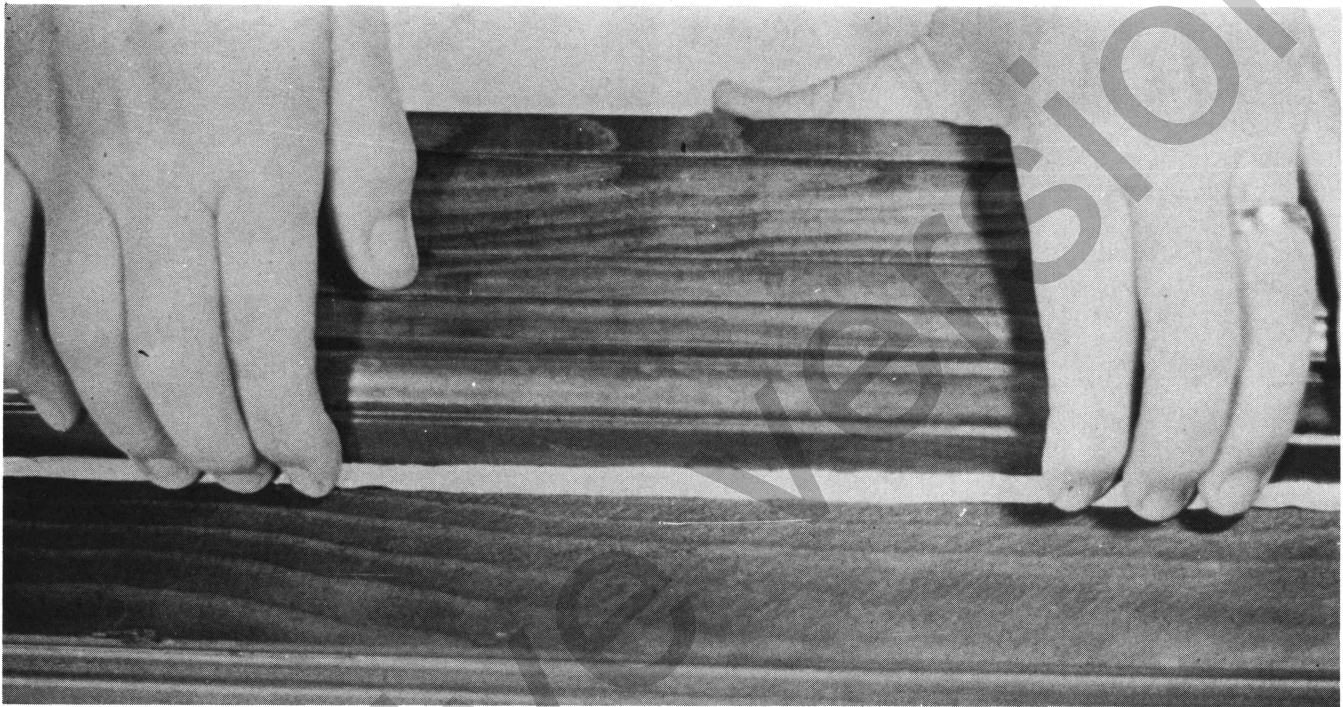




Published by the University of Missouri-Columbia
Extension Division
College of Home Economics

Weatherstripping Windows

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Caulking cork will seal cracks between the sash and stop of the window.

Purpose of guide: To tell readers how to reduce heating and cooling costs of their homes by weatherstripping their own windows.

Unlike doors, factory-installed weather stripping on window units has been common for years. Even so, the windows in many houses only 10-12 years old may be without this essential feature. Poor or non-existent weather stripping can result in great amounts of heat loss or gain. In the average home approximately 46 per cent of the annual heat loss is through and around glazed areas in windows and doors. Loss occurs through conduction and infiltration which is air flowing into the structure through cracks around the window parts.

On a typical double-hung window begin by checking the sash lock. Make sure each lock is fastened securely to the sash (wooden frame around the glass) and is in working order. Locks should be adjusted so that the upper and lower sash are drawn together as the lock is tightened.

If infiltration at the top or bottom of the window unit is still detected after locking the sash, apply a strip of

closed-cell vinyl foam tape to the bottom or top edge of the appropriate sash.

In many instances transparent weatherstripping tape can be used effectively to seal cracks around window sash. After cleaning all surfaces using a tack rag dampened with lacquer thinner or denatured alcohol, simply use this product to cover all window cracks.

