OTTAWA SOUNDPROOFING

Materials & Products

MLV, resilient channel, acoustic insulation, Green Glue

18 Expert Answers from Sound IQ

ottawasoundproofing.com/construction-brain

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Q1

Are soundproof curtains actually effective or are they a waste of money?

Soundproof curtains provide modest noise reduction — typically 3-8 decibels — which is noticeable but far from true soundproofing. They're most effective against high-frequency sounds like traffic noise, voices, and air conditioning units, but do very little for low-frequency sounds like bass, footsteps, or heavy machinery.

What Soundproof Curtains Actually Do

Quality acoustic curtains work through **mass and absorption**. Heavy curtains with multiple layers, dense weave fabrics, and sometimes mass loaded vinyl cores can absorb some sound energy and block a small amount of transmission. Products like Nicetown blackout curtains ($40-80), Moondream acoustic curtains ($100-200), or custom theatre curtains with MLV backing ($200-500) represent the spectrum from basic to professional-grade options available in Ottawa.

The key is understanding what "soundproof" means in marketing versus reality. True soundproofing requires **mass, air gaps, absorption, and decoupling** — curtains only provide mass and absorption. A typical acoustic curtain might reduce noise by 5-10 decibels, which sounds modest but represents cutting the perceived loudness roughly in half. However, this reduction primarily affects mid and high frequencies (voices, traffic hum, HVAC noise) while doing almost nothing for low frequencies (bass, footsteps, rumbling trucks).

In Ottawa's urban environment, where traffic noise from the Queensway, Bronson Avenue, or Bank Street is common, quality acoustic curtains can make bedrooms noticeably quieter for sleeping. They're particularly effective in older homes with single-pane windows or newer condos with large windows facing busy streets. The key is realistic expectations — they'll reduce annoying background noise but won't eliminate your neighbour's music or footsteps from upstairs.

Practical Application and Limitations

For curtains to be effective, they must **cover the entire window area** and extend beyond the frame to minimize sound flanking around the edges. Installation should include ceiling-mounted tracks that allow the curtains to seal against the wall on both sides. Many homeowners make the mistake of hanging lightweight "soundproof" curtains on standard rods with gaps everywhere — this provides minimal benefit.

The biggest limitation is that windows are rarely the primary sound transmission path in most noise problems. Sound typically travels through walls, ceilings, floors, doors, and HVAC systems much more readily than through modern double or triple-pane windows. If you're hearing your neighbour's TV clearly, the sound is probably coming through the shared wall, not the window, so even perfect acoustic curtains won't solve the problem.

Ottawa's climate adds another consideration — heavy acoustic curtains provide excellent **thermal insulation** during our cold winters, potentially saving on heating costs while providing modest sound reduction. This dual benefit can justify the cost even if the acoustic improvement is limited.

When They're Worth It vs. When They're Not

Acoustic curtains make sense for **specific, limited noise problems**: reducing traffic noise for better sleep, minimizing echo in a room with hard surfaces, creating a quieter home office environment, or adding privacy from outdoor conversations. They're also useful as **part of a larger soundproofing strategy** — every few decibels of reduction helps when combined with other measures.

They're generally a waste of money for serious noise problems like loud neighbours, home theatre isolation, or eliminating footstep noise from upstairs. In these cases, the $200-500 spent on curtains would be better invested in proper wall soundproofing, door upgrades, or professional acoustic consultation.

For most Ottawa homeowners dealing with moderate noise issues, quality acoustic curtains are a reasonable first step — they're non-permanent, relatively affordable, and provide immediate (if modest) improvement. Just don't expect miracles, and be prepared to invest in proper soundproofing if the noise problem significantly impacts your quality of life.

For serious noise concerns, it's worth consulting with an experienced acoustic professional who can assess your specific situation and recommend whether curtains, window upgrades, or comprehensive soundproofing will provide the most cost-effective solution.

Q2

What's the best resilient channel brand available at Ottawa building supply stores?

RC-1 resilient channel from PABCO Gypsum is the most widely available and reliable option at Ottawa building supply stores, found at Home Depot, Lowe's, and most professional lumber yards. This galvanized steel channel meets Canadian standards and provides consistent performance when properly installed.

Understanding Resilient Channel Options

The **RC-1 profile** is the industry standard in Canada, featuring the distinctive hat-shaped cross-section that creates a spring-like decoupling effect between your drywall and the structural framing. PABCO's version is manufactured to tight tolerances and uses 25-gauge galvanized steel that resists corrosion in Ottawa's humid conditions. You'll

also find **ClarkDietrich RC-1** at some suppliers, which offers similar performance characteristics.

However, here's the critical point many Ottawa homeowners miss: **sound isolation clips with hat channel significantly outperform resilient channel alone**. Products like **RSIC-1 clips** (available through specialty acoustic suppliers) paired with standard furring channel can improve your wall assembly's STC rating by 5-10 points over resilient channel. The clips cost more upfront ($4-7 each versus $1.50-2.50 per linear foot for resilient channel), but they provide superior vibration isolation.

Under the **Ontario Building Code**, party walls between dwelling units must achieve STC 50 minimum, but resilient channel assemblies typically hit STC 52-55 when properly installed. For serious noise problems in Centretown condos or Barrhaven townhouses, you'll want that extra performance from isolation clips. Ottawa's extreme temperature swings also favor the more robust mounting system that clips provide.

Installation Critical Success Factors

The biggest mistake with resilient channel is **short-circuiting** — driving screws through the channel into the stud behind it. This creates a rigid connection that completely defeats the decoupling effect. Always screw only into the channel itself, never through it. In Ottawa's cold climate, also ensure your **vapour barrier placement** remains on the warm side of the insulation, even with the channel creating a small thermal bridge.

Space channels 16 or 24 inches on center, and run them perpendicular to the framing. Cut channels with tin snips, never bend or twist them. Each channel should span at least three framing members for proper load distribution. Use 1¼-inch fine-thread drywall screws into the channel only.

For your specific soundproofing project, it's worth consulting with an experienced acoustic contractor who can assess whether resilient channel alone will meet your noise reduction goals, or if upgrading to isolation clips would be more cost-effective long-term. Check the Ottawa Contractor Directory for professionals who can evaluate your situation and ensure proper installation that actually delivers the sound isolation you're paying for.

Q3

What's the difference between mass loaded vinyl and Green Glue for soundproofing walls?

Mass Loaded Vinyl (MLV) and Green Glue serve completely different functions in wall soundproofing — MLV acts as a dense barrier that blocks sound transmission, while Green Glue is a damping compound

that converts sound energy into heat between two layers of drywall.

Understanding the Two Approaches

Mass Loaded Vinyl is a thin, heavy, flexible membrane (typically 1 lb per square foot) that works purely through mass — the denser the material, the harder it is for sound waves to vibrate through it. MLV gets installed as a continuous sheet over wall studs before the drywall goes up, creating a limp-mass barrier that's particularly effective at blocking mid and high-frequency sounds like voices and TV audio. In Ottawa installations, expect to pay $1.50-$3.00 per square foot for quality MLV plus installation labor.

