



## Caulking FAQ's

### CAULKING:

Caulk forms a flexible seal for cracks, gaps or joints less than 1-quarter-inch wide. You can use a caulking compound to seal air leaks; caulking can also prevent water damage inside and outside of the home when applied around faucets, ceiling fixtures, water pipes, drains, bathtubs and other plumbing fixtures.

#### **Before applying new caulk:**

Remove old caulk or paint residue remaining around a window using a putty knife, stiff brush, or special solvent. After old caulk is removed, a new caulk can then be applied to all joints in the window frame and the joint between the frame and the wall.

### HOW TO USE A CAULKING GUN:

- Step 1:** Clean the area to be caulked, removing dirt, loose paint and old caulk.
- Step 2:** Be sure the area is dry before you begin.
- Step 3:** Load a tube of caulk into a caulking gun, making sure it's well seated at both ends.
- Step 4:** Use a utility knife to cut the tip of the spout. Cut off as little as possible, taking into consideration the size of the "bead" of caulk you need. Some people like to cut the spout at an angle, while others cut it straight; it doesn't make a big difference.
- Step 5:** If using a caulk that comes in a cardboard tube, look for a second seal at the base of the spout. Insert a nail or awl through the spout to puncture the seal. Many caulking guns come with such a puncturing device. (Plastic tubes usually don't have a second, inner seal.)
- Step 6:** Hold the gun at a slight angle. If you're filling a crack, insert the spout if you can; otherwise, run it at the surface.
- Step 7:** Pull away from the bead slightly as you squeeze out the caulk, rather than push into it, which can be very messy.
- Step 8:** Use just enough caulk to do the job. (Experiment in an out-of-the-way area. You may find that you'll need less of a bead than you think.)
- Step 9:** Use your finger to gently press the caulk into the corner or crack.
- Step 10:** Use a damp towel or rag to clean off most of the excess caulk, then use a dry one to clean off the rest.

### TIPS:

- Many types of caulk are available, including silicone, acrylic and latex. Silicone caulk is probably the longest-lasting, but does not take paint well.
- Keep a bowl of water at hand. Dip your finger in the water before running it down the bead of caulk.