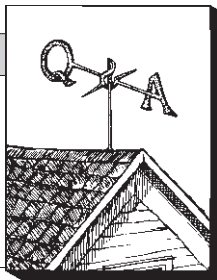


# Why Do Glasses Fog Up?

by Henry Spies



## Steamy Goggles

**Q.** Why do my safety glasses fog up when I wear a dust mask and what can be done to prevent it?

**A.** The dust mask directs some of your breath upward from the filter, and the warm, moist air from your breath condenses on the colder surface of the glasses. To prevent this you can use any of the anti-fogging products sold in most eyeglass stores for this purpose. These are rubbed onto the lenses and then polished off. Or you can do the same thing with a cake of glycerin soap.

## Dormer Ridge Vents

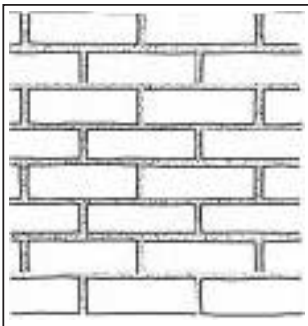
**Q.** I want to run a new shed dormer off the peak of an existing gable roof. The existing roof has asphalt shingles and a 6:12 pitch. The new dormer will have a rubber roof and a 2:12 pitch. Can a standard ridge vent be used to span the two different roof pitches and two different roofing materials?

**A.** A standard ridge vent can be used. However, you're probably best off with a ridge vent that can be shingled over, such as "Shingle Vent" from Air Vent, Inc., Peoria Heights, Ill., or "Cor-a-Vent," Mishawaka, Ind. This vent will probably work best to keep the weather out and will be easier to install than a conventional metal cap.

## Brick Patterns

**Q.** What is the difference between a common and running bond in brick masonry?

**A.** A common bond and a running bond are exactly the same: Each course is offset from the previous one by half a brick (see illustration).



## Stormproofing Storm Windows

**Q.** I am weatherizing an old bungalow in our area where coastal storms can be severe. Can the old aluminum storm windows be revamped to prevent hard driving rain from leaking in? What lubricant can I use to make these windows operate more easily?

**A.** To keep some of the rain out, caulk the frames into place against the trim. The joints at the corners of the frames can also be caulked. And if there is pile weatherstrip on the storm sash, it can be replaced. Most hardware stores sell a replacement kit for these. Beyond that there is little you can do. Care should be taken to keep the weep holes in the bottom of the window open so water that does get in can drain. In general, the storm window should not be tighter than the prime window or condensation will probably occur between the windows.

A spray-on Teflon or silicone lubricant will help the windows operate more easily.

## Insulating Wet Basements

**Q.** What is the best way to insulate a floor over a damp basement? Should a vapor barrier be used? If so, should it be installed towards the heated surface, as one might expect, or beneath the joists to keep rising moisture from soaking the insulation?

**A.** A vapor barrier should be used and it should be installed on the warm side of the insulation, which is against the underside of the floor. The insulation can be held in place with short wires sprung between the floor joists. These can be purchased from most lumber yards for installation on 16- and 24-inch centers. Another option to hold the insulation in place is a network of single-strand wire or chicken wire strung across the bottom of the joists.

In a typical basement, there are many surfaces that will be colder than the insulation on the ceiling and the moisture will condense on these first. There should be no condensation in the insulation. ■

Henry Spies is with the Small Homes Council-Building Research Council of the University of Illinois. Questions should be sent to him at *The Journal of Light Construction*.