Green Glue Noiseproofing Compound works through viscoelastic damping — when sound waves try to vibrate the drywall, the compound converts that vibrational energy into tiny amounts of heat instead of letting it pass through. You apply Green Glue between two layers of drywall (typically 5/8-inch Type X), using about one tube per 32 square feet. At $15-$22 per tube in Ottawa, it's one of the most cost-effective soundproofing upgrades available.

The key difference is that **MLV blocks sound through mass, while Green Glue dampens vibration through energy conversion**. MLV is excellent for blocking airborne noise but does nothing for impact noise like footsteps. Green Glue works across a broader frequency range and is particularly effective at reducing low-frequency transmission — that bass from your neighbor's home theatre that seems to travel through everything.

Performance and Installation Considerations

In Ottawa's climate, both materials face installation challenges during winter months. Green Glue requires temperatures above 10°C to cure properly, so winter installations in unheated spaces need temporary heating. MLV can become stiff in extreme cold, making it harder to handle during installation. Both products must be carefully detailed around electrical outlets, switches, and HVAC penetrations — any gaps will significantly reduce performance.

For maximum effectiveness, many Ottawa soundproofing projects use both materials together — MLV as the blocking layer and Green Glue between doubled drywall for damping. A typical high-performance wall assembly might include: acoustic mineral wool insulation (Roxul Safe'n'Sound), MLV over the studs, resilient channel or isolation clips, first layer of 5/8-inch drywall, Green Glue compound, and a second layer of drywall. This combination can achieve STC ratings of 55-60, well above Ontario Building Code minimums.

The choice between them often comes down to your specific noise problem and budget. If you're dealing with voices and TV sound from adjacent rooms, Green Glue between double drywall offers excellent value. If you're trying to block traffic noise or need maximum isolation for a home theatre, MLV plus Green Glue provides superior performance. Remember that proper air sealing with acoustic caulk is critical with either approach — sound will find any gap you leave.

For a project like this, it's worth consulting with an experienced soundproofing contractor who can assess your specific noise issues and recommend the most cost-effective combination of materials for your situation.

Q4

What's the most effective acoustic caulk for sealing gaps in a soundproof wall assembly?

Tremco Acoustical Sealant is the gold standard for sealing gaps in soundproof wall assemblies, offering superior performance that remains permanently flexible while maintaining excellent adhesion to all common building materials. This professional-grade acoustic caulk costs $12-$18 per tube in Ottawa but delivers the reliability that serious soundproofing projects demand.

Why Acoustic Caulk Quality Matters

The effectiveness of your entire soundproof wall assembly hinges on complete air sealing — even a hairline crack can reduce your STC rating by 5-10 points. Regular construction caulk hardens over time and cracks with Ottawa's extreme temperature swings (from -30°C to +35°C), creating sound leak paths that undermine your investment. Acoustic caulk like Tremco remains permanently flexible, moving with the building without breaking the seal.

Tremco Acoustical Sealant excels because it bonds to drywall, wood, metal, concrete, and vinyl without primer, stays flexible for decades, and maintains its seal through over 100 freeze-thaw cycles per year that Ottawa experiences. It also meets fire-rating requirements when used in fire-rated assemblies, which is crucial since most party walls between dwelling units must maintain their fire rating under the Ontario Building Code.

OSI QUAD Max offers excellent performance at $8-$12 per tube and works well for most residential soundproofing projects. It provides good adhesion and flexibility, though not quite matching Tremco's longevity. **Acoustical Solutions Acoustic Caulk** at $10-$15 per tube is another solid choice, specifically formulated for sound control applications.

For Ottawa's climate, avoid any caulk that becomes rigid when cured — this includes most standard construction caulks and even some products marketed as "acoustic." The constant expansion and contraction from our temperature extremes will crack rigid caulks within 2-3 years, creating sound leak paths exactly where you need the tightest seal.

Application is critical — clean all surfaces first, apply in a continuous bead without gaps, and tool the surface smooth within 10 minutes. Pay special attention to the top and bottom plates of walls, around electrical boxes (even with acoustic putty pads), where different materials meet, and at all drywall joints that won't be taped. In double-wall assemblies, seal both the inner and outer drywall layers separately.

Common mistake: Using too little caulk to save money. A $15 tube covers roughly 50 linear feet with a 1/4-inch bead — skimping on coverage to save $20 can cost you thousands in lost soundproofing performance. Also, never caulk over dust or debris; the seal will fail within months.

For serious soundproofing projects, budget one tube per 40-50 linear feet of sealing, and always buy 10-15 percent extra — running out mid-project means joints that don't get sealed properly. Professional soundproofing contractors in Ottawa typically use Tremco exclusively because the performance difference justifies the cost premium.

For a project requiring this level of acoustic sealing, it's worth consulting with an experienced soundproofing professional who can ensure every potential sound leak gets properly addressed and recommend the most effective approach for your specific wall assembly and noise concerns.

Q5

Should I use acoustic hangers or clips to decouple my basement ceiling from the floor joists?

For basement ceiling decoupling, sound isolation clips (such as RSIC-1, WhisperClips, or GenieClip) paired with hat channel are the clear winner over traditional acoustic hangers or resilient channel for most Ottawa residential projects. Isolation clips consistently outperform resilient channel by 5-10 STC points in real-world installations because they provide true mechanical decoupling through a rubber isolator element, whereas resilient channel relies on a thin metal profile that is extremely easy to short-circuit during installation. The way isolation clips work is straightforward: a rubber or neoprene isolator is housed in a metal or polymer clip that screws directly to the joist. A hat channel (7/8" furring channel) snaps into the clip, and your drywall screws into the hat channel — never into the joist. The rubber element absorbs vibration energy before it can transfer from the floor above into your basement ceiling drywall. A properly installed clip-and-channel system with two layers of 5/8" Type X drywall, Green Glue compound, and Roxul Safe'n'Sound mineral wool between the joists can achieve STC 55-63, well above the OBC minimum of STC 50 and genuinely comfortable for most homeowners. Traditional resilient channel (RC-1) is the budget alternative at $1.50-$2.50 per linear foot compared to $4-$7 per clip, but it comes with a critical vulnerability. If even a single drywall screw misses the channel flange and hits the joist behind it, you have created a rigid sound bridge that can reduce your entire ceiling's performance by 8-12 STC points. In a typical Ottawa basement ceiling of 800-1,200 square feet, there may be 500-800 drywall screws — the odds of every single one hitting perfectly are not in your favour, especially for DIY installers. Isolation clips are far more forgiving because the hat channel sits well below the joist face, making it physically difficult for screws to reach the structure above. Cost-wise for an Ottawa basement, expect to pay approximately $3.00-$5.00 per square foot for the clip-and-channel system (clips plus hat channel plus labour), compared to $1.50-$2.50 per square foot for resilient channel. For a 1,000-square-foot basement, that is roughly $3,000-$5,000 versus $1,500-$2,500 — a premium of about $1,500-$2,500 that buys you significantly better performance and much lower risk of installation error. Many Ottawa homeowners finishing basements in Barrhaven, Kanata, and Stittsville find that the clip system pays for itself in peace of mind alone. One

