



Tips and trends for homeowners, buyers and sellers

## Upgrade Your Attic Insulation



The attic may be the last place homeowners think about when considering improvement projects. However, there can be some big benefits from upgrading the insulation in your attic. Most people aren't attic experts, so here's some information on insulation upgrades for your home.

### 1 Determine how much you need—

The first step when upgrading attic insulation is to figure out how much new material is needed. Many believe their home has enough as is, but insulation tends to compress over time and become less effective. Get accurate measurements of your space so you're not buying too much or too little. If your attic is finished, consider adding an extra layer on top of what's currently against the roof. For unfinished attics, add layers to what's currently on the floor.

### 2 Understand R-values—

When researching attic insulation, you will come across the term "R-value," which is the ability of a material to resist heat flow. The higher the R-value of a specific insulation, the more effective it will be for trapping heat. The Department of Energy recommends different R-value insulations depending on the area or climate where you live. Visit [energy.gov/energysaver/weatherize/insulation](https://www.energy.gov/energysaver/weatherize/insulation) to determine the type of insulation you'll need for your attic.

### 3 Big savings possible—

Utility bills can be a drag on your personal finances, but attic improvements can generate savings for homeowners. The Environmental Protection Agency estimates you can save up to 15% on utility costs by adding new insulation and sealing air leaks in your attic. Also, most homes built before 1960 do not have proper insulation based on modern standards, so your older home may be losing a lot of energy. Modernizing your attic can result in a significant return on your investment.

## Creating Efficient Storage

One of the biggest complaints from homeowners is that they don't have enough storage space. While adding extra physical rooms may not be an option for most, there are ways to creatively utilize your space.

**Decluttering**—Before you start thinking about reorganizing your storage space, first consider whether you absolutely need to keep everything. Decluttering may be the easiest way to open up new areas for more important items. Tackle each of your current storage spaces individually so you're not overwhelmed.

**No stray items**—To maximize the space you have, use boxes or containers to efficiently

make use of the area. Uniform shapes and sizes will help you determine how these containers stack—think of your storage space like a game of Tetris.

**Choose the right products**—Make sure to think ahead before purchasing any storage containers, racks or shelves for your closets or crawl spaces. Measure your closet and keep these figures with you as you're shopping online or in stores.

**Storage zones**—Use the space you have in smart ways by keeping all items you use regularly between your knees and shoulders. Use hard-to-reach areas for items that are for long-term storage. Think vertically instead of horizontally to make your storage spaces more efficient.

