wood, say a 1" x 4" x 6" piece of

pine and wrap a wet, wrung out piece of smooth rag and wipe that over the dried wallboard compound. Turn and/or rinse the rag as necessary until the area is flush. Do the same with the second coat. No dust with this system. When dry, prime with a good primer.

Good luck, don't give up and no swearing!

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