

How do you walk safely in an insulated attic?

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Robert from Winnipeg Manitoba asks about the safety of walking around in his attic. First let's be sure not to fall into the room below. If you were to remove all the insulation, you would see the drywall or plaster of the ceiling below, nothing more. It is held in place by the ceiling joists, which inside the attic become the floor joists. If you are not going to remove the insulation, you have to carefully seek out the location of each joist with your feet, being sure you are on solid material before putting your weight down. If you wish to put boards out to walk on, it is better to either add some wooden spacers from the joists up to the top of the insulation, or remove the insulation so that the boards can sit firmly on the joists. If you simply lay boards out and start walking or crawling on them, you could put enough pressure on the insulation to push the drywall away from the joists, popping nails all over the place if not actually breaking the ceiling panels. When your roof is made of roof trusses, it is much more difficult to move around, because of all the structure, but obvious as to where you can put your feet. If you displace insulation in order to move around in the attic, don't forget to put it back as you leave. Exposed floor joists can cause condensation on the inside of the ceiling, peeling paint and nail rusting. The trail you leave in the attic can easily end up tracing a path on the ceiling below. Once you have your footing solid, don't forget to wear a thick hat, if not a construction helmet. There will be a large number of very sharp and rusty nails sticking through the roof deck, and it is all too easy to get a puncture wound in the top of the head by just raising your head up too fast. A viewer asked me to explain the toe guards in the above photo. They are designed to prolong the life of steel toe boots. Steel toe boots are not allowed on construction sites as soon as the leather wears off exposing the metal because of the possibility of electrical shock. These Boot Saver toe guards simply glue onto the leather and prevent it from wearing off. A great gadget and hard to find, so I was happy to get them into the on-line store.

Keywords:

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