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# A Commitment to Training Wheels of Learning Drywall I

by Denise M. McGiffin



**A** major issue facing the construction industry today is the need for skilled craftsmen. This is especially true in the drywall field of the wall and ceiling industry.

In 1979, concerned industry leaders began a project to help meet the need for the training of craftsmen in the drywall trade. The project, called wheels of Learning Drywall I, was developed through a joint venture between the Association of the Wall and Ceiling Industries-International (AWCI) and the Associated Builders and Contractors (ABC). AWCI's development committee on this joint venture were Jere Luckey, Southeastern Drywall Inc., Nashville, Tennessee; Urban Rump, Barnwell, Inc., Atlanta, Georgia; David LaPlante, Truax & Hovey, Liverpool, New York; and Ora Blaw, Omega Drywall, Ltd., Upper Marlboro, Maryland.

The Wheels of Learning is a competency-based, task-oriented training program that can be administered in a formal classroom setting or on an individual basis. The curriculum is made up of 19 modules from which program administrators can select the skills to be taught for new hires, upgrading or retraining of other employees.

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Because the program is competency-based and task oriented, craftsmen can progress at their own pace, ensuring better skill development than with a time-based program. The program contains tests, hands-on work, laboratory work, and research, all of which are graded. Each Wheels of Learning curriculum comes with a student and instructor manual complete with lesson plans and final tests.

“One of the strengths of the Wheels of Learning program is that it is among the most comprehensive training programs of its kind available for our industry,” said Urban Rump. “It trains workers on the most up-to-date skills for drywall installation. We’ve put it to work on a company wide basis and we’re already seeing the results.”

But the program is not being used by companies alone. Since its introduction this past Fall, Wheels of Learning Drywall I has been purchased for use throughout the world by vocational training schools and other educational institutions. The program has been incorporated into U.S. Department of Labor-approved apprentice training courses.

“This program is available to everyone who wants to use it,” said Jere Luckey. “It’s ideal for contractors in the same area who want to get together and set it up. In today’s expanded drywall field, it’s important to maintain the skill level in our trade. We’re hoping this program will increase quality of drywall construction throughout the industry—benefitting

everyone.”

The next step in the Wheels of Learning program is to make the program available by modules or units so that organizations can either buy the entire program or develop customized training programs that suit their specific needs.

The second-year curriculum is tentatively scheduled for completion in the Fall of 1989.

AWCI has scheduled a briefing session during the Convention in Las Vegas on the Wheels of Learning Drywall I. At this session program organizers will be on hand to answer any questions and provide guidance on establishing a local program. Consult the Convention Program for the date and time.

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# Wheels of Learning Drywall I—Course Outline

Module No.	Title	Hours	Module No.	Title	Hours
15101	<b>Introduction to the Trade</b>	2.5			
	This introductory module describes the evolution of this trade from ancient plastering to the point where gypsum wallboard is now used in 90 percent of all new construction. Modern apprenticeship is discussed as well as career opportunities in the drywall trade.			knowledge absolutely required for success in this trade. Whole numbers, measurements, and basic fractions are stressed with better explanations to help re-teach important lessons that may not have been mastered in school.	
15102	<b>Safety</b>	5	15107	<b>Materials Handling and storage</b>	5
	Accidents and unsafe behavior are analyzed and ways to avoid them are discussed. Avoiding hazards of all types is stressed. OSHA rules are presented, and safety practices regarding most tools and equipment used by the drywall mechanic are discussed in detail. Having a "safety attitude" is also emphasized.			Job site conditions and materials handling is very important due to the nature of drywall work, and the need for drywall construction materials to be protected from weather. This module discusses safe and practical procedures apprentices must follow in handling and storing deliveries, both for ground-level and high-rise conditions-including rigging and crane procedures.	
15103	<b>Human Relations</b>	2.5	15108	<b>Introduction to Drywall Systems</b>	2.5
	This module presents important factors that pertain to having a successful future in the drywall trade. Good communication and proper conduct with both supervisors and customers is emphasized, because the drywall trade is very customer intensive.			This module explains the complex interrelated wall and ceiling systems common to the modern drywall trade. It is important for the trainee to understand the whole picture of construction, even if only working on a small part of it. Included are discussions of wall groups; ceiling groups; and special constructions such as curves, angles, soffits, partitions, and fire-rated assemblies.	
15104	<b>Tools of the Trade</b>	5	15109	<b>Introduction to Blueprints</b>	5
	Here the basic hand and power tools, as well as other important equipment are identified and described for trainees in this trade. They are divided into four categories of: framing, hanging, finishing, and related equipment.			Being able to read construction floor, elevation, and sectional plans is important even for an apprentice in this trade. These concepts are explained, and their peculiar symbols and vocabulary are made understandable.	
15105	<b>Materials of the Trade</b>	7.5	15201	<b>Framing Materials and Fasteners</b>	10
	The basic drywall trade construction materials used in the course of framing, hanging, and finishing a project are described. included are introductory explanations of metal studs and track, gypsum wallboard, insulation, finishing compounds, and fasteners.			A detailed "dictionary" of explanations is presented for most all important drywall construction materials used especially in metal wall and ceiling framing. Suggested prerequisites: Modules 15104, 15105, and 15107.	
15106	<b>Trade Math</b>	7.5			
	This module is an important and thorough review of the mathematical				

