

# Insulation saves energy, adds comfort

With soaring costs of energy today and dire predictions of shortages to come, it makes sense for homeowners to do everything possible to conserve fuel.

And one of the simplest and least costly methods of doing this is to improve your home's insulation.

Two important things happen when you add insulation. You use less fuel and consequently save money (from 25 to 50 per cent of your annual heating-cooling bill), and your home will feel more comfortable all year round.

**Insulation facts**  
Insulation is manufactured and sold by "resistance value" (R-value). The greater the R-value, the less heat or cold will penetrate

through the insulating material.

**Where to begin**

There are five prime areas where additional insulation may be necessary.

The top storey ceiling area should be your first priority as up to 25 per cent of your heat loss in winter and 40 per cent of your heat gain in summer occurs through attic floors.

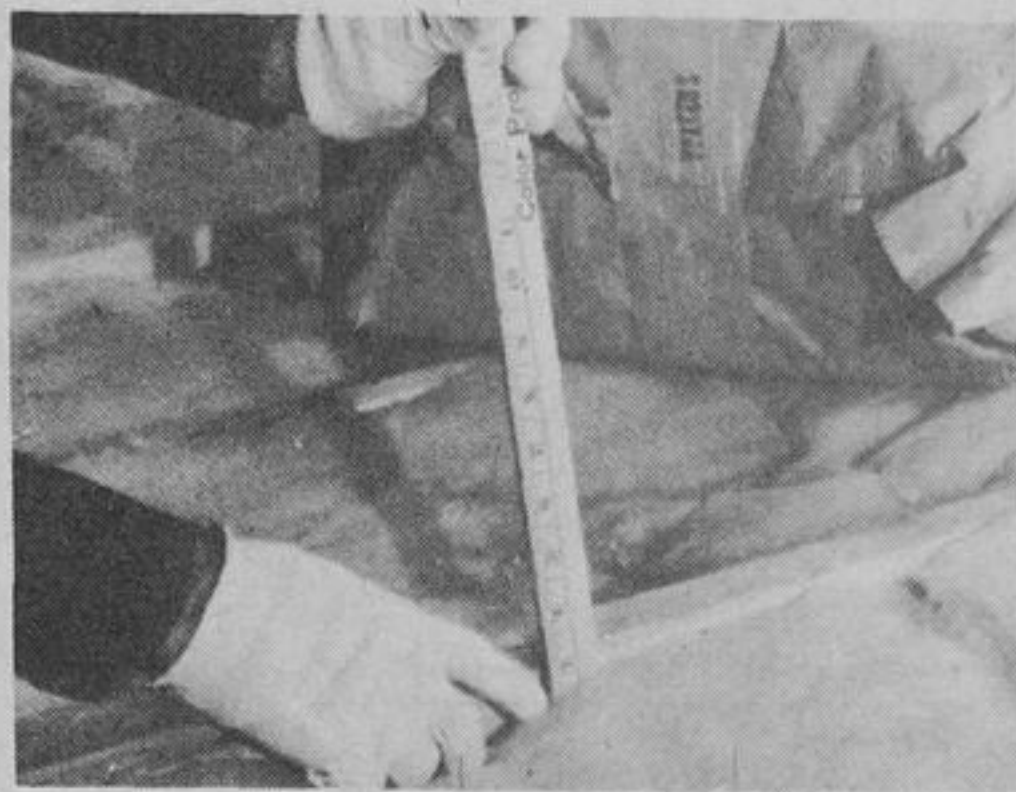
Other areas to consider are walls (this may only be practical in unfinished basement areas or if you are remodeling your home); floors over unheated crawl spaces above garages or basements, and windows and doors.

**Types, applications**

There are four basic types of insulation, each

designed for a specific application. Installation of the various types is slightly different.

1. Batt and Blanket insulation is made from fibres of glass, rock or slag and has a soft wooly texture. The batts are sold in bundles with a varying number of 4-foot pieces (dependent on thickness) cut to a standard joist width. In lengths over 4 feet, this type of insulation is referred to as a blanket. Batt and blanket insulation can be used in ceilings, walls, under floors and in crawl spaces or garages. Before purchasing batt or blanket insulation, measure the distance between the joists to determine the proper width to purchase. Batt



**Measure insulation**

You can tell if your top storey ceiling is under-insulated by measuring. Five to seven inches is usually required for maximum heating and cooling efficiency.

and blanket insulation is available with or without a vapour barrier, (usually a black kraft paper facing). If you are adding to existing insulation, buy the non-vapour type and lay it on top of the original material. On new application where the vapour barrier is required, staple it to the attic joists with the insulation facing upwards.

2. Loose fill insulation can be either pellet, or fibrous, or granulous and is sold in bags. It is ideal in attics of new and older homes because of its ease of installation. Just pour into the ceiling to the desired height (usually about 6 inches for R-20

value) and rake smooth. This insulation does not have a vapour barrier and on new applications it will be necessary to apply vinyl sheets or kraft paper before installation. When insulating an attic, be sure not to cover over the eaves vents.

3. Rigid insulation is

sold in sheets of varying thickness and size. Made of polyurethane and polystyrene, this type is

lightweight and particularly effective for insulating solid masonry walls, since it can be installed directly on the surface with bonding glue. It can also be nailed

to flat roofs or walls. A vapour barrier, varnish or rubber base paint is necessary for this type of installation. This type of insulation is also an excellent sound proofing.

For additional information on insulation, see your local building material suppliers or an insulation contractor.

**Recommended R-values for insulating**

AREA	R-VALUE	THICKNESS ●
WALLS above ground (frame and brick veneer)	R 12	3.4 inches
WALLS above ground (solid masonry)	R 8	2.3 inches
WALLS for heated basements and crawl spaces (less than 50 pct. exposed to outdoor temperature)	R 8	2.3 inches
WALLS for heated basements and crawl spaces (50 pct. or more exposed to outdoor temperatures)	R 12	3.4 inches
CEILINGS exposed to outdoor temperatures	R 20	5-7 1/2 inches
CEILINGS exposed (radiant systems)	R 28	9 inches
FLOORS over crawl spaces, garages and other unheated areas	R 12	3.4 inches
FLOORS between levels of multi-level structures using radiant systems	R 8	2.3 inches
FLOORS concrete on ground — unheated	R 5	(rigid) 1.2 inches
FLOORS concrete on ground containing heating ducts, pipes or electric heating cable	R 8	(rigid) 2 inches

● Thickness — varies according to manufacturers and type of insulation materials.

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