PROFESSIONAL INSULATION SELECTION GUIDE

FOR YOUR BARNDOMINIUM

A SIMPLE DECISION PROCESS

CLIENT NEEDS > MATERIALS > LOCATION > BUDGET > QUALITY > APPROVAL

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1.

START WITH THE CLIENT'S NEEDS

Select the result the owner wants before selecting a material

YEAR-ROUND COMFORT — PRIORITY

BENEFITS

More even temperatures, warmer surfaces, and fewer drafts.

CONSIDERATIONS

Requires a complete air-sealing and insulation plan—not only high R-value.

LOWER ENERGY USE — LONG TERM

BENEFITS

A strong envelope reduces heating and cooling demand over time.

CONSIDERATIONS

Results depend on HVAC sizing, airtightness, workmanship, and owner use.

MOISTURE CONTROL — ESSENTIAL

BENEFITS

Correct layers reduce condensation risk at cold metal and framing.

CONSIDERATIONS

The wrong vapor strategy can trap moisture inside the assembly.

BUDGET + ACCESS — BALANCE

BENEFITS

A balanced system can protect comfort while controlling initial cost.

CONSIDERATIONS

Lower-cost systems usually require separate air sealing and close inspection.

CLIENT QUESTIONS

Will the shop be heated? Is sound control important? Is the priority lower monthly bills or lower initial cost? Are future wiring changes likely?

2.

MATERIAL DIFFERENCES AT A GLANCE

Compare what each material does best and where it needs additional support

PHOTO	MATERIAL	MAIN BENEFITS	LIMITATIONS / DIFFERENCES	BEST CLIENT NEED	COST
	**CLOSED-CELL SPRAY FOAM**	High R-value per inch; excellent air seal; strong moisture control.	Highest initial cost; dense; difficult future access or removal.	Maximum comfort and condensation control.	**$$$$**
	**OPEN-CELL SPRAY FOAM**	Excellent air seal; fills irregular cavities; good sound absorption.	Needs more thickness; vapor strategy may be required.	Comfort and sound control with moderate foam cost.	**$$$**
	**FIBERGLASS BATTS**	Lowest common cost; available; easy future modifications.	Does not stop air; gaps and compression reduce performance.	Lower initial budget and accessible framed walls.	**$**
	**BLOWN FIBERGLASS**	More uniform coverage than batts in attics or netted cavities.	Requires depth and density control plus separate air sealing.	Economical attic or deep-cavity coverage.	**$-$$**
	**CELLULOSE**	Dense coverage; recycled content; good sound control.	Moisture-sensitive; density and settling must be controlled.	Quiet interiors and value-focused cavities or attics.	**$$**
	**HYBRID SYSTEM**	Combines foam air sealing with economical fiber insulation.	More sequencing and compatibility decisions; labor quality matters.	Balanced comfort, moisture control, and budget.	**$$-$$$**

IMPORTANT

R-value measures resistance to heat flow, but comfort also depends on air sealing, moisture control, thermal bridging, installation quality, and HVAC design.

General comparison based on DOE and ENERGY STAR building-envelope guidance. Product values and approved assemblies vary.

SPRAY FOAM OPTIONS

Understand the important difference between closed-cell and open-cell foam

CLOSED-CELL FOAM $$$$

BENEFITS

High R-value per inch, excellent air seal, and strong moisture resistance.

CONSIDERATIONS

Highest cost; difficult to remove and must be installed at correct depth.

OPEN-CELL FOAM $$$

BENEFITS

Expands well, seals irregular cavities, and can improve sound control.

CONSIDERATIONS

Lower R-value per inch and may require separate vapor control.

BEST FOR THE OWNER DECISION

BENEFITS

Closed cell favors maximum air and moisture control; open cell favors cavity filling and sound.

CONSIDERATIONS

Neither option replaces ventilation, approved details, or quality control.

WHAT TO VERIFY ESSENTIAL

BENEFITS

Confirm product, thickness, covered area, warranty, and protective coating.

CONSIDERATIONS

Uneven thickness, poor adhesion, or overspray can reduce performance.

