

HOME IMPROVEMENT

Upgrading your home; Renovating the attic

By Andy Lang
Insulation
 The first step in insulating an attic prior to refinishing is to determine how much insulation already is in the floor or what really is the ceiling of the room below. When there is such insulation, it usually is 3 inches or less, in which case you should add enough to bring it to 6 or 8 inches.

Even though the insulation already there probably is the loose fill type, it is better to use fiber glass or rock wool batts or blankets between the joists. But you don't want vapor barriers in that area, so be certain the new insulation does not have them. If the old has any, remove them and slash them freely, pluing the

insulation with the slashed side down. Part some of the new insulation between the joists of the floor that extend outside the living space. You must place insulation between the sloping rafters, under beams and knee walls, including the dormer walls and ceilings if there is a dormer.

When insulating a wall, the end of a blanket snugly against the top piece of framing and work down the wall, stapling the flanges about every 3 inches and cutting the blanket to fit tightly against the framing at the bottom. When insulating an attic anywhere else, always re-

member the vapor barrier should always face the side of the wall that will be heated in cold weather. All this insulation, by the way, is not only to keep your attic warm but keep the space comfortable in cold weather or especially for the purpose. To cut blankets and tape, use a sharp knife, such as a serrated-edge kitchen knife. You will find a rake very useful for pushing insulation

into areas that you cannot reach easily. The vapor barrier is intended to prevent moisture from entering the attic or basement. If a tear should develop in the barrier when you are installing the insulation, mend it immediately. Use a piece of polyurethane for this. Or you can use a strip of barrier from a scrap section of blanket. If you do not mend the patch, moisture will enter the insulation and defeat the purpose of the barrier. Be sure there is ventilation above the attic insulation you have put up to take care of the newly finished space. The idea is to provide openings that will permit air to move across the top of the attic. In situations, you may have to help this air move with some kind of fan. Insulation fibers can cause skin irritation. When you are working, wear gloves and proper clothing, such as a long-sleeved shirt.

Q: Here are some tips for home improvement

By Andy Lang
New Windows
 Q - Have to replace several windows/panes soon. Have done work of this kind in the past, but have never painted the glazing compound that sets the pane in place. Assume the compound can be painted. I want to use a paint matched to the color of the window frame. A - A paint can be painted. Usually, you should wait several days before doing the painting. Read the label on the compound to determine exactly how long to wait. When painting, be sure the paint extends a fraction of

an inch on to the glass to insure protection against the passage of air and rain. Q - Some milk spilled on my coffee table and was not noticed for several hours. When it was wiped off, some of the finish came with it. Can the area be touched up or must the entire table top be refinished? A - As with any damage of that sort, you can make an effort to retouch the marred area. Then, if it doesn't work, a complete refinishing is in order. Milk sometimes acts as a varnish remover unless it is wiped off the moment it is spilled.

Q - I will be doing some concrete work and want to keep the concrete surface rough as to make it sort of slip-proof. Will it be OK to use a garage broom with stiff bristles to make the rough finish? A - Do the concrete work the regular way, but when it is time to do the troweling, use the bristles of the broom. Apply as so the ridges made by the bristles run across the concrete at right angles to the direction people walk. That will keep anybody from sliding on the walkway. Allow the concrete to "cure" for about a week. This means keeping it

moist. One way is to place wet burlap over the finished job and misten it twice a day. Special curing compounds also are available. If you do not want to bother with the burlap or use a commercial curing product, wet down concrete about three times a day for six or seven days. Q - Scratches have appeared on a waxed dining room table. We don't know how they occurred. What is the best way to remove them? They are very slight. A - They probably are scratches that go deeper than the wax. Rub off the wax entirely with turpentine or a

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