Ottawa-specific detail worth noting: our cold winters cause floor joists to contract and shift slightly, which can cause resilient channel to develop contact points with the structure over time — another advantage of the more robust clip system. Whichever approach you choose, this is a project where professional installation makes a real difference. Browse the Ottawa Contractor Directory at justynrookcontracting.com/directory to find soundproofing professionals who specialize in basement ceiling isolation.Looking for experienced contractors? The Ottawa Construction Network connects homeowners with qualified professionals:Luxe Painting and Renovations RenoMotion Inc.RrenovatiosValcor ConstructionCustom By ArieView all contractors ?

Q6

What's the best floor underlayment for impact noise reduction under luxury vinyl plank in Ottawa?

The best floor underlayment for impact noise reduction under luxury vinyl plank (LVP) in Ottawa is a rubber or cork-rubber composite underlayment in the 3-6mm thickness range, with products like Pliteq GenieMat RST, Acoustik by Duracoustics, or Cork Plus underlayment leading the field. These materials excel at absorbing the footfall energy that creates impact noise — the thumping and tapping that drives downstairs neighbours crazy in condos and stacked townhouses — while providing a stable, firm surface that LVP needs to perform properly. Not all underlayments work well with luxury vinyl plank, and this is where many Ottawa homeowners make costly mistakes. LVP is a floating floor system that requires a firm, stable substrate — the soft, spongy foam underlayments commonly used under laminate flooring can actually cause LVP click-lock joints to flex and fail over time. Look specifically for underlayments rated for vinyl plank use with a compressive strength sufficient to support the flooring without excessive deflection. Rubber underlayment at 3mm thickness hits the sweet spot: firm enough for LVP stability, dense enough for meaningful impact isolation, and thin enough to avoid transition height issues at doorways. Budget approximately $2.00-$4.50 per square foot for quality acoustic underlayment, compared to $0.50-$1.00 for basic foam. IIC Ratings and Ottawa Building Code Requirements For condos and multi-unit buildings in Ottawa, the Ontario Building Code requires a minimum IIC 50 for floor-ceiling assemblies between dwelling units. A standard LVP floor on concrete with basic foam underlayment typically achieves IIC 45-50 — right at or below code minimum. Upgrading to a quality rubber or cork-rubber underlayment can boost that to IIC 55-65, providing a noticeable improvement in impact noise reduction and a comfortable margin above code. If you are in a wood-frame building — common in many Barrhaven, Orleans, and Kanata townhome complexes — impact noise is even more challenging, and you may want to layer a mass loaded vinyl membrane under the rubber underlayment for maximum performance. Ottawa's climate introduces a factor that does not get enough attention: our extreme humidity swings from very dry winter air (sometimes below 20% RH) to humid summers (70%+ RH) can cause dimensional changes in both the underlayment and the LVP itself. Rubber and cork-rubber underlayments are

inherently moisture-stable and serve as a vapour retarder over concrete subfloors, which is particularly important in Ottawa basement installations where slab moisture is common. Always perform a calcium chloride or relative humidity test on concrete subfloors before installation — moisture levels above 75% RH or 3 lbs per 1,000 sq ft require a dedicated vapour barrier beneath the underlayment. For a typical 1,000-square-foot Ottawa condo, expect to pay $2,000-$4,500 for professional-grade underlayment installed, which is a worthwhile investment compared to the ongoing stress of noise complaints. Connect with an experienced flooring and soundproofing professional through the Ottawa Contractor Directory at justynrookcontracting.com/directory to get the right product specified for your specific floor assembly.Looking for experienced contractors? The Ottawa Construction Network connects homeowners with qualified professionals:HomeupgradersJC CarpentrySomar Contracting Inc.Denys Builds Designs RenovationsEstra DesignView all contractors ?

Q7

Are acoustic stretch fabric wall systems effective for both sound absorption and noise blocking?

Acoustic stretch fabric wall systems are highly effective for sound absorption — reducing echo, reverberation, and flutter within a room — but they provide virtually zero noise blocking (sound transmission loss) on their own. This is one of the most commonly misunderstood distinctions in acoustics, and confusing the two can lead to expensive disappointment. If your goal is to stop sound from passing through a wall to the next room, a stretch fabric system alone will not help. A stretch fabric wall system consists of an aluminium or plastic perimeter track mounted to the wall, with acoustic absorber material (typically fibreglass panels or mineral wool boards) placed behind a decorative fabric that is tensioned across the frame. The absorptive core — usually 1-2 inches of Owens Corning 703 or Rockwool acoustic board — captures mid and high-frequency sound energy within the room, reducing reverberation time (RT60) and improving speech clarity. These systems excel in home theatres, recording studios, conference rooms, and open-concept offices where controlling the room's internal acoustics is the priority. A well-designed stretch fabric system can achieve NRC 0.85-1.05 (Noise Reduction Coefficient), meaning it absorbs 85-100 percent of the sound energy that hits it. The critical distinction is that absorption and blocking are fundamentally different physics. Sound absorption converts acoustic energy to heat within a porous material. Sound blocking requires mass, density, and air-tight construction — heavy drywall, mass loaded vinyl, decoupled framing, and sealed penetrations. A stretch fabric panel weighs perhaps 2-4 pounds per square foot, far too light to block sound transmission. To put it in perspective, the Ontario Building Code requires STC 50 for party walls between dwelling units, and a stretch fabric system by itself contributes essentially STC 0 to that rating. That said, stretch fabric systems can be part of a comprehensive soundproofing strategy when layered over a properly built sound isolation wall. In many Ottawa Centretown and Glebe condos, homeowners invest in both: first, a high-performance wall assembly with isolation clips, double drywall, Green Glue, and acoustic mineral wool to achieve STC 55-60 for noise blocking, and then a stretch fabric system over top for room acoustics and aesthetics. The fabric system hides the industrial look of the sound-rated wall while improving the room's internal sound quality. Budget approximately $15-$30 per square foot installed for a quality stretch fabric system in Ottawa, on top of whatever you invest in the underlying sound isolation assembly. If you are dealing with noise coming through walls from neighbours or adjacent rooms, invest your budget in proper sound isolation first — decoupled drywall, mass, and sealed construction — and add the stretch fabric for aesthetics and room tuning afterward. A soundproofing professional can help you design a system that addresses both needs effectively, and the Ottawa Contractor Directory at justynrookcontracting.com/directory is a great resource for finding experienced acoustic specialists in the Ottawa area.Looking for experienced contractors? The Ottawa Construction Network connects homeowners with qualified professionals:Justyn Rook ContractingRenoMotion Inc.The FixerLeeds Property MaintenanceMaster TapersView all contractors ?

