

Crawlspace Insulation

The crawlspace is the area directly underneath the floor joists on wood framed houses. Significant losses and structural damage can occur in this area if not insulated properly. Crawlspace can be set up two different ways, either vented/unconditioned or unvented/conditioned. There are distinctly different ways of handling the two different types of crawlspaces.

Vented/Unconditioned: The floor above a vented crawlspace needs to be insulated. Fiberglass batts or blankets are the most common material to use for insulation in this space. The insulation can be held in place with wire mesh or flexible plastic sticks wedged between the floor joists. If the insulation has a vapor barrier it needs to be next to the warmest side which is the underside of the subfloor. The insulation value should be a minimum of R 19. Do not forget to insulate the band joists when insulating the floor. If the crawlspace has a dirt or gravel floor cover it with a 10 mil plastic sheet. Tape all seams and seal to crawlspace walls. This ground covering will prevent moisture from the ground from collecting and condensing in the crawlspace. All ductwork and pipe work in a vented/unconditioned crawlspace should be insulated to prevent heat loss and pipe freezing.



Unvented/Conditioned: The outside foundation walls of the crawlspace on the crawlspace side need to be insulated. Fiberglass batts or insulating foam boards are typically used. The insulation should be fastened directly to the walls using batten strips or adhesive and continuous from the sill plate to the bottom of the crawlspace. The insulation value should be a minimum of R 10. Do not forget to insulate the band joists and cover the dirt or gravel floor with a 10 mil plastic sheet. The ductwork and pipe work does not need to be insulated since they are contained within the conditioned space.



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