How to Remove Scuff Marks from Walls

Start gentle, work up step by step, and never damage the paint. Most scuffs come off with the first two methods below.

QUICK FACTS

Difficulty: Easy | Time: 10-30 minutes per wall | Cost: Pantry basics

Rule: always start with the gentlest method first.

What You Will Need

- Dry microfibre cloth
- Baking soda (bicarbonate of soda)
- Mild dish soap and warm water
- White vinyl eraser (for black rubber marks)
- Melamine sponge - last resort only
- Clean soft cloths for wiping and drying
- Touch-up paint and a small brush (only if needed)

Before You Start

Identify your wall type first - painted plaster, wallpaper, panelling and fresh paint all need different care. Always test your chosen method on a hidden spot first and wait 5 minutes to check for damage or colour change before you clean the visible mark.

Methods - Gentlest First

1. Dry Microfibre Cloth

Rub the scuff gently with a dry microfibre cloth for 10-20 seconds. This alone removes many light surface marks.

2. Baking Soda Paste

Mix 3 tablespoons of baking soda with 1 tablespoon of water to make a paste. Rub it over the mark in small circles for 20-30 seconds, let it sit for 2-3 minutes, then wipe clean with a damp cloth and dry.

3. Mild Soapy Wash

Mix 1 teaspoon of dish soap in 1 cup (240 ml) of warm water. Dampen a soft cloth, wipe the mark gently, then wipe again with a clean cloth dampened in plain water and dry the wall.

4. White Vinyl Eraser - for Black Rubber Marks

Rub a white vinyl eraser lightly over black rubber scuff marks (from shoes, furniture or bags). Never use coloured or pink erasers - they can leave colour on the wall. Wipe away eraser crumbs with a dry cloth.

5. Melamine Sponge - Last Resort Only

Use a melamine sponge only if nothing gentler worked. Use light pressure for just 10-15 seconds, then stop and check. Never use a melamine sponge on wallpaper,

panelling, or paint that is less than 30 days old - it can dull or remove the finish.

6. Touch-Up Paint - If the Mark Will Not Come Off

If the scuff has damaged the paint itself, touch it up with matching paint. Apply thin coats, allow about 1 hour to dry to the touch, wait 2-4 hours between coats, and do not clean the touched-up area for 24 hours.

Never Use on Walls

Do NOT use steel wool, bleach, acetone, or oven cleaner on walls.
These can strip paint, stain, or permanently damage the surface.
When in doubt, stop and test a hidden spot first.

Tick-Off Checklist

- ☐ Wall type identified and hidden spot tested (waited 5 minutes)
- ☐ Dry microfibre cloth tried first (10-20 seconds)
- ☐ Baking soda paste applied (3 tbsp + 1 tbsp water, 20-30 seconds, sat 2-3 minutes)
- ☐ Mild soapy wash used if needed (1 tsp dish soap in 1 cup / 240 ml warm water)
- ☐ White vinyl eraser used for black rubber marks (no coloured or pink erasers)
- ☐ Melamine sponge used only as a last resort (10-15 seconds, light pressure)
- ☐ Melamine sponge NOT used on wallpaper, panelling or paint under 30 days old
- ☐ Wall wiped clean and dried after each method
- ☐ Touch-up paint applied in thin coats, if needed (1 hour dry to touch, 2-4 hours between coats)
- ☐ Touched-up area left uncleaned for 24 hours
- ☐ No steel wool, bleach, acetone or oven cleaner used

Notes