

How to Install Drop Ceiling Panels

Both Ceilume's 0.013" thick Feather-Light and 0.030" thick Signature Ceiling Tiles can be installed in an approved ceiling suspension system using standard 15/16" face T-bar grid per the manufacturer's instructions. Many Signature styles may also be installed in slimline, 9/16" drop ceiling grid.

Check building codes as required.

Install Your Grid Tape or Strips First

If you are not using grid tape, decorative strips, or smooth strips, skip this section.

Before You Begin

- Your grid must be even and level. Grid tape and strips will not adhere properly to bent/damaged T-bar.
- Room temperature needs to be between 60°F and 80°F when installing grid tape or strips, otherwise the adhesive will not stick properly.
- Do not remove the peel surface on the adhesive until you are ready to install. **If the adhesive comes in contact with dust, oil, or grease of any kind it will not adhere to your grid.**

Start with an Empty Ceiling

Remove your existing tiles (if you have them!) to give yourself full grid access, which is absolutely necessary to both properly clean the grid and to firmly press the grid tape or strips in place when installing. **The next installation steps will fail if you do not start with an empty ceiling grid.**

Clean Your Grid

To ensure good adhesion, your grid must be perfectly clean and dry! Thoroughly clean and remove contaminants (like grit, dust, or grease), then dissipate static electricity with a damp rag to avoid attracting dust to the T-bar. Dust and oil can accumulate during construction and remodels, so even brand new grid should be thoroughly cleaned before you apply your tape or strips.

Install Your Tape

If you are using decorative or smooth strips, skip to the next section.

Beginning in a corner, peel off the backing of your tape to expose about 2 feet of adhesive. Grasp the backside of the grid with one hand (to compensate for the force of installation) and press the tape against the front of your grid with the other. Press about 2 inches of the tape onto your grid at a time, aligning the remaining exposed tape carefully before pressing it firmly into place. **Press hard and evenly over the full surface of the tape** (a small roller may assist with firm and consistent pressure) to ensure that the adhesive forms a firm bond with the grid.

When you reach a corner, trim the tape to fit. When you've finished applying the tape to the perimeter of your room, move on to your ceiling mains (long seamless portions of grid), and finish with your ceiling T's (shorter cross pieces of grid). Trim to fit precisely; **do not overlap any portions of tape**, particularly where the cross T's intersect the mains.

Install Your Decorative or Smooth Strips

"Dry fit" your first decorative or smooth strip by placing the beginning of the strip over the intersection of four ceiling tiles, and its length over the grid between two adjacent tiles. If installing decorative strips, center the "dot end" of the strip over the intersection. Trim to length if necessary.

Peel off the backing of your strip to expose the adhesive. Line the strip up as before and press firmly into place. Grasp the backside of the grid with one hand (to compensate the force of installation) and **press hard and evenly over the full surface of the strip** with the other to ensure that the adhesive forms a firm bond with the grid.

Butt the next strip directly against the end of the first. If you are installing decorative strips, pay close attention to the repeating dot-dash pattern; the dot on your second strip will land over the next intersection of four ceiling tiles.

Install all of the strips running in one direction, and then finish by installing the set of strips that run perpendicular to the first, trimming as necessary. If installing decorative strips, you'll need to trim the dot off the end of each strip in this second set in order to keep the dot-dash pattern consistent.

Install Your Ceiling Tiles

Remove your existing tiles (if you have them!) to give yourself full grid access, and then pop your new tiles into place.

If you are refacing an existing ceiling, slide your new refacing ceiling tiles (with features projecting down and into the room) under your old, existing tiles.

Border Tiles

In all likelihood, your ceiling will have some less than full-size grid squares, usually around the perimeter of your room. Border tiles have been designed with a minimum relief pattern that lends itself to trimming and installing in these smaller areas.

Simply measure each of your partial grid squares, cut your border tiles to size with scissors or snips, and then place them into your grid.

Drop Ceiling Insulation

To install Soniguard Drop Ceiling Insulation, simply drop your ceiling tiles and insulation into your grid in pairs: one Soniguard piece resting on top of one ceiling tile.

If using standard insulation, attach it to the “real” ceiling surface above your grid. Do not roll out the insulation over your grid and ceiling tiles. The weight of the insulation may cause the tiles to bow.

Recessed Lighting

Grid-mounted can lighting is a great illumination option. Choose a tile design that has sufficient flat area in the middle to accommodate the light opening and trim ring, and choose light fixtures that come with grid-suspension brackets so that the weight of the light is supported by your T-bar and not by your tile.

Measure the fixture to determine the size of the opening needed for the light and trim ring, make a simple cutting template, mark the location of the opening on your tile, and use a utility knife, scissors, or snips to cut the hole. Then pop your tile into place in your drop ceiling grid, position your light fixture above it, and install the trim ring.

Coffered ceiling tiles may require additional steps. Please contact us for more information.

