



## Don't Look in the Attic

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If you were around in the early 80's, you may have encountered the relatively bad but entertaining movie called "Don't Look in the Attic". The movie follows all of the standard horror movie tropes, including a couple inheriting a haunted mansion, a house haunted by people who've died there and, also, being afraid of your attic.

Whether or not you go in your attic may be influenced by a fear of the attic or just because it's tough to physically get to. However, you should not be afraid of your attic – it's crucial to your house.

### Why would my attic be so important?

Your attic is vital to the health of your house. It is the buffer between your living space and the roof that protects your house. Without the attic, your home would be much less efficient and harder to maintain.

### Great, but how does that affect my life?

You can end up wasting thousands of dollars by ignoring your attic over the course of many years.

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## How?

### 1. Utility Increases – This is the silent thief.

With poor ventilation and low insulation values, your bills in the summer and winter will creep up, slowly at first. Your bills might only shift by 10 or 20%, so you may not notice, but this is why this is so crucial.

### 2. Leaks & Moisture – Visible water buildup or dampness.

If you never go in your attic, you might never catch a leak before it damages your drywall, insulation, wood floors, furniture, etc. Catching a leak before it has traveled into your house can help save you a lot of money in repairs.

### 3. Critters – Your house is not on AirBnB for squirrels.

Most attics are relatively warm and dry. Combine this with being a rarely visited area of your home, and you might as well have a Welcome Home sign to any small creature that is looking for a nice place to sleep.

## What can I do?

The biggest and most impactful tip I can offer is to visit your attic on a regular basis. Grab a flashlight and your phone (for pictures) and spend about 10 minutes poking around. If you do this regularly, you'll begin to notice what is normal and what might need more investigation. Insulation that has settled or gaps mean you are losing money. Insulation that seems chewed up or signs of animal droppings mean you have visitors. Water on the roof nails or any moist areas mean water is making its way inside and should be looked into.

Being familiar with what is in your attic can help you get in front of big issues. One story I heard was about a contractor (not Pro Home Improvement!) that installed a bathroom exhaust fan as a part of a bathroom remodel. They left the exhaust duct in the attic laying on the insulation! This meant, every time he used the shower, he was pulling all that warm, moist air into his attic. Bad news for an attic.

Once the homeowner finally went up there, he managed to find a place to run some flex duct to exhaust that air properly. Without looking, he'd have continued to contribute to the demise of his own attic with all of that moist air.

## How do I know how much insulation there should be?

The Department of Energy puts out recommendations based on our region. On the cover image, you see we are in Zone 5.

## **Pro Advice - Don't Look in the Attic**

For zone 5, the insulation recommendations for your attic are R-38 to R-60. Of course, as a rule, we recommend you insulate on the higher end of this spectrum at R-55 or 60 (? Gary). Pro Home Improvement has their own proprietary insulation that is perfect for your attic, Pro Grade Cellulose Insulation. There is a video about how easy the installation process on the website.

## **Fine! I'll check my attic...**

Good to hear! Do it monthly, or at least quarterly and feel good about protecting your home, family and wallet.



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