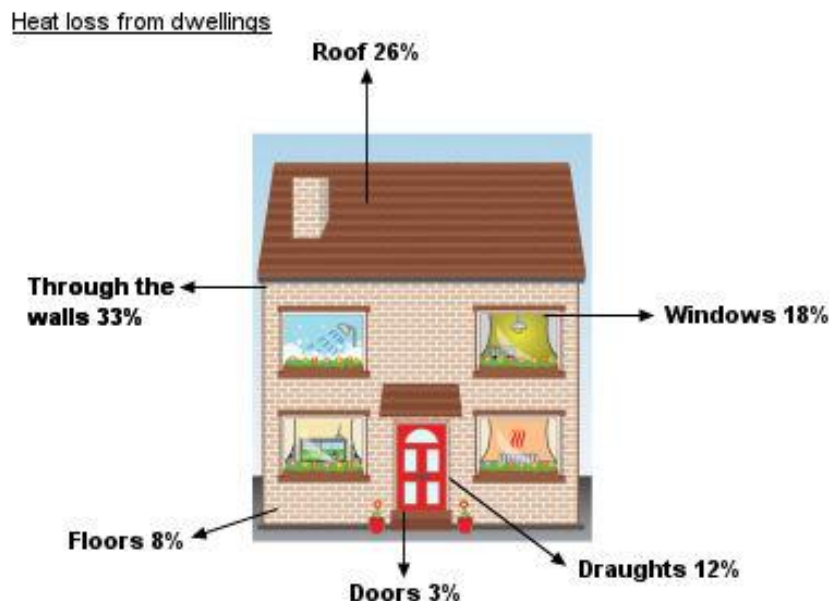


FLOOR INSULATION



Over 10% of the heat lost from your home could be through the ground floor and through unsealed gaps in the flooring. This happens even if there are carpets.

Floor insulation was not included in new houses until 1991, so if your home is older than this, it is unlikely to have floor insulation. It has been estimated this could save 15 % of your total heating costs.

In addition to saving on fuel bills, floor insulation also increases comfort levels and room temperatures at floor level.

There are two ways to insulate a ground floor, **under floor** insulation (which is fitted underneath the floor) and **floating** floor insulation which is laid on top of the floor.

Under floor insulation is possible if there is enough space to get under the ground floor. Make sure all pipes under the floor are lagged prior to the main insulation being done. Seal any draughts in the floor prior to having the insulation installed. This could be done by using a polythene vapour layer, tube sealant or wood filler.

The floor insulation is fitted between the floor joists across which the floorboards are laid. You could use standard insulation products such as space blanket fibreglass from DIY stores or Kingspan TP 10 insulation board, again available from DIY shops and online. Ideally leave an air gap of 20 – 50 mm between the vapour barrier/floor and the insulation material as this improves the insulating effect. The insulation can

be kept in by strong netting or boards. Insulation board requires less effort to get it to stay in place.

For even more effect, make sure there is insulation added below the joists too. This could be done by having an additional layer of insulation fitted either using standard materials or insulated plasterboard.

If there is no access under a suspended floor you could **take up floorboards** from above, to gain access. Options are:

- to nail battens to the sides of the bottoms of the joists to support rigid insulation boards or
- to use insulation quilt such as Spaceblanket. Before doing this, strong plastic or wire netting needs to be stapled between the joists to keep this insulation in place.

When insulating a suspended floor, if there are ventilator grills in the walls below the floor it is **important** that these are left uncovered to provide ventilation across the bottom of the insulation from each side.

Floating floor insulation requires lifting the carpets or laminate on the ground floor. Specialist insulation can be many times better than thick carpets. You would need to have a joiner trim the doors to get them to close when the insulation is fitted. Replace your carpet or flooring on top of the insulation material after it is fitted.