

Use Dynamic Programming:

Let $a(x, y)$ be the wasted area for a rectangle (x, y) , $1 \leq x \leq W$, $1 \leq y \leq H$. Initially, put $a(x, y) = xy$, for all (x, y) except for the ones corresponding to needed plates, e.g. $x = w_i$ and $y = h_i$, $1 \leq i \leq N$, for which we put $a(x, y) = 0$. For a plate (x, y) consider all vertical cuts $c = 1, 2, \dots, x - 1$ and all horizontal cuts $c = 1, 2, \dots, y - 1$ and chose the cut producing the minimum wasted area $a(x, y) = a(c, y) + (x - c, y)$ or $a(x, c) + a(x, y - c)$ for some c .