Q8

What kind of vibration isolation mounts should I use for a ceiling-mounted projector in a media room?

For a ceiling-mounted projector in a media room, you should use elastomeric vibration isolation mounts — specifically, neoprene or silicone isolation pads rated for the weight of your projector — combined with a threaded rod suspension system using spring isolators. The goal is to prevent the projector's internal fan vibration from transmitting into the ceiling structure and, more importantly, to prevent the room's bass energy from shaking the projector and causing image jitter on screen. The most effective approach for residential media rooms is a two-stage isolation system. First, mount a projector ceiling plate to threaded rods that hang from the structural ceiling, and incorporate Mason Industries or Kinetics spring hangers (or equivalent) at the connection points — these absorb low-frequency vibrations that elastomeric pads alone cannot handle. Second, place neoprene isolation pads between the projector mount plate and the projector itself to catch higher-frequency mechanical vibration from the projector's cooling fan. This two-stage approach costs approximately $150-$350 in isolation hardware on top of your standard projector mount, but it makes a meaningful difference in both image stability and noise control. If your media room has a soundproofed ceiling — and it should, if you are serious about acoustic performance — you need to be especially careful about how the projector mount penetrates that ceiling assembly. Every rigid connection through a decoupled ceiling is a flanking path that can short-circuit your sound isolation clips and resilient channel. The proper technique is to mount the threaded rods directly to the structural joists above the decoupled ceiling, passing through the drywall layers with oversized holes sealed with acoustic caulk so there is no rigid contact between the mount and the finished ceiling surface. This detail alone can prevent 5-10 STC points of performance loss in your ceiling assembly. In Ottawa, where many homeowners in Kanata, Stittsville, and Riverside South are finishing basements as dedicated media rooms, the ceiling-mounted projector is increasingly common. Our climate adds a consideration that is easy to overlook: seasonal humidity changes — from very dry winter air to humid summers — can cause wooden joists to expand and contract, which over time can loosen rigid mount hardware. Spring-type isolators are inherently more forgiving of this movement than rigid bolt connections, making them a better long-term choice for Ottawa installations. For the projector's own noise output, keep in mind that most home theatre projectors produce 28-35 dB of fan noise, which is noticeable in a quiet, acoustically treated room. A hush box — a ventilated acoustic enclosure around the projector — can reduce this by 10-15 dB, but it needs to be carefully designed to avoid overheating. Budget $300-$800 for a custom hush box with proper ventilation. For the full media room experience, it is worth having an acoustic professional assess your ceiling structure, projector weight, and room layout to design the right isolation system — the Ottawa Contractor Directory at justynrookcontracting.com/directory can connect you with specialists who handle this type of work.Looking for experienced contractors? The Ottawa Construction Network connects homeowners with qualified professionals:613BinsJC CarpentryHome Front ServicesLeeds Property MaintenancePrism ServicesView all

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Q9

Is there a noticeable performance difference between one-pound and two-pound mass loaded vinyl?

Yes, there is a measurable and noticeable performance difference between one-pound and two-pound mass loaded vinyl (MLV), but it is not as dramatic as doubling the weight might suggest. One-pound MLV (1 lb per square foot) provides roughly STC 26-27 on its own, while two-pound MLV delivers approximately STC 29-32. That 3-5 STC point improvement translates to a perceptible reduction in sound transmission — most people can detect a 3 dB change — but it comes at a significant cost and handling penalty that may not always be justified. The physics behind this follows the mass law of sound isolation, which states that doubling the mass of a barrier increases its sound transmission loss by approximately 6 dB in theory. In practice, because MLV is always installed as part of a larger wall or ceiling assembly, the real-world gain from upgrading to two-pound MLV is typically 3-5 STC points for the complete assembly. Where this matters most is in the low-frequency range below 200 Hz — bass from subwoofers, traffic rumble, mechanical equipment hum — where heavier mass makes a proportionally bigger difference. If your primary noise concern is voices, television, or general household sound, one-pound MLV within a properly built assembly will usually get the job done. Cost and Practical Considerations for Ottawa Projects In Ottawa, one-pound MLV runs $1.50-$2.25 per square foot, while two-pound MLV costs $2.75-$4.50 per square foot — roughly double the material cost. For a typical 200-square-foot basement ceiling, that is the difference between $300-$450 and $550-$900 just for the MLV layer. Two-pound MLV is also significantly harder to work with: it weighs about 200 pounds per 4x25-foot roll compared to 100 pounds for one-pound, making ceiling installations particularly challenging and labour-intensive. Labour costs increase accordingly, often by 15-25 percent for two-pound installations. For most Ottawa residential soundproofing projects — party wall upgrades in Centretown condos, basement ceiling treatments in Barrhaven or Kanata homes, or home office isolation — one-pound MLV combined with Green Glue compound and double 5/8" drywall delivers excellent results at a much better price point. The assembly of isolation clips, hat channel, one-pound MLV, Green Glue between two layers of 5/8" Type X drywall, and acoustic mineral wool insulation can achieve STC 55-60, which exceeds the Ontario Building Code minimum of STC 50 by a comfortable margin. Reserve two-pound MLV for situations where you genuinely need maximum low-frequency isolation — dedicated home theatres, music studios, or mechanical room enclosures — where every additional STC point justifies the premium. One important Ottawa-specific note: MLV adhesives and tapes need temperatures above 10°C to bond properly, so if you are working in an unheated garage or basement during our winter months, plan for temporary heating during installation. A soundproofing professional familiar with Ottawa conditions can help you determine whether the upgrade to two-pound MLV is worth the investment for your specific

noise problem — browse the Ottawa Contractor Directory at justynrookcontracting.com/directory to connect with local acoustic specialists.Looking for experienced contractors? The Ottawa Construction Network connects homeowners with qualified professionals:Reno's by Daniel FrauwallnerRenoMotion Inc.Humble Homes - property maintenanceJaiko Cleaning ServicesCallandgoneView all contractors ?

Q10

What's the best acoustic door gasket system that works with Canadian-standard door frames?

