



DIY FOR 2010



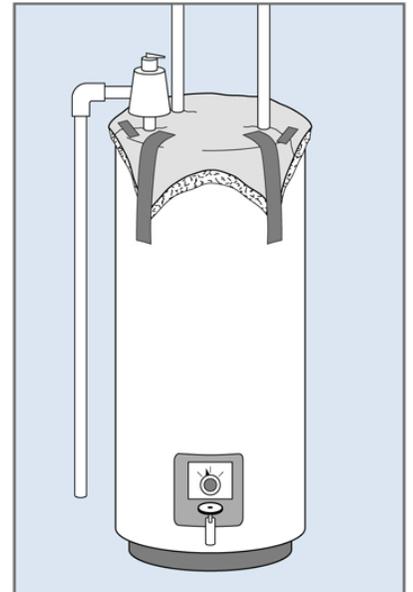
Installing an Insulation Blanket on a Water Heater

On average, water heating costs homeowners between \$400 and \$600 a year. One way to cut this cost is to insulate your water heater. Every water heater has an R-value and you want this value to be at least R-24. A quick and easy way to determine if your water heater needs additional insulation is to touch it. If it is warm to the touch, then your water heater is losing heat to the air and needs to be insulated. Adding insulation to a water heater can reduce standby heat losses by 25%–45%.

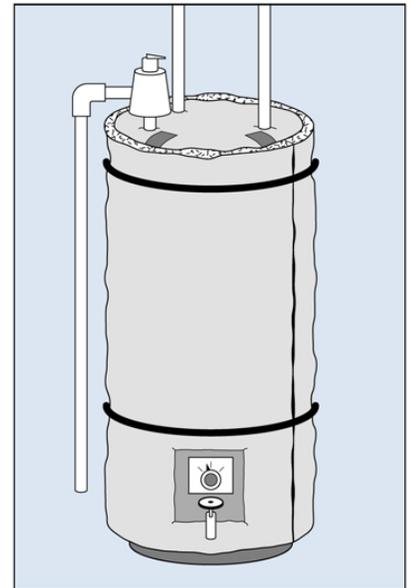
Insulating your storage water heater tank is fairly simple and inexpensive. You can find pre-cut jackets or blankets available from around \$10–\$20. Choose one with an insulating value of at least R-8.

Directions for Insulating an ELECTRIC Water Heater Tank

1. Cut the tank top insulation to fit around the piping in the top of the tank. Tape the cut section closed after the top has been installed.
2. Fold the corners of the tank top insulation down and tape to the sides of the tank as in the picture to the right.
3. Position the insulating blanket around the tank. For ease of installation, position the blanket so that the ends do not come together over the access panel(s) on the side of the tank.
4. Secure the blanket in place with the belts, if provided. Otherwise, secure the blanket with duct or electrical tape. Position the belts so they do not go over the access panels. Belts should fit snugly over the blanket but not compress it more than 15%–20% of its thickness. The installation is easier with two people. If working alone, use tape to hold the blanket to the top until you get the belts into position.
5. If your water heater has the temperature/pressure relief valve and the overflow pipe on the side of the tank instead of on the top, install the blanket so these items are outside of the blanket. Depending on the piping arrangement and location, you may need to compress (or even cut) the blanket.



6. Locate the four corners of the access panel(s). Make an x-shaped cut in the insulating blanket from corner to corner of each access panel. Fold the triangular flaps produced by the cuts underneath the insulating blanket. You want the blanket to wrap the tank just like the image to the right.



Directions for Insulating a Gas Water Heater Tank

Installing insulation blankets or jackets on gas and oil-fired water heater tanks is more difficult than installing them for electric water heater tanks. We recommend that you have a qualified plumbing and heating contractor install the insulation. However, if you want to install it yourself, read and follow the directions that come with the insulation blanket very carefully. Keep the jacket or blanket away from the drain at the bottom and the flue at the top. Make sure the airflow to the burner is not obstructed. Leave the thermostat uncovered, and don't insulate the top of a gas water heater tank—the insulation is combustible and can interfere with the draft diverter.

For most Americans, your water heater is not optimized to save you money; however, Insulation blankets can help make your current water heater more efficient and lower your water heating costs. A small change like this will make a big difference in your energy bill. Two other ways to reduce your water heating costs include turning the thermostat on your water heater down to the efficient level, 120°F and installing water-saving devices such as low flow showerheads and aerators. For additional information, visit www.energysavers.gov

