

CLOSE THE DOOR ON ENERGY LOSS WITH SIMPLE IMPROVEMENTS

Your door may be closed, but is it really keeping your conditioned air inside and external elements outside? Therma-Tru Doors, the nation's most preferred entry door, offers homeowners tips on identifying their door problems and solutions to prevent further energy loss.

Hold a candle to the wind. Using a lighted candle, follow the outline of the door around the door frame on a windy day. You'll see the candle flicker at every point air is entering the opening.

Look for the light. On a bright day, stand in your foyer and look for daylight flowing through the door opening. If light is coming in, so is external air. Your weatherstripping may have lost compression, or you may have a warped door frame or door.

Take the touch test. Touch your door on hot days and cold days. If you feel the exterior temperatures on the inside surface, your door may not have adequate insulation.

Watch the weatherstripping. Low-quality weatherstripping can lose its compression over time, opening the door to air infiltration. Look for flat or cracked weatherstripping that is no longer doing its job.

Sill the deal. Your door sill and bottom sweep prevent air infiltration and water penetration. Try to slide a piece of paper under your entry door. If you can, you'll likely need to adjust or replace your bottom sweep.

Open and shut case. Finally, open and shut your door on both dry and wet, humid days. If your door fits tightly on humid days, then it is probably leaking air on dry days. You may want to consider a high-performance door such as fiberglass to prevent swelling.

"The door opening can be a major source of energy loss," said John Kufner, Product Line General Manager, Entry Door Systems, for Therma-Tru. "There are some simple solutions consumers can take to reduce air infiltration. However, if the door slab and frame are low-quality materials and are warped or cracked, you'll need to replace them with a high-quality door system."

Therma-Tru recommends a maximum opening of only 3/32" between the door and door frame to keep air infiltration to a minimum. To improve your door's energy efficiency, Therma-Tru suggests the following solutions:

Replace the weatherstripping. Adding new weatherstripping is a simple solution that can greatly reduce air infiltration. Your local hardware store will be able to recommend the product best suited to your application.

Adjust the hinges. Loose hinges or low-quality hardware can create gaps. Tighten the screws in existing hardware or consider replacing hardware with high-quality brass or brushed steel components.

Level the sill. Many times, the sill can settle, opening gaps for air. Purchase shims from your local hardware to reset the sill so it is flush with the door bottom, and consider replacing or adjusting the bottom sweep for a tighter seal.

Upgrade the lock. If your lock isn't installed properly or the right size, it won't keep the door seated squarely in the door frame. Carefully measure your existing lock and door and look for high-quality brass or brushed steel replacement locks.

If these simple measures don't solve the problem, you may need a new door. Today, fiberglass doors are the best option because they insulate five times more efficiently than wood and have integrated components that prevent air infiltration and warping.

"Ideally, you want a high-performance door slab with integrated high-quality components designed to work together, such as a Therma-Tru door system," said Kufner. "Fiberglass is the door material of the future, because it won't warp, split, shrink or swell as wood doors tend to do. They also do not dent, rust or corrode like steel doors."

When homeowners are buying a door, they need to remember that an entryway is an entire system of components, not just the door slab. If they – or their contractor – don't install high-quality hinges, sill plates, weatherstripping and locking systems, their door won't perform like they expect. Therma-Tru produces a complete door system designed to work together with high-quality, durable components – from door hardware to beautiful glass sidelights and transoms -- designed uniquely for Therma-Tru door systems. It also offers a comprehensive door system warranty to ensure the performance of the Therma-Tru system.