The best acoustic door gasket system for Canadian-standard door frames is a perimeter compression seal combined with an automatic door bottom (drop seal), which together can achieve STC 35-45 depending on the door slab itself. The gold standard in the industry is the Zero International system — their perimeter gaskets and automatic door bottoms are designed to work with standard 1-3/8" and 1-3/4" interior door slabs used across Canada, and they mount directly to conventional wood or steel frames without modification. A complete acoustic door gasket system has three components. First, a perimeter compression gasket that seals the top and both sides of the door — look for neoprene or silicone seals rated for acoustic use, not simple foam weatherstripping that compresses flat within months. Second, an automatic door bottom that drops a seal against the threshold when the door closes and retracts when it opens, eliminating the massive air gap under the door that is typically the single weakest point in any room's sound isolation. Third, a proper acoustic threshold — a flat, smooth surface that the door bottom can seal tightly against. Budget approximately $150-$300 for a quality gasket kit for a single door, plus $100-$200 for professional installation if you want it done right. Here in Ottawa, there is an important climate consideration that many homeowners overlook. Our extreme temperature swings — from -30°C in January to +35°C in July — cause door frames to expand and contract seasonally, which can break the seal on rigid gasket systems. This is why adjustable compression gaskets are strongly preferred over fixed seals for Ottawa homes. Neoprene holds up far better than silicone in our freeze-thaw environment, maintaining its flexibility and compression memory through Ottawa's brutal winters. If you are in an older home in the Glebe, Sandy Hill, or Centretown, your door frames may also be slightly out of square after decades of settling, making adjustable gaskets even more important. Keep in mind that even the best gasket system is only as good as the door slab it surrounds. A hollow-core interior door has an STC rating of roughly 15-20 — adding gaskets to it might get you to STC 25, which is still inadequate for serious sound control. For meaningful results, pair your gasket system with a solid-core door (STC 30-35 on its own, $250-$500 per door) or a purpose-built acoustic door slab (STC 45-55, $800-$2,500+). The combination of a solid-core door with a quality gasket system can realistically achieve STC 38-45, which is a substantial improvement for most residential applications like home offices or bedrooms facing noisy common areas. One practical tip — when installing the automatic door bottom, ensure it makes full contact across the entire width of the threshold with no light visible underneath when the door is closed. Even a sliver of gap undermines the whole system. For a project like this, consulting with an experienced soundproofing professional who can assess your specific doors and frames will save you from costly trial and error — the Ottawa Contractor Directory at justynrookcontracting.com/directory is a good place to start your search.Looking for experienced contractors? The Ottawa Construction Network connects homeowners with qualified professionals:Reno's by Daniel FrauwallnerJC CarpentryHome Front ServicesALM Construction & Landscaping Inc.Grunt Work 4 GruntsView all

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Q11

Are there sound-rated electrical boxes that I should use in my soundproofed walls?

Yes, sound-rated electrical boxes are available and are a smart investment for any serious soundproofing project. Products like the Lessco Air-Vapor-Sound (AVS) box and Sealed electrical box systems from various manufacturers are specifically designed to minimize sound flanking through electrical penetrations, which are one of the most common weak points in otherwise well-built sound isolation walls.Standard electrical boxes are essentially open-backed plastic or metal shells with knockout holes for wiring. Even when installed in a soundproofed wall, they create thin spots where the only barrier between rooms is the box itself and a thin layer of drywall. In back-to-back configurations common in Ottawa condos and townhouses, the two boxes can be separated by as little as two inches of open air inside the wall cavity, creating a direct sound channel. A single pair of back-to-back standard boxes can reduce an STC 55 wall to an effective STC 43 to 45 at that location, undermining the entire investment.Product Options and Cost ConsiderationsPurpose-built sound-rated boxes feature sealed backs, gaskets where wires enter, and sometimes additional mass or damping material built into the housing. The Lessco AVS box, for example, includes an integrated air and vapour seal that addresses both acoustic and building envelope performance, which is particularly relevant in Ottawa where vapour barrier integrity is critical during our long heating season. These boxes typically cost $15 to $35 each, compared to $2 to $5 for a standard box. For a room with six to eight boxes, the premium is roughly $100 to $250 total, which is modest relative to a soundproofing project that may cost thousands.If you cannot source sound-rated boxes or prefer to save on materials, the standard professional approach is to use regular electrical boxes wrapped with acoustic putty pads. Products like Specified Technologies SSP putty pads or 3M Fire Barrier Putty Pads at $3 to $6 each wrap around the back and sides of a standard box, creating a dense, fire-rated seal that blocks sound flanking. This approach, combined with acoustic caulk where the box meets the drywall, achieves results very close to a purpose-built sound-rated box at a lower per-box cost. Most Ottawa soundproofing contractors use this putty pad method because the products are readily available and effective.Regardless of which approach you choose, there are two critical installation rules. First, never install boxes back-to-back on a party wall or any wall you are soundproofing. Offset boxes by at least one stud bay, roughly 16 inches, so that each box faces a solid section of wall on the other side. Second, seal every cable entry point where wires enter the box, using acoustic caulk or fire-rated putty. A common oversight is carefully sealing the box itself but leaving the wire knockouts wide open, which creates a direct air path that sound will exploit. In new construction or gut renovations, consider running wiring through surface-mounted conduit on the soundproofed wall rather than penetrating it at all, which eliminates the problem

entirely.For professional guidance on electrical details in your soundproofing project, especially in Ottawa condos where party wall fire ratings must be maintained per the Ontario Building Code, consult with an experienced soundproofing contractor. The Ottawa Contractor Directory at justynrookcontracting.com/directory is a helpful resource for finding qualified professionals in your area.Looking for experienced contractors? The Ottawa Construction Network connects homeowners with qualified professionals:HomeupgradersJC CarpentryFloor-2-Wall IncThe Granite shopGeerts Roofing IncView all contractors ?

Q12

What weight of mass loaded vinyl do I need for blocking low-frequency bass through a wall?

For blocking low-frequency bass through a wall, you should use 2 lb per square foot mass loaded vinyl (MLV) rather than the more commonly available 1 lb variety. Bass frequencies below 100 Hz are the most difficult sound to block, and they require significantly more mass than mid-range or high-frequency sound. The heavier 2 lb MLV provides roughly 3 to 5 additional STC points in the low-frequency range compared to 1 lb MLV, which can make the difference between still feeling the bass and genuinely blocking it.Mass loaded vinyl is a dense, flexible sheet material loaded with barium sulfate or calcium carbonate that adds mass to a wall assembly without adding significant thickness. Standard 1 lb per square foot MLV costs approximately $1.50 to $3.00 per square foot in Ottawa, while 2 lb MLV runs $3.00 to $5.50 per square foot. The 2 lb product is roughly twice the weight (about 2 pounds per square foot) and approximately 1/4 inch thick compared to 1/8 inch for the 1 lb version. For a typical 10x8-foot wall, 2 lb MLV adds roughly 160 pounds of mass to the assembly, which is substantial and requires proper support during installation.Why Bass Requires Heavier MaterialsLow-frequency sound behaves differently from mid and high frequencies. Bass waves are long, powerful, and capable of vibrating entire wall structures rather than just passing through air gaps. The Mass Law in acoustics states that doubling the mass of a barrier increases its sound blocking by approximately 6 dB, but this improvement is frequency-dependent and most impactful at lower frequencies. This is why adding mass through heavy MLV is one of the most direct ways to address bass transmission. However, mass alone is not sufficient for serious bass problems. You need a complete multi-element assembly combining mass, decoupling, absorption, and damping.For an Ottawa home dealing with bass from a neighbour's home theatre, a music practice room, or a teenager's subwoofer, the recommended wall assembly would include sound isolation clips and hat channel for decoupling, Rockwool Safe'n'Sound mineral wool filling the cavity, 2 lb MLV applied over the studs or over the first layer of drywall, and then double 5/8-inch Type X drywall with Green Glue compound between the layers. This assembly can achieve STC 60 or higher and provides meaningful attenuation down to approximately 50 Hz. The total installed cost in Ottawa for this type of premium wall treatment runs approximately $25 to $40 per square foot, or roughly $4,000 to $6,500 for a single 10x8-foot wall.Be

