

Sealing Windows and Doors

This playbook provides step-by-step instructions on how to seal gaps in windows and doors to enhance home energy efficiency, thereby reducing drafts and energy costs.

Step 1: **Inspect**

Assess all windows and doors for drafts and visible gaps. Use a lit incense stick or a thin piece of tissue paper to help identify less obvious drafts by noting whether the smoke or tissue moves when held up to closed windows and doors.

Step 2: **Clean Surfaces**

Clean the areas around the identified gaps thoroughly to ensure that new sealing materials adhere properly. Use soapy water and a scrubbing brush, followed by wiping down with alcohol or a non-residue cleaner.

Step 3: **Remove Old Sealant**

Carefully remove any old sealants, caulks, or weatherstripping that are damaged or ineffective. A putty knife or a caulk remover tool may aid in this process.

Step 4: **Measure Gaps**

Measure the size of the gaps to determine the appropriate width and thickness of the weatherstripping or sealant required.

Step 5: **Apply Sealant**

Cut the weatherstripping to the required length, if using. For sealants, prepare the caulking gun. Apply weatherstripping or caulking to the gaps, ensuring a snug and even application. Follow the manufacturer's instructions for optimal application results.

Step 6: **Smooth Sealant**

For caulking, use a caulking tool or your finger (wearing a glove) to smooth out the bead for a neat finish. Ensure the sealant adheres to both sides of the gap without any air pockets.

Step 7: **Check Operation**

Once the materials are in place and the sealant is dry, check the operation of the windows and doors to ensure that they open and close smoothly without any obstructions.

Step 8: **Final Inspection**

Inspect the work to confirm that all gaps are sealed and no drafts are present. Perform a final check with the incense stick or tissue paper to ensure that no movement occurs at the sealed areas when windows and doors are closed.

General Notes

Weather Conditions

Ideally, sealing should be done in dry conditions with moderate temperatures, as extreme temperatures can affect the adhesion and curing of some sealants.

Sealant Curing Time

Allow adequate time for any sealants or caulks to cure completely before testing the seal. Check the product label for specific curing times.

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