

# Ventilation of small roofs

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## Question

Do all insulated roof voids, including small roof voids to porches and bay windows, need to be ventilated?

## Considerations

- Ventilation is required to cold roof voids to disperse water vapour and reduce the risk of condensation within the structure.
- Providing cross-ventilation to small roofs can be difficult and unsightly.
- NHBC Standards clause 7.2.15 gives ventilation requirements for pitched cold roofs.
- NHBC Standards clause 7.1.7 refers to ventilation requirements for cold flat roofs.
- Approved Document C (England and Wales), Technical Handbook – Domestic 3 (Scotland) and Building Regulations Part C (Northern Ireland) refer to ventilation of cold roof spaces.
- BS 5250 “Code of practice for the control of condensation in buildings” gives recommendations for ventilation of roof spaces and methods for calculating the risk of interstitial condensation within roof structures.

## Answer

Cross-ventilation should normally be provided for insulated cold pitched roofs. However, where the roof area is very small (3m<sup>2</sup> or less) ventilation need not be provided.

Cross-ventilation should be provided for all insulated cold deck at roofs, regardless of size.

Alternative roof designs, e.g. warm roofs or unventilated cold pitched roofs, using a vapour permeable underlay, may be preferable for small roofs.



**NHBC, NHBC House, Davy Avenue, Knowlhill, Milton Keynes, Bucks MK5 8FP**  
**Tel: 0344 633 1000 Web: nhbc.co.uk**

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