



4. Draught sealing

If you seal gaps around doors, windows and floors, it takes a lot less energy to heat and cool a building.

Low cost option

Draught sealing is a low cost option that gives immediate results. When combined with improved insulation, the effect can be dramatic.

By sealing unwanted gaps in a building, you can prevent heat getting in during warm weather and stop it getting out in colder weather. Make sure you don't block intentional ventilation ducts designed to help the flow of fresh air.

Getting started

You can use a range of DIY gap sealing products and techniques.

Door and windows

Adhesive strip products, such as Door & Window Weather Strips and Handy Sealant, are inexpensive and easy to apply around doors and windows. They come in a range of widths and thicknesses. You can also take them with you if you move.

Metal or rubber strips can be screwed to the bottom of a door to seal the gap between it and the floor. A rolled towel or door snake can be placed at the bottom of a draughty door.

Architrave and skirting boards sealing

Architraves and skirting boards should cover the gap between the wall and the floor. Sometimes, gaps form because wood shrinks as it ages and buildings move over time. A tap with a hammer may re-seal these gaps or use gap-sealing products such as Gap Filler or silicon. These are applied with a caulking gun.

Once applied, they can be smoothed with a damp rag. For wider gaps, polyurethane-expanding foam can be sprayed into the spaces. This is best for out-of-sight spots. In some instances, the architraves or skirting boards will need to be replaced.

Wall vents

Wall vents can be sealed with pieces of cardboard and tape. Check for gaps where pipes penetrate the walls. Seal up any unused chimneys.

Ceiling and floors

Gaps in ceilings and floors can be sealed with rolls of foil insulation stapled on the non-visible side.



However, **extreme care** must be taken not to staple through to any live wiring in ceilings and under floors as this is a big **safety risk**.

Exhaust fan outlets

Exhaust fan outlets can have 'draught stoppers' inserted above them in the ceiling that close when a fan isn't in use.

Downlights

Downlights can be fitted with a protective cone placed above them in the ceiling to stop air escaping. This cone or cover reduces the heat loss through the fitting and the risk of house fire.

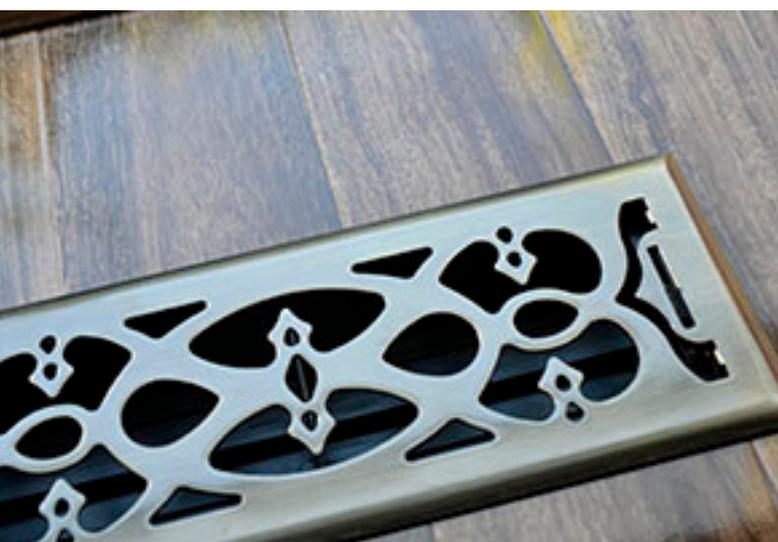
Downlight cones must meet fire proof standards.

Make sure you replace halogen downlights with the more efficient and cooler running LEDs bulbs. But remember, LEDs should not be installed in existing light fittings.

Make sure you get assistance from a licensed professional if you need to switch over any transformers.

Automatic door closers

Automatic door closers are a good option for doors that tend to be left open.



CHECK POINTS

- ▶ Go on a gap hunt and mark the areas needing sealing.
- ▶ Decide which products or techniques are suitable for each type of gap.
- ▶ Recruit a handy volunteer or employ a handy person to seal the gaps.
- ▶ Take some photos of gaps to seal and ask the hardware store for ideas.

Ducted gas heating vents

Ducted gas heating vents often have seals that can be opened or closed. If possible, close the seals during the warmer months.

Insulation

Get assistance from a licensed professional to check that your ceiling insulation is thick and snugly fitted. They will need access to the ceiling cavity through the manhole.

Ventilation ducts must be maintained so that some air circulation does occur.

Further resources

Check out A Greenhouse Around the Corner website:

www.agreenhouse.net.au/helpful-resources

Related fact sheets

For more fact sheets, go to A Greenhouse Around the Corner website:

www.agreenhouse.net.au/fact-sheets