

# Caulking Windows

Caulk on the exterior of the window frame can dry and crack from aging and temperature change. If you find the caulk is coming off or contains cracks, you need to re-caulk.

## Material

Caulk comes in cartridges that fit in a caulk gun, however, some pressurized containers do not require a caulk gun. They also come in aerosol cans and squeeze tubes.

## Advantages

- Saves money on your heating and air conditioning bill by preventing air leaks.
- Prevents uncomfortable drafts in your home.

## Tools required:

Caulk gun (if not using a pressurized container, putty knife or similar tool to scrape the old caulk)

**Materials required:** Caulk

**Estimated time taken:** For 8-10 windows: 2-3 hours to prepare and apply the caulk, 12- 15 hours for it to dry

**Project cost:** Prices vary depending on type of caulk, starting from \$5 per tube

## Installation

There are caulks made specifically for concrete, brick, wood, and even for glass and metal. It is best to ask someone at the hardware store for advice on the best caulk to use for your specific type of window. Typically, Polyurethane caulk is the most versatile and sticks to just about everything. Additionally, Polyurethane caulk is quite flexible and lasts longer than most types of caulk. One tube should be enough for a whole window.

## How To

- 1 Remove any old caulk using caulk softener. Apply caulk softener at least 2 hours in advance, and then remove old caulk with a putty knife. Try to strip off or scrap out old caulk and smooth out the surface.
- 2 Wipe down the surface with a damp cloth to remove any residue or dirt. Be careful not to wash old windows with water since water entering through the crack might damage the window. Make sure the window surface is clean and dry before beginning to caulk.
- 3 Cut the tip off of the tube of caulk at a 45-degree angle and load it into a caulking gun. Break the seal on the tube by inserting a nail or a small screwdriver into the nozzle opening.
- 4 Squeeze and apply the caulk along the seam of the window at an angle, moving the gun slowly and evenly. When filling larger gaps, move more slowly to let the caulk adequately fill the space.
- 5 For a finishing touch, use a wet finger to smooth out the caulk and give it a clean look, as soon as caulk is applied to prevent caulk from drying and cracking. Allow 12-15 hours for caulk to dry and set.

## Additional Recommendations

Caulking is best done when the outside temperature is above 45°F and humidity is low. Higher temperatures help the caulk to dry and set properly.

Source: [www.energysavers.gov](http://www.energysavers.gov)