aware that very low bass below 40 Hz is extremely difficult to block with any wall treatment because those wavelengths are long enough to vibrate the entire building structure, including the floor and ceiling. If the bass source is within your own home, such as a home theatre subwoofer, vibration isolation platforms under the subwoofer are essential in addition to wall treatment. For bass from external sources, a full-perimeter approach treating walls, ceiling, and potentially the floor is necessary for meaningful results. This is genuinely a job for a professional acoustics specialist who can measure the specific frequencies causing problems and design an assembly to address them. The Ottawa Contractor Directory at justynrookcontracting.com/directory can help you find experienced soundproofing contractors serving the Ottawa area.Looking for experienced contractors? The Ottawa Construction Network connects homeowners with qualified professionals:Reno's by Daniel FrauwallnerRenoMotion Inc.Estra DesignALM Construction & Landscaping Inc.Custom By ArieView all contractors ?

Q13

Should I choose hat channel or resilient channel for my ceiling soundproofing project?

For ceiling soundproofing, hat channel paired with sound isolation clips is the superior choice and the one most acoustic professionals in Ottawa will recommend over resilient channel (RC-1) used alone. While resilient channel has been the standard for decades, isolation clips with hat channel provide significantly better decoupling and are far more forgiving of installation errors, which makes them worth the additional investment for ceiling applications where performance truly matters.Resilient channel is a thin, hat-shaped metal strip that attaches directly to the joists, with drywall then screwed to the channel rather than the joist. The channel flexes under sound pressure, breaking the direct connection between the drywall and the structure. It costs approximately $1.50 to $2.50 per linear foot in Ottawa and has been used in Canadian construction for decades. The problem is that resilient channel is extremely susceptible to short-circuiting, where a single screw that is too long, a piece of blocking that contacts the drywall, or even a heavy light fixture that compresses the channel can create a rigid bridge that defeats the entire purpose. In ceiling applications, where you are fighting gravity and where longer screws are tempting, short-circuiting is the most common installation failure.Why Isolation Clips Win for CeilingsSound isolation clips such as RSIC-1, Whisper Clips, or GenieClip mount directly to the joists and hold a piece of standard hat channel (furring channel) away from the structure using a built-in rubber isolator. The drywall screws into the hat channel, which floats on the rubber isolators, providing a much more robust and reliable decoupling system. Clips cost $4 to $7 each, spaced approximately every 48 inches along each joist, with hat channel at $1.00 to $1.50 per linear foot running perpendicular to the joists at 24-inch spacing. For a typical 800-square-foot Ottawa basement ceiling, the material cost for clips and hat channel runs roughly $1,200 to $2,000, compared to $600 to $1,000 for resilient channel alone.The performance difference justifies the cost. A ceiling assembly with isolation clips and hat channel typically achieves 8 to 12 STC points higher than the same assembly with resilient channel. In practical terms, that is the difference between still hearing conversations from upstairs (STC 45) and genuine quiet (STC 55+). Clips also provide better low-frequency isolation, which matters enormously for footstep noise (impact sound) coming through the ceiling of an Ottawa basement, a ubiquitous complaint in homes across Barrhaven, Kanata, and Orleans where finished basements are standard.The one scenario where resilient channel alone might be adequate is a budget-constrained project where you are soundproofing a ceiling between two rooms you own and moderate improvement is acceptable. In that case, resilient channel with Rockwool Safe'n'Sound insulation in the joist bays and double 5/8-inch Type X drywall with Green Glue can deliver a solid STC 50 to 52 if installed perfectly. The key phrase is perfectly, because resilient channel requires meticulous installation with exactly the right screw length and zero short circuits.For most Ottawa homeowners investing in basement or second-floor ceiling soundproofing, the isolation clip approach is the better value when you factor in the reliability of results. A professional installer experienced with both systems can help you choose the right approach for your specific ceiling and budget. Check

the Ottawa Contractor Directory at justynrookcontracting.com/directory to find soundproofing professionals in your area.Looking for experienced contractors? The Ottawa Construction Network connects homeowners with qualified professionals:613BinsJC CarpentryOttawa CaulkingSteven Labelle - Your Complete Home RenovatorSomar Contracting Inc.View all contractors ?

Q14

What's the best acoustic caulk that stays flexible through Ottawa's freeze-thaw cycles?

The best acoustic caulk for Ottawa's demanding climate is Tremco Acoustical Sealant, which remains permanently flexible and never fully cures, making it ideal for joints and perimeters in soundproofed assemblies that will experience the extreme temperature swings of our region. A close second is Green Glue Noiseproofing Sealant, which offers similar non-hardening properties and is widely available through the same suppliers that carry Green Glue compound.Ottawa's climate puts extraordinary stress on sealants. With winter temperatures dropping to -30C and summer heat reaching +35C, plus over 100 freeze-thaw cycles per year, any sealant that hardens even slightly will crack, separate from substrates, and create sound leak paths. Standard silicone caulk and latex caulk both stiffen significantly in cold temperatures, and acrylic caulk can crack outright after a few seasons of thermal cycling. This is why purpose-built acoustic sealants are formulated to remain permanently pliable, essentially staying in a putty-like state indefinitely. They never skin over or harden, which means they maintain their seal even as building materials expand and contract through Ottawa's seasonal extremes.Product Options and Application TipsTremco Acoustical Sealant costs approximately $8 to $12 per tube in Ottawa and is available through building supply dealers and some Home Depot locations. It is a non-hardening, non-skinning sealant that remains permanently flexible. The trade-off is that it stays tacky and cannot be painted, so it is best used in concealed locations like the perimeter of drywall panels, behind baseboards, around electrical boxes, and at ceiling-to-wall joints where it will be hidden by trim or additional drywall layers. Green Glue Noiseproofing Sealant runs $12 to $18 per tube and has similar properties. It is specifically designed to complement Green Glue compound in complete soundproofing assemblies.For exposed joints where you need a paintable finish, OSI SC-175 or similar acoustically rated sealants offer a compromise. They skin over and can be painted but remain flexible beneath the surface. They are not quite as permanently flexible as Tremco, but they hold up well in interior applications where temperature swings are moderated by the building envelope. If you are soundproofing an interior wall between rooms in a heated Ottawa home, the temperature variation at the sealant joints is much less extreme than in an exterior application, and a paintable acoustic sealant will perform adequately.Application technique matters as much as product selection. Apply acoustic caulk in a continuous, unbroken bead around the entire perimeter of every drywall panel, at every joint between the drywall and the floor, ceiling, and adjacent walls. Seal around every penetration, including

