

DIY: Weatherizing Exterior Doors

Priority: High

Difficulty Level: Medium

Time Commitment: 30 min - 1 hr

Physical Requirements: Ability to bend down and stand on a ladder

Purpose

Weatherizing exterior doors seals the cracks where the door does not fully meet the threshold and frame. Sealing the edges of exterior doors with Door Sweeps and Weatherstripping can help reduce drafts and prevent pests from entering the home.

Indicators that this Action is worth doing in your home

- If you feel drafts coming from your exterior doors into your home.
- If you see light coming through the cracks at the edges of exterior doors.

Videos:

[Installing a Door Sweep. Seal Gap, Keep Drafts & Bugs Out!](#)

[M-D Building Products Screw on Door Jamb Kit Aluminum & Vinyl Wrapped Foam Seal](#)

[WEATHERSTRIP: Save \\$\\$, Prevent Cold Air Drafts](#)



Materials Needed

- Door sweep
- Foam/Vinyl Top & Sides Door Seal For Door Jambs (See Tips section for which type to choose)
- Measuring Tape
- Pencil
- Hacksaw or Metal Snippers
- Screw driver
- Drill (optional but helpful)
- Clear Caulk (optional)

Directions

Side & Top Seals

- Remove the old seal, if there is one.

- Measure the height of the side jamb from the top corner down to the floor or threshold. Mark the metal piece with a pencil at that length.
- Using metal snippers or a hacksaw, cut the metal (not the vinyl/plastic/rubber portion). Trim the foam about a ¼ inch extended from the metal portion, and trim back after you check the fit.
- Hold the metal piece up to the frame where the door meets it and close the door, ensuring there is compression of the foam portion. Mark the screw holes for where you will drill.
- Drill pilot holes, then attach the strip using the screws from the kit, one by one to avoid buckling of the metal. Screw in the screws to the center of the holes so you have some wiggle room.
- Repeat the above steps on the other side of the door, followed by the top of the door frame. When you hold up these pieces, you may need to trim the foam slightly shorter from the metal portion for a tight, compressed fit at the corners.

Door Sweep:

- Remove the old sweep, if there is one.
- Measure the length of the door (side of the door that swings toward you) at the bottom, plus any gap on the side between the door and the frame. Mark the door sweep length with a pencil.
- Use the hacksaw or metal snippers to cut off the extra metal from the mark. Cut the vinyl/plastic/rubber part about a ¼ inch extended from the metal portion. (Remember, you can always trim more, but you can't add it back on!)
- Hold the sweep up to the bottom of the door. The vinyl/plastic/rubber should be more than barely grazing the floor, but it should also not be completely pressed onto the floor. Mark the screw holes for where you will drill.
- Drill pilot holes, then attach the sweep using a screwdriver and the screws from the kit.
- Optional: look at the top of the drilled-in door sweep to see if there is any space in between the door and the sweep. If so, you can seal this space with Clear Caulk. See the Sealing Air Leaks page for more details on sealing.

Tips

- There are adhesive door sealing kits. These tend to wear out much more quickly, but they don't require as much hardware. You can choose which type is best for your home.
- You can choose door sweeps and door sealing kits that match your door's color and material.
- When cutting the ends of metal pieces, trim both sides to keep screw holes close to each end.
- You will want to install the sweep on the side of the door that your door swings toward. So if your door swings into the house, you will install it on the inside side of the door.
- Measure twice, cut once! Once you have measured the pieces you are going to cut, hold them up to where you will place them and double check the length is correct.
- It can be helpful to have a second person to hold the metal while you install the screws.