Luminous Ceiling Panels Below Light Fixtures

For best results, install translucent, frosted, or clear ceiling panels at least 6” below your light fixtures, and use in conjunction with AcoustoTherm Backpanels, which obscure dust and insect accumulation.

Ceiling Level Temperature

As a general rule, Ceilume's ceiling panels and tiles will not be affected by ceiling level temperatures up to 120°F.

In some installations involving halogen lights, metal heat registers, and radiant heat sources (wood stoves, kitchen ovens, etc.), localized ceiling and ceiling tile temperatures can be much higher than anticipated. Please contact us for specific advice if your installation has any of these special conditions.

Painting

All of Ceilume's ceiling tiles, ceiling panels, tape, and strips can be painted before or after installation.

- Be sure that everything is clean and dry before painting.
 - Do not use solvent-type thinners or cleaners.
 - Experiment on a sample with the paint of your choice prior to working on your ceiling in its entirety.
 - Painting voids all ratings, approvals, and certifications.
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Cleaning

Ceilume's ceiling tiles, panels, tape, and strips require no special cleaning agents – just wipe them down with a soft, damp rag. Small, stubborn spots can be handled with an all-purpose cleaner.

There is no risk of water damage during cleaning, and there is no need for scheduled professional cleaning and resurfacing to prevent environmental and aesthetic problems.

Do not use cleaners containing organic solvents or other aggressive ingredients as they may affect the surface appearance of your tiles. Examples of these types of cleaners include chlorine bleach, liquid grease remover, strong detergents, and nail polish remover.

Storing

Store boxes of tiles upright in a single layer (no stacking) in a cool spot out of direct sunlight.

Fire Sprinklers

When fire suppression sprinklers are involved with your drop ceiling installation, your first and most important step is to consult with your local building and fire officials to make sure that your intended use will conform with the appropriate local codes.

Sprinklers Penetrating Ceiling Panels

Ceilume's ceiling panels and tiles are designed to be sensitive to heat from a fire; that is why they can be used as drop-out ceiling panels (see next section). When a fire suppression sprinkler passes through a tile, the tile cannot interfere with sprinkler operation in the event of a fire.

When it is necessary for your sprinklers to penetrate/pass through your ceiling tiles and be visible in the room, you **must**...

Cut the opening in the ceiling tile a minimum of 0.25" larger than the outer diameter of the sprinkler head or trim ring/escutcheon (whichever is larger). This enables the tile to fall from the ceiling grid without becoming entangled with the sprinkler or interfering with its operation.

or

Use a 0.030" thick Signature Ceiling Tile backed by a mineral fiber ceiling panel at each sprinkler penetration. This holds the tile in place and keeps it insulated, preventing it from interfering with sprinkler operation.

Never use a restraining-type trim ring/escutcheon at a sprinkler penetration without an appropriately sized tile opening or mineral fiber ceiling tile backer.

Drop-Out Ceiling Panels Beneath Sprinklers

All of Ceilume's ceiling panels and tiles are approved for installation beneath fire sprinklers in Light Hazard and Ordinary Hazard Group I occupancies. When exposed to heat from a developing fire, drop-out ceiling panels soften, distort, and fall from the ceiling grid. Heat from the growing fire activates the sprinkler which, unimpeded by the panels, controls or extinguishes the fire.

ALL of Ceilume's ceiling tiles and panels are listed and approved for use beneath Standard Response (SR) sprinkler systems rated with an activation temperature of 165°F or above, where allowed by local safety authorities.

Additionally, Ceilume's 0.013" thick Feather-Light Ceiling Tiles are also listed and approved for use beneath Quick Response (QR) and Standard Response (SR) sprinkler systems rated with an activation temperature of 155°F or above, where allowed by local safety authorities.

Please note: Grid tape, decorative strips, and smooth strips have not been tested for use in drop-out installations, though there is no mechanical reason that the use of our tape or strips, when installed properly, would affect the panels' ability to drop from your grid.

Consult with your local building and fire officials to make sure that your intended use will conform with the appropriate local codes.

How to Install Glue-Up Ceiling Tiles

Ceilume's 0.030" thick Signature Ceiling Tiles can be mounted directly to an existing ceiling surface using adhesive. They are easy to install, clean, and maintain, and create the look of a tin, wood, or plaster ceiling at a fraction of the cost.