Caulking cork or rope caulk has many uses and is highly effective in stopping unwanted air from entering the home. Rope caulk will remain flexible for years, never shrinks, works and removes easily. A bonus of both rope caulk and weatherstripping tape is that both can be installed from inside the house. This feature should be particularly attractive to the elderly or for those windows or doors a story or two off the ground.

For years the use of caulking compound has been recommended as an effective sealant for exterior cracks around windows and doors. Manufacturers today supply a variety of caulking compounds each possessing distinctive working characteristics and price. For general caulking of

windows and doors acrylic latex caulk is probably the best buy.

Thirty years ago, the steel casement window was very popular with builders. Thousands of these windows were installed but experience has since proven them to be thermally insufficient. When winterizing a steel casement window begin with the locking handle making sure that it is tight (if adjustable) and in working order. The installation of closed-cell pressure sensitive foam tape is an easy task to perform by merely cleaning the flanges around the edge of the sash and pressing on a thin strip of the tape.

A relative of the steel casement window is the steel basement window. Most newer homes with basements have several of these units that are cast in place when the basement wall is poured. Though small in size, infiltration and heat loss through windows of this type can be severe. The easiest and best method of weatherstripping steel basement windows is once again the closed-cell foam tape. Apply the tape to the window stop on three sides, and to the window sill on the bottom side of the unit.

Another big spender of fuel dollars is the jalousie window. Frequently found in the walls of breezeways and sun porches, this window is an excellent ventilator throughout the year. Perhaps the best cure for a jalousie window is to cover the entire unit with a polyethylene sheet held in place on all sides with weather strip tape.

One of the newest items on the market is a plastic storm window unit designed for installation on the inside of the dwelling. Consisting of a system of "zip-lock" plastic side strips and cut-to-size clear, sheet vinyl, the storm window installs in minutes and is easily removed from the inside for cleaning or ventilation. This window appears to have particular promise when used as a storm unit over the casement, basement and jalousie windows mentioned above.

Studies have shown that tightly fitting storm windows will cut conduction and infiltration losses by 50 per cent. Self-storing double or triple track aluminum storm windows have traditionally been specified, but inexpensive plastic window and door kits can be used with comparable results if wood or metal storm windows and doors are too expensive. Usually made of thin polyethylene sheet plastic these kits are practical for temporary use.

When installing a plastic sheet storm window it is suggested that strips of thin plywood, paneling, or even yardsticks be substituted for the cardboard strips usually supplied with the kit. After roughly cutting the plastic to size, the top edge of the plastic is wrapped once or twice around the nailing strip and fastened to the top exterior of the window casing. After nailing the top, wrap the plastic around a second strip, stretch tightly, and nail to the window sill. The same procedure is followed for each of the sides of the window.

A disadvantage of the polyethylene sheeting is its lack



Use wooden strips with polyethylene storm windows to increase stability.

of visual clarity which is especially distracting when the plastic is used to cover windows. When clarity is required the consumer may want to purchase a clear acetate or vinyl material also on the market.

For second-story apartment dwellers or the elderly, the exterior installation of plastic sheeting is difficult. Therefore, the easiest procedure is to secure the plastic to the interior window casing using transparent weather stripping tape. When using this method be sure to seal the window joints with tape or rope caulk before applying the plastic sheet.

Throughout the year window model air-conditioners are notorious fuel consumers. To eliminate infiltration around the unit make sure that all exterior case and window joints are properly caulked or sealed. After the cooling season be sure to wrap the unit with a manufactured air-conditioner cover, or make your own using polyethylene plastic.

For those with window units in a second-story window, the treatment is once again to be done inside. Using polyethylene and transparent weather strip tape, cover the front of the unit by taping the plastic to the inside window casing.

A final area of air-conditioner related infiltration is the crack which develops between the raised sash of a double-hung window. Ordinary fiberglass insulation can be used to fill this void, but a more attractive solution is a strip of specially sized urethane foam.

These guides were printed through a grant from the Department of Natural Resources, Missouri Energy Agency to Dr. Walter Heidlage, department of agricultural engineering, University of Missouri-Columbia. All information was approved by UMC specialists.



Issued in furtherance of Cooperative Extension Work Acts of May 8 and June 30, 1914 in cooperation with the United States Department of Agriculture. Carl N. Scheneman, Vice President for Extension, Cooperative Extension Service, University of Missouri and Lincoln University, Columbia, Missouri 65211. ■ An equal opportunity institution.