electrical boxes, HVAC registers, plumbing pipes, and any other hole through the assembly. The goal is a completely airtight envelope because sound travels through any air gap, no matter how small. Even a gap as thin as a credit card along a 10-foot wall can reduce performance by several STC points. One tube of acoustic sealant covers approximately 40 to 50 linear feet, so budget three to five tubes for a typical room at a total cost of $30 to $60, which is one of the most cost-effective investments in any soundproofing project.For professional-grade results and to ensure every gap is sealed properly, consider working with a soundproofing contractor who understands the critical importance of air sealing. The Ottawa Contractor Directory at justynrookcontracting.com/directory can help you find acoustic professionals serving the Ottawa area.Looking for experienced contractors? The Ottawa Construction Network connects homeowners with qualified professionals:Luxe Painting and Renovations RenoMotion Inc.TH Custom WoodworkRenovo ConstructionWhole Home Beauty (WHB)View all contractors ?

Q15

Are recycled denim insulation batts as effective as mineral wool for soundproofing interior walls?

Recycled denim insulation, such as UltraTouch by Bonded Logic, provides decent acoustic performance but falls measurably short of mineral wool products like Rockwool Safe'n'Sound for dedicated soundproofing applications. While denim batts are an excellent eco-friendly choice for thermal insulation, if your primary goal is sound control, mineral wool is the better performer.The difference comes down to density and fibre structure. Rockwool Safe'n'Sound has a density of approximately 2.5 pounds per cubic foot, while recycled denim batts typically come in at 1.0 to 1.5 pounds per cubic foot. In acoustics, density matters significantly for low-frequency absorption. Higher-density mineral wool absorbs more sound energy across a wider frequency range, particularly in the low-to-mid frequencies (125 Hz to 500 Hz) where voices, TV sound, and music are most problematic. In standardized testing, a wall assembly with Rockwool Safe'n'Sound typically achieves 3 to 5 STC points higher than the same assembly with denim insulation, which translates to a noticeable real-world difference.Cost and Performance Comparison for Ottawa ProjectsIn the Ottawa market, Rockwool Safe'n'Sound runs approximately $1.20 to $1.80 per square foot for standard 2x4 wall batts, while recycled denim insulation costs $1.50 to $2.50 per square foot, making denim both less effective acoustically and more expensive. This makes mineral wool the clear winner on a performance-per-dollar basis for soundproofing. Denim insulation is also more difficult to source in Ottawa, as it is typically a special order item, whereas Rockwool Safe'n'Sound is stocked at most Home Depot and Lowes locations across the city and available same-day.Mineral wool has additional advantages in Ottawa's building environment. It is naturally fire resistant with a melting point above 1,000C, which helps maintain the fire ratings required by the Ontario Building Code for party walls and rated assemblies. Denim insulation is treated with borate for fire resistance, which is effective but adds a chemical treatment to what is marketed as a natural product. Mineral wool

is also moisture resistant and will not absorb water or support mould growth, which is relevant in Ottawa where condensation in wall cavities is a concern during our long heating season. Denim insulation can absorb moisture and is slower to dry out, potentially creating conditions for mould in improperly detailed wall assemblies.There is one scenario where denim insulation makes sense even for acoustic applications. If you are doing a green building project where environmental credentials and recycled content are paramount, and the wall assembly already includes robust decoupling with sound isolation clips and hat channel, the insulation type becomes less critical to overall performance. In a well-decoupled assembly, the difference between denim and mineral wool might be only 1 to 2 STC points, since the clips and air gap are doing most of the heavy lifting. In that context, choosing denim for its environmental benefits is a reasonable trade-off.For most Ottawa homeowners tackling a soundproofing project, mineral wool remains the standard recommendation. It performs better, costs less, is easier to source locally, and integrates well with fire-rated assemblies. If you want expert guidance on choosing the right insulation for your specific wall assembly, Sound IQ is here to help, and the Ottawa Contractor Directory at justynrookcontracting.com/directory can connect you with insulation professionals who specialize in acoustic applications.Looking for experienced contractors? The Ottawa Construction Network connects homeowners with qualified professionals:613BinsRenoMotion Inc.Somar Contracting Inc.Dump n Dash HaulingREJUVENATION RENOVATIONSView all contractors ?

Q16

What type of acoustic putty pads should I use behind electrical boxes in a soundproofed wall?

For electrical boxes in soundproofed walls, you should use fire-rated acoustic putty pads specifically designed for this purpose, such as Specified Technologies SSP Series, 3M Fire Barrier Putty Pads, or Hilti CFS-P BA putty pads. These products wrap around the outside of the electrical box, sealing it as both a sound leak point and a fire penetration, which is critical for maintaining the fire rating required by the Ontario Building Code on party walls and rated assemblies.Acoustic putty pads are sheets of dense, non-hardening, fire-resistant putty that you press and mold around the back and sides of an electrical box before it is installed in the wall cavity. They typically cost $3 to $6 per pad in the Ottawa market, and you need one pad per box. For a typical room soundproofing project with four to six electrical boxes, you are looking at roughly $18 to $36 in putty pad materials, which is a trivial cost relative to the performance benefit. A single unsealed electrical box can reduce an otherwise excellent wall from STC 55 down to STC 45 or worse, so this is one of the highest-return investments in any soundproofing project.Installation Details That MatterThe correct installation technique is to lay the putty pad flat, place the electrical box face-down on it, and fold the putty up and around all sides of the box, pressing firmly to create a complete seal with no gaps. The putty should cover the back and all four sides of the box, with particular attention to the cable entry points where wires enter. Some installers also apply a bead of acoustic caulk around the front edge where the box meets the drywall for a belt-and-suspenders approach. The putty remains permanently pliable and will not harden, crack, or shrink over time, which is particularly important in Ottawa's climate where temperature swings between -30C and +35C cause rigid sealants to crack and fail.There are a few important distinctions to be aware of. Standard metal electrical boxes and plastic boxes both need putty pads, but the application differs slightly. Metal boxes conduct sound more readily, so ensuring complete coverage is even more critical. For low-voltage brackets used for cable TV, data, and phone connections, these are typically open-backed and require special attention. You can use putty pads behind a solid low-voltage plate, or better yet, install a sealed low-voltage box rather than an open bracket.Do not substitute generic putty, caulk, or modelling clay for purpose-built acoustic putty pads. The fire-rated products are specifically formulated to intumesce, meaning they swell when exposed to heat to seal the penetration during a fire. Generic materials will not provide this fire protection, and using them on a fire-rated party wall in an Ottawa condo could create a code violation and a genuine safety hazard. The Ontario Building Code requires that all penetrations through fire-rated assemblies maintain the assembly's fire rating, and acoustic putty pads are the approved method for electrical box penetrations.While putty pad installation might seem straightforward, it is typically done as part of a larger wall soundproofing project where proper integration with the rest of the assembly matters. A professional installer will ensure every box is fully sealed and that the putty pads work in concert with the insulation, decoupling, and air sealing of the complete wall system. If you are planning a soundproofing project, the Ottawa Contractor Directory at justynrookcontracting.com/directory can connect you with professionals experienced

in acoustic wall assemblies.Looking for experienced contractors? The Ottawa Construction Network connects homeowners with qualified professionals:Justyn Rook ContractingJC Carpentry613PAINTING INCL.L. RenovationTransitions RenovationsView all contractors ?

