

What is Background Ventilation?

Background ventilation refers to small, controllable ventilation openings designed to provide continuous, low-level airflow throughout a building. These openings ensure a consistent supply of fresh air while maintaining indoor air quality and reducing the risk of condensation, mould growth, and stale air.

In the UK house building, residential retrofit, home renovation, and extension sectors, background ventilation is a critical component of building design. It complements other ventilation strategies, such as extractor fans or mechanical ventilation systems, