

Draughtproofing

Draughtproofing is one of the cheapest and most efficient ways to save energy in any type of building. It should be fitted to:

- windows
- doors
- chimneys and fireplaces
- floorboards and skirting boards
- loft hatches

Windows: For windows, there are 2 main types of material:

- self-adhesive foam strips – the cheapest option, and easy to install, however may not last as long as other methods.
- metal or plastic strips with brushes or wipers attached – these are long-lasting, but cost a little more.

Make sure the strip is the right size to fill the gap in the window. If the strip is too big it will get compressed and damaged and it may be difficult to close the window. If it's too small there will still be a gap.

For sliding sash windows, it's best to fit brush strips or consult a professional. Foam strips do not work well.

For windows that don't open, a silicon sealant can be used.

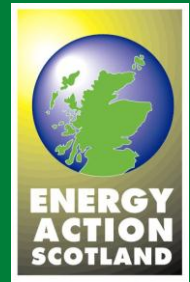
Doors: Draughtproofing for outside doors can save a lot of heat and will only cost a few pounds.

There are 4 main things to think about:

1. the gap at the bottom – use a brush or hinged flap draught excluder
2. gaps around the edges – fit foam, brush or wiper strips like those used for windows
3. the keyhole – buy a purpose-made cover that drops a metal disc over the keyhole
4. the letterbox – use a letterbox flap or letterbox brush. Remember to measure the letterbox before buying.

Internal doors need draughtproofing if they lead to a room not normally heated, like the spare room or kitchen. Keep doors to unheated rooms closed as much as possible to stop the cold air from moving into the rest of the house.

Internal doors between two heated rooms don't need draughtproofing – it's ok to let warm air circulate between different rooms.



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*"Working to
end fuel
poverty and
achieve
warm, dry
homes for
all."*

Chimneys and fireplaces: If the fireplace is unused, the chimney is probably a big source of unnecessary draughts.

There are 2 main ways to draughtproof a chimney:

1. fit a cap over the chimney pot – this might be better done by a professional
2. buy a chimney balloon – an inflatable cushion which blocks up the chimney.

Floorboards and skirting boards: block cracks using filler.

Floorboards and skirting boards often contract, expand or move slightly with everyday use, so a filler that can tolerate movement should be used – these are usually silicon-based.

Fillers block gaps permanently so be careful when applying them and wipe off any excess or mess with a damp cloth before it dries. Fillers may break down over time, but can easily be re-applied.

Loft hatches: Draughtproofing the loft hatch is essential, since hot air rises and is lost into the cold space in the loft.

Cold air can also blow in through the gaps around the loft hatch. Loft hatches can be draughtproofed by using strip insulation, like on a door.

Which rooms don't need draughtproofing?

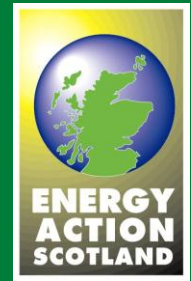
Be careful about draughtproofing rooms that need good ventilation, including:

- areas where there are open fires or open flues – It is essential that areas like this have adequate ventilation.
- rooms where a lot of moisture is produced, such as the kitchen, bathroom or utility room. Good ventilation helps reduce condensation and damp. See also Factsheet VII – 3.

Draughtproofing products and installers

For a list of registered installers see the National Insulation Installers website - www.nationalinsulationassociation.org.uk

For information on products, installers and manufacturers, see the Draughtproofing Advisory Association website - www.dpaa-association.org.uk



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