Q17

Is there a Canadian equivalent to QuietRock drywall available at Ottawa building supply stores?

QuietRock itself is available in Canada and can be sourced in the Ottawa area, though it is a specialty order item rather than something you will find sitting on the shelf at your local Home Depot or Lowes. The main Canadian equivalent is CertainTeed SilentFX, which is manufactured domestically and is generally easier to source in the Ottawa market at a somewhat lower price point.CertainTeed SilentFX is a factory-damped gypsum panel that uses a viscoelastic polymer layer between two gypsum cores, similar in concept to QuietRock. It is manufactured in Canada and distributed through building supply dealers, making it more readily available in Ottawa than the American-made QuietRock products. A sheet of SilentFX typically runs $35 to $55 compared to $40 to $65 for QuietRock, and performance is comparable. SilentFX achieves an STC improvement of roughly 8 to 10 points over standard drywall when used in a typical wall assembly, which is meaningful.Where to Source Specialty Acoustic Drywall in OttawaFor purchasing in Ottawa, your best options are specialty building supply dealers rather than big-box stores. Ottawa Building Materials on Belfast Road, TBM Group, and specialized acoustic supply companies can order CertainTeed SilentFX or QuietRock with typical lead times of one to two weeks. If you are working with a contractor, they will usually handle sourcing and may have established supplier relationships that get better pricing. Some contractors keep a small stock of acoustic drywall for ongoing projects.The important question is whether specialty acoustic drywall is worth the premium over the alternative approach of using double layers of standard 5/8-inch Type X drywall with Green Glue compound between them. The double drywall plus Green Glue approach costs roughly $30 to $40 per 4x8 area in materials (two sheets at $14 to $18 each plus one tube of Green Glue at $15 to $22), while a single sheet of SilentFX or QuietRock costs $35 to $65. The double drywall with Green Glue approach actually provides equal or slightly better STC performance in most assemblies, adds more mass to the wall, and uses readily available materials that any drywall installer is familiar with.Where specialty acoustic drywall shines is in situations where wall thickness matters. In an Ottawa condo where you are soundproofing a party wall and every half inch of room depth counts, one layer of QuietRock or SilentFX is thinner than two layers of standard drywall. It is also faster to install, which reduces labour costs. For a Centretown condo with small rooms, saving that half inch of depth on two walls might be worth the material premium. For a Kanata home with generous room sizes, the double drywall and Green Glue approach is usually the better value.Whichever product you choose, remember that the drywall is only one component of a complete soundproofing assembly. Without proper decoupling through

resilient channel or isolation clips, cavity insulation with acoustic mineral wool, and thorough air sealing with acoustic caulk at every edge and penetration, even the best acoustic drywall will underperform. A soundproofing professional can help you decide which approach makes the most sense for your specific project and budget. Browse the Ottawa Contractor Directory at justynrookcontracting.com/directory to connect with local acoustic insulation specialists.Looking for experienced contractors? The Ottawa Construction Network connects homeowners with qualified professionals:Reno's by Daniel FrauwallnerRenoMotion Inc.CFT GroupJMY RenovationsTiptop ContractingView all contractors ?

Q18

What's the difference between open-cell and closed-cell acoustic foam and when should I use each?

Open-cell acoustic foam has interconnected air pockets that allow sound waves to enter and lose energy through friction, making it effective for sound absorption within a room. Closed-cell foam has sealed, independent air pockets that resist airflow and moisture penetration but do very little to absorb sound energy. Understanding this distinction is essential because many Ottawa homeowners purchase the wrong type and end up disappointed with the results.Open-cell foam is what you see in recording studios, home theatres, and podcast rooms. Products like Auralex Studiofoam or Primacoustic Broadway panels use open-cell polyurethane foam to reduce echo, flutter, and reverberation within a space. The interconnected cell structure allows sound waves to penetrate the material, where the air friction inside the pores converts sound energy to heat. This is ideal for room acoustics, improving speech clarity in a home office, taming echo in a large living room with hard floors, or creating a better listening environment for music. Open-cell foam panels typically range from $2 to $8 per square foot in Ottawa, depending on thickness and brand, and are available at music supply stores and online retailers.When to Use Each TypeClosed-cell foam, by contrast, is primarily a thermal insulator and moisture barrier. Products like closed-cell spray foam insulation are excellent for insulating rim joists in Ottawa basements, sealing air leaks, and providing moisture resistance, but they offer almost no sound absorption. Because the cells are sealed, sound waves bounce off rather than entering the material. Closed-cell spray foam does add some mass to a wall assembly, which provides a small amount of sound blocking, but it is far less effective dollar-for-dollar than purpose-built acoustic materials like mineral wool insulation.For Ottawa homeowners, here is the practical breakdown. If your goal is to reduce echo and improve room acoustics in a home theatre, music room, or home office, open-cell acoustic foam panels mounted on walls and ceilings are appropriate. This is a reasonable DIY project costing $300 to $1,200 for a typical room. If your goal is to block sound transmission between rooms or from outside, neither type of foam will do the job effectively. Sound blocking requires mass, decoupling, and complete air sealing. You need materials like

5/8-inch Type X drywall, Rockwool Safe'n'Sound mineral wool, resilient channel or sound isolation clips, and acoustic sealant, assembled as a complete system.A common and expensive mistake is covering a shared condo wall in Centretown or a townhouse party wall in Barrhaven with acoustic foam panels expecting it to block the neighbour's TV or conversations. Those panels will improve the acoustics inside your room but will block virtually zero sound transmission through the wall. It is the difference between treating the symptom inside your room and treating the actual sound path through the structure. If you are dealing with noise coming through walls, ceilings, or floors, it is worth speaking with a soundproofing professional who can recommend the right materials and assembly for your specific problem. The Ottawa Contractor Directory at justynrookcontracting.com/directory lists acoustic and insulation professionals who can assess your situation and steer you toward the solution that will actually work.Looking for experienced contractors? The Ottawa Construction Network connects homeowners with qualified professionals:Justyn Rook ContractingRenoMotion Inc.Renovo ConstructionCustom By ArieTransitions RenovationsView all contractors ?
