

HOW TO: REPLACE WINDOW CAULK

Prepare your house for winter by replacing your old, cracked, and peeling window caulk with a fresh new layer! Old caulk could allow cold outdoor air to seep into your warm house. Take on this project and help lower your heating costs for the rest of the season!

Project Overview:

Level: Beginner

Estimated Time: A few hours

Estimated Cost: Under \$100

Tools:

Caulking Gun
Window Caulk
Caulk Remover
Putty Knife
Rubber Gloves
Utility Knife

Rubbing Alcohol
Soapy Water



Instructions:

- Check for faulty caulking by attaching a tissue to the end of a pencil and slowly moving it around the edges of the windows. If the tissue moves, the caulking needs to be replaced. Replace any caulk on the outside that is cracking or peeling.
- Start by removing the old caulking. You can dig the old caulking out with a putty knife or scraper, or just apply some chemical caulking remover, let it set up, and then remove the old caulk after it's been softened. You may need to remove some really stubborn old pieces by cutting carefully along the seams, then using your scraper to dig them out.
- Clean up any remaining little pieces of leftover caulking using rubbing alcohol and old rags. You need to get rid of all the old caulking for the new caulk to adhere properly.
- While you're waiting for the alcohol to dry thoroughly, use your utility knife to cut the tip of the caulking tube on an angle about $\frac{1}{4}$ inch from the end. You will need to use a long, thin nail to puncture the foil covering the caulking at the base of the tube tip.
- Insert the tube of caulk into your caulking gun and squeeze the handle to apply some pressure to the base of the tube and bring the caulk up to the tip.
- Start at a corner and push the caulking at about a 45-degree angle along the edge of the window, filling in the seam. Apply steady pressure and try to not lift the caulking gun up until you get to an end of one side of the window.
- When you get to the end, stop squeezing the trigger of the caulking gun and lift the tube up and away from the window while putting an old rag over the end to catch any caulking that comes out.
- Clean the end of the tube and move to start applying caulking along the next side.
- After you've caulked all sides of the window, use a finger dipped in soapy water, an old Popsicle stick, or small tongue depressor to smooth the caulking all along the window edge.

Helpful Hints: Your windows will have small holes (called weep holes) on the bottom. These are there to allow for moisture to escape. Don't fill them with caulk.