

Here's a simple test - hold the palm of your hand up against the windows in your home. If you feel cold air coming through, warm air is escaping. In fact, in a typical home 20 per cent of all heat loss is through ventilation and draughts.



Draught proofing is an easy, cost-effective way to reduce heating bills. It will save you £10-£20 a year for a DIY outlay of £50. Most materials are available from DIY stores. Check the quality of the products. It will affect their performance and durability. They should conform to the standard BS 7386.

There are several types of materials available - from brushes, foams and sealants to strips and shaped rubber or plastic. The Draught Proofing Association can help you decide which is best for your home. There could even be grants and offers available to help you pay for draught proofing.

Other things to think about:

- adequate ventilation is as important as draught proofing - and essential if you have solid fuel fires, gas fires or a boiler with an open flue;
- ventilation is especially important in kitchens and bathrooms;
- draught proof internal doors, if needed, but leave kitchen and bathroom windows alone to keep condensation under control;
- if condensation is a problem, an extractor fan may help;
- open a window while cooking, running hot water or drying clothes;
- trickle vents in the window frame provide background ventilation - not usually enough on their own, but they reduce the need to open windows;
- have chimneys swept regularly and check air bricks for blockages.