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Module No.	Title	Hours	Module No.	Title	Hours
<b>15202</b>	<b>Basic Non-Load Bearing Wall Framing</b>	<b>2.5</b>	<b>15303</b>	<b>Wallboard Hanging on Metal Walls</b>	<b>15</b>
	Detailed material is presented here for procedures to follow when installing the metal framing components of non-load bearing, or partition, walls. Included are techniques for correct plumbing, aligning, anchoring, and erecting metal studs and track. Also included are procedures to follow with modern aligning and leveling equipment, such as the laser. Suggested prerequisites: Module 15104, 15105, and 15201.			Principles involved with hanging gypsum board on metal wall framing are explained. Procedures to follow include proper measuring, cutting, plumbing, leveling, and fastening to metal framing. Important rules involved with stud flange directions, proper board hanging sequences, and single- or multi-layered assemblies are presented in detail. Suggested prerequisites: Modules 15104, 15105, 15201, and 15301.	
<b>15203</b>	<b>Ceiling Frames</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>15304</b>	<b>Wallboard Hanging on Metal Ceilings</b>	<b>10</b>
	This module presents detailed methods and procedures for installing the metal framing components of suspended ceiling grids and furred ceiling systems used with metal framing. Suggested prerequisites: Modules 15104, 15105, and 15201.			Hanging gypsum board on suspended and furred metal drywall ceiling framing is presented in detail, including proper techniques for sizing, installing, leveling, and attaching boards with correct fasteners. Both direct-attached and suspended systems are discussed, as are single- and multi-layered ceiling assemblies. Suggested prerequisites: Modules 15104, 15105, 15201, 15203, 15204, and 15301.	
<b>15204</b>	<b>Furring</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>15305</b>	<b>Thermal Insulation and Sound Control</b>	<b>5</b>
	Basic furring systems and methods for both metal and wood framing are presented, as well as installation procedures over concrete and masonry. Suggested prerequisites: Modules 15104, 15105, and 15201.			An introduction is given to the various systems and methods of controlling heat loss and improving sound transmission class. Most types of insulation materials and sound control methods are described, which the drywall mechanic is likely to encounter. Also included are proper installation techniques and safety procedures.	
<b>15301</b>	<b>Hanging Materials and Fasteners</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>15306</b>	<b>Trim Installation</b>	<b>2.5</b>
	This module presents a “dictionary” of information about materials used in hanging gypsum board, including all types of board, trim, and fasteners—including adhesives. Suggested prerequisites: Module 15105.			Part of gypsum board hanging includes trim installations for such materials as metal and plastic corner bead, various finished and unfinished trim pieces, and expansion joints. These are described along with their proper installation procedures and specialized tool uses.	
<b>15302</b>	<b>Wallboard Hanging on wood</b>	<b>10</b>			
	Hanging gypsum board on wood framing is presented in detail, including attachment to walls and ceilings. Measuring, cutting, aligning, plumbing, and abutting gypsum panels are among the included techniques. Floating angle construction and fastener types and spacings are also discussed. Suggested prerequisites: Modules 15104, 15105, and 15301.				