CLIENT TIP

Select foam by the complete assembly and desired result—not by color or appearance. Confirm all specifications in writing.

4.

FIBER INSULATION OPTIONS

Compare economical materials for framed cavities, attics, and sound control

FIBERGLASS BATTS $

BENEFITS

Lowest common cost, widely available, and easy to replace or modify.

CONSIDERATIONS

Gaps, compression, and poor fitting reduce performance; needs air sealing.

BLOWN FIBERGLASS $-$$

BENEFITS

More uniform coverage in attics and netted cavities than standard batts.

CONSIDERATIONS

Depth, density, settling, and separate air sealing must be verified.

CELLULOSE $$

BENEFITS

Dense coverage, good sound control, and recycled-content options.

CONSIDERATIONS

Moisture-sensitive and may settle if installed below specified density.

HYBRID SYSTEM $$-$$$

BENEFITS

Combines targeted foam air sealing with economical fiberglass or cellulose.

CONSIDERATIONS

Requires compatible products, correct sequencing, and a clear installer scope.

QUALITY TIP

Fiber insulation provides excellent value when it is dry, fully fitted, protected from air movement, and inspected before drywall.

WHERE EACH SYSTEM FITS

Match the strategy to the location and how the space will be used

ROOF / CEILING

$$-$$$$

BENEFITS

Foam can follow the roofline; blown fiber works over an air-sealed ceiling.

CONSIDERATIONS

Choose vented or unvented design before selecting the material.

EXTERIOR WALLS

$-$$$$

BENEFITS

Foam offers air control; fiber offers value and easier future access.

CONSIDERATIONS

Posts, girts, corners, windows, and base transitions require attention.

SHOP / GARAGE

$-$$$

BENEFITS

Separate zones allow different temperatures and operating costs.

CONSIDERATIONS

Garage doors, exhaust, and separation from living space affect performance.

INTERIOR SOUND

$$-$$$

BENEFITS

Cellulose, fiberglass, and open-cell foam can absorb sound in partitions.

CONSIDERATIONS

Sound control also depends on drywall, doors, framing, and sealed gaps.

CLIMATE NOTE

Cold winters and humid summers make air sealing, condensation control, ventilation, and correctly sized HVAC especially important.

RECOMMENDATIONS BY CLIENT PRIORITY

Choose the system that directly answers the owner's primary goal

MAXIMUM COMFORT

$$$-$$$$

BENEFITS

Closed-cell or a well-designed hybrid can reduce drafts and cold surfaces.

CONSIDERATIONS

Higher initial investment and more detailed planning.

BALANCED BUDGET

$$-$$$

BENEFITS

Targeted air sealing plus fiber insulation balances performance and price.

CONSIDERATIONS

Requires compatible layers and careful sequencing.

LOWEST INITIAL COST

$

BENEFITS

Fiberglass can work well when fully fitted and separately air sealed.

CONSIDERATIONS

Most sensitive to gaps, compression, and incomplete air sealing.

QUIET HOME / SHOP

$$-$$$

BENEFITS

Cellulose, fiberglass, or open-cell foam can improve sound absorption.

CONSIDERATIONS

Sound control also needs the correct wall, door, and ceiling details.

OWNER GUIDANCE

Prioritize a tested air and moisture strategy when condensation is the main concern. Discuss future electrical access before selecting full-depth foam.

7.

FINAL CLIENT-SELECTION CHECKLIST

Confirm decisions once, document them clearly, and inspect before drywall

OWNER PRIORITIES

- [ ] Comfort priority selected
- [ ] Energy-cost goal discussed
- [ ] Sound-control areas identified
- [ ] Shop temperature decided
- [ ] Future access considered

SELECTED SYSTEM

- [ ] Material and manufacturer
- [ ] Target R-value
- [ ] Installed thickness / depth
- [ ] Roof and wall locations
- [ ] Relative-cost approval

AIR + MOISTURE

- [ ] Air-sealing scope
- [ ] Vapor-control strategy
- [ ] Ventilation / exhaust plan
- [ ] Dry substrates verified
- [ ] Metal condensation details