Tools Required

- Ceiling tiles
- Decorative or smooth strips
- Tape measure
- Pencil
- Chalk line
- Scissors or aviation snips
- Ceiling tile adhesive

Surface Types and Methods of Installation

- **Sheetrock, Drywall, Plaster, or Cement**
Install tiles directly to ceiling using ceiling tile adhesive.
- **Wood Paneling or Plywood**
Install tiles directly to ceiling using ceiling tile adhesive.
- **Wood Furring Strips**
Install tiles directly to furring strips using ceiling tile adhesive.
- **Popcorn**
Ceiling tiles should not be installed directly over popcorn ceilings, as popcorn ceilings do not provide a flat, even, or sound installation surface. Before installing your ceiling tiles you must first remove the popcorn, add a new layer of drywall over it, or install wood furring strips (positioned 23.75" x 23.75" on center in a graph or cross pattern).
- **Fiberboard or Mineral Fiber Ceiling Tiles**
If your existing fiberboard or mineral fiber ceiling tiles are sturdy and attached firmly to your ceiling, simply install your new tiles directly to them using ceiling tile adhesive. If your existing fiberboard or mineral fiber ceiling tiles do not provide a sound installation surface, we recommend removing them or installing wood furring strips (positioned 23.75" x 23.75" on center in a graph or cross pattern).

Install Your Ceiling Tiles

Before You Begin

- Your hands, work surfaces, and ceiling **must** be smooth, clean, and dry. Dust, oil, and grease can affect the adherence of your ceiling tiles and strips.
- Pre-test your materials before installing your ceiling in its entirety to ensure the best results for your specific installation.

Measure Twice, Cut Once

Map out your ceiling. Measure and mark all of your walls, hallways, closets, and doorways. Locate and draw any lights, heating vents, and ceiling-mount fixtures. Decide and illustrate how to best create an even border around the perimeter of your room.

Using your map and taking into account the variables above, snap two chalk lines along your ceiling's midpoints, forming a cross in the center of your ceiling. Keep in mind that ceilings are rarely square and chalk lines may need to be adjusted.

Break Out the Adhesive

Apply a perimeter and center bead of ceiling tile adhesive to the backside of your ceiling tile (1/8" to 3/16" is a good bead width). For a flat tile, a bead around the edge and a simple center pattern is all that is required. For a three-dimensional tile, an additional bead near the formed features will ensure a good bond.

As you are applying your adhesive, remember – it isn't how much adhesive you use, but that you use the right amount of adhesive in the right places.

Position your ceiling tile about 1/4" offset from your chalk lines and lightly press it to the ceiling. Then slide it into place against the chalk lines, allowing the adhesive to spread just a bit. Press and rub firmly over the glued areas, smoothing out any bumps in the glue and seating the tile firmly into place.

Once your first ceiling tile is installed, begin placing adjacent tiles. Your second ceiling tile should be placed directly against the first. Seams between tiles may vary slightly, so do not butt the tiles together with force, simply slide them into place. All joints will be covered with decorative or smooth strips in the final phase of installation; do not worry about any small gaps between your tiles.

Border Tiles

In all likelihood, your ceiling will have some less than full-size areas, usually around the perimeter of your room. Border tiles have been designed with a minimum relief pattern that lends itself to trimming and installing in these smaller areas.

Simply measure from the edge of an installed tile to the wall and cut your border tiles to size with scissors or snips. Apply a perimeter bead of ceiling tile adhesive to the backside of the trimmed tile. Position it with the cut edge toward the wall, about 1/4" offset from its final position and lightly press it to the ceiling. Then slide it into place, allowing the adhesive to spread just a bit. Press and rub firmly over the glued areas, smoothing out any bumps in the glue and seating the tile firmly into place.

Repeat with your remaining border tiles, proceeding from one adjacent tile to the next until your border is complete.

When finished, clean tools with warm water and paper towels while the ceiling tile adhesive is still wet. Dried material can be scraped or chipped off if needed.

Install Your Decorative or Smooth Strips

Before You Begin

- Your ceiling tiles must be installed correctly. Strips will not adhere properly to uneven, bumpy, or poorly installed tiles.
- Room temperature needs to be between 60°F and 80°F when installing strips, otherwise the adhesive will not stick properly.
- Do not remove the peel surface on the adhesive until you are ready to install. **If the adhesive comes in contact with dust, oil, or grease of any kind it will not adhere to your grid.**

Clean Your Ceiling Tiles

To ensure good adhesion, your ceiling tiles must be perfectly clean and dry! Thoroughly clean and remove contaminants (like grit, dust, or grease). Dust and oil can accumulate during construction and remodels, so even freshly installed ceiling tiles should be cleaned before you apply your strips.

Install Your Decorative or Smooth Strips

“Dry fit” your first decorative or smooth strip by placing the beginning of the strip over the intersection of four ceiling tiles, and its length over the joint between two adjacent tiles. If installing decorative strips, center the “dot end” of the strip over the intersection. Trim to length if necessary.

Peel off the backing of your strip to expose the adhesive. Line the strip up as before and press firmly into place. **Press hard and evenly over the full surface of the strip** to ensure that the adhesive forms a firm bond with the tiles.

Butt the next strip directly against the end of the first. If you are installing decorative strips, pay close attention to the repeating dot-dash pattern; the dot on your second strip will land over the next intersection of four ceiling tiles.

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Storing

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