What Makes A Door Feel Drafty In Dallas

Summer here is hard on the whole opening, not just the slab itself. Sun exposure dries out seals, metal parts expand, and older weatherstripping loses its shape faster than many homeowners expect.

Around an exterior door, it often means conditioned air escaping while hot, humid air finds a path inside. If the door faces west or south, the problem is usually more obvious in the late afternoon, when the frame and slab have been baking for hours.

That is why a door can look intact but still leave a noticeable line of light, heat, or air around the edges. If the latch has to be pushed or lifted to catch, that is often part of the same story.

The First Places To Check For Air Leaks

Start with the easiest telltales. Shut the door, turn off nearby fans, and feel around the perimeter with your hand. If you want a better test, use a thin strip of tissue or incense smoke and move it slowly along the jamb. The air movement will usually show up at the corners, the strike side, the bottom sweep, or the threshold.

That is where traffic, heat, and age do the most damage. A door that hangs slightly uneven can leave a bigger gap on one corner and compress the seal too hard on another, which makes the whole system perform poorly.

Look closely at the existing weatherstrip. It should spring back when pressed. If it is flattened, cracked, missing, or pulling away from the frame, it is no longer doing its job. On older doors, the adhesive backing may have failed in the heat, or the material may have hardened enough that it no longer closes cleanly against the slab.

If you can see daylight under the slab or feel hot air moving across the floor, the sweep or threshold is usually part of the fix. That bottom gap also tends to collect dust, which is another clue that the seal is weak.

door installation Dallas

An experienced door replacement company can confirm the weak points with a quick inspection.

Weatherstripping Materials That Hold Up Better In Texas Heat

Not every strip of foam or rubber works well in a Dallas climate. A cheap seal that fails in a season costs more in the long run than a better-fitting product installed once.

For many homes, a combination approach works best:

- A fitted perimeter seal around the jamb
- A bottom edge seal that closes the floor gap
- A properly set threshold if the existing one is worn or uneven

V-shaped or bulb-style weatherstripping tends to hold up better on many exterior doors because it can take repeated compression without tearing apart as quickly. On steel or fiberglass doors, adhesive-backed products can work well if the surface is clean, dry, and properly prepped.

If the door has to slam to latch, the weatherstripping is too bulky or the slab is already out of alignment. If the fit is wrong, the door hardware wears faster and the gap can actually worsen.

Do not ignore the finish around the frame. Caulk is not a substitute for weatherstripping, but it does matter where the trim meets the wall and where the frame meets the siding or masonry. Small cracks in those spots let

hot air and moisture slip around the assembly, which can make the door feel drafty even when the perimeter seal is decent.

Signs A Door Needs More Than New Weatherstripping

Fresh weatherstripping can fix a lot of everyday discomfort, but it cannot solve every problem. You can keep patching around a door for years, but if the underlying fit is poor, the energy loss keeps coming back.

A few signs point toward something bigger than a routine repair:

1. If the slab needs to be muscled into place, the frame may be out of square.
2. There is visible daylight around the edges even after new seals are installed.
3. The bottom edge has rotted, bent, or worn down enough that the sweep cannot reach evenly.
4. It often comes with fading, peeling finish, and hot spots.
5. At that point, replacement can be the more practical choice.

Sometimes a door just needs a new sweep, a better threshold, and a careful rehang. That is especially true on west-facing doors that take the full force of the afternoon sun.

If you are trying to reduce heat gain and stop drafts, start with the seal, then evaluate the fit, then judge the condition of the slab and frame.