QUALITY + APPROVAL

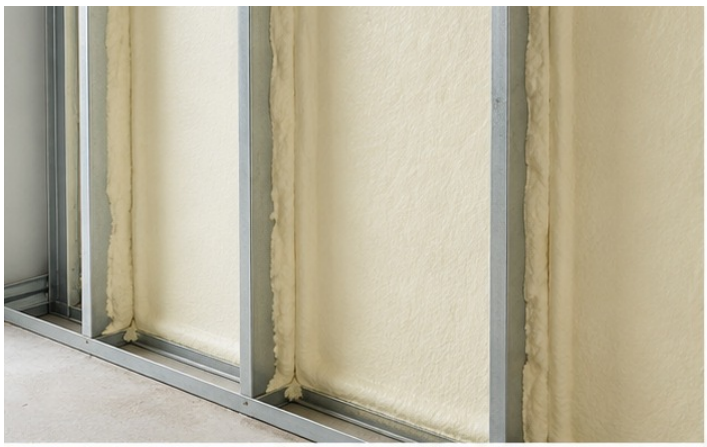
- [ ] Rough MEP inspections complete
- [ ] Coverage and gaps inspected
- [ ] Protective coating confirmed
- [ ] Photos before drywall
- [ ] Client approval and date

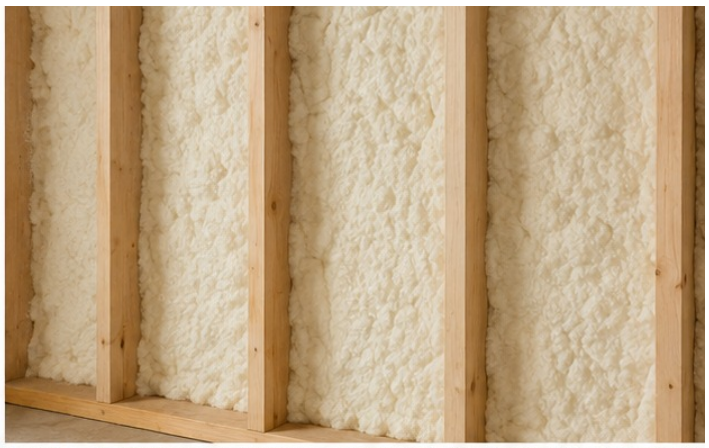
AVOID THESE MISTAKES

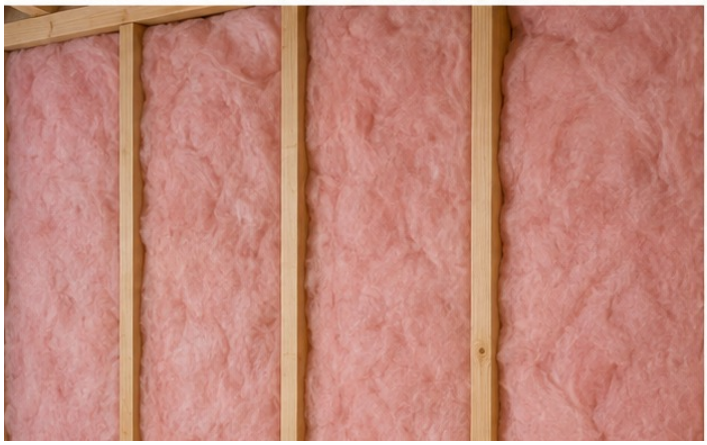
Do not choose by R-value or price alone, cover wet materials, leave gaps or compressed batts, or change vapor-control layers without review.

VISUAL MATERIAL COMPARISON

Use photographs to recognize materials—not to judge final performance







SPRAY FOAM — $$$-$$$$

For strong air sealing and irregular roof or wall geometry.

FIBERGLASS — $-$$

For economical cavities and attics with separate air sealing.

CELLULOSE / HYBRID — $$-$$$

For dense coverage, sound control, or a balanced system.

IMPORTANT NOTE

Final performance depends on the approved assembly, product, thickness, air sealing, moisture design, installation quality, and inspection.