



What to insulation first, your ceiling or walls?



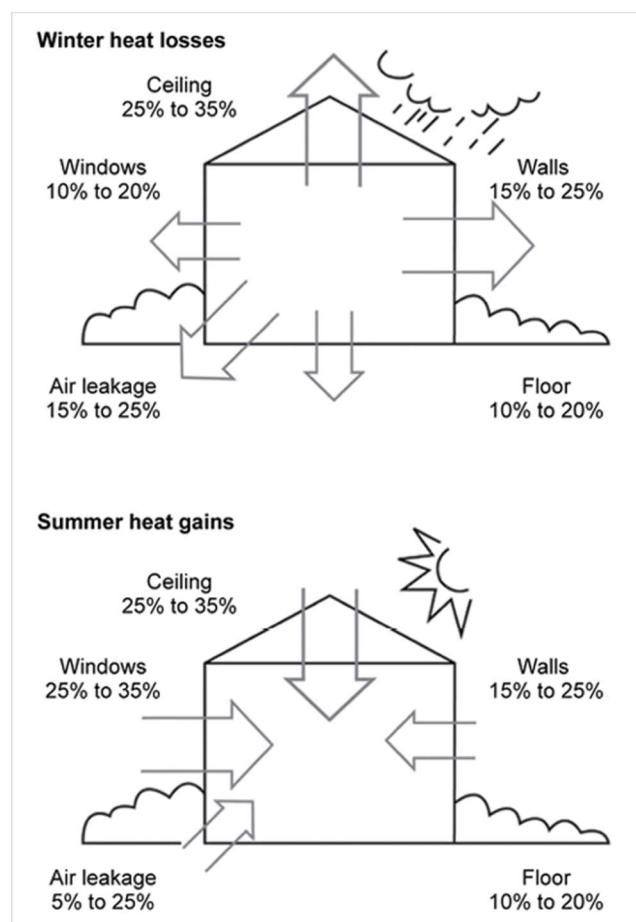
For new builds or if you are renovating, on a limited budget you may ask yourself if you should insulate your ceiling or walls.

The best answer is both. Insulation is a once-only cost that makes your house more comfortable for its entire lifespan, without another cent having to be spent.

If you were on a very skinny budget and had to make a choice, you would insulate your ceiling first. Installing ceiling insulation can save around 35% on heating and cooling energy.

Insulating your walls saves around 15% on heating and cooling energy.

The below diagram helps show the difference:



Source: SEAV 2002

Now that we have established that ceiling is more effective than wall insulation, the next question is what R-value to use.

What R-value insulation to use?

The best answer is the highest R-value you can afford. Remember, this is a once-only cost that lasts the life of the house. We recommend R5.0 or above.

In alpine climates it is recommended that two layers of insulation be used in the ceiling. One between the joists and the other on top.

When installing insulation in the ceiling you want to maximise coverage BUT be mindful of ceiling lights. Downlights generate a lot of heat and a minimum clearance of 50mm is recommended for light transformers. If you are buying lights, ask your lighting specialist if they have a fire safety barrier for the light.

So there you have it. When insulating, do both the ceiling and walls if you can. If not, then make sure you start with the ceiling and get the highest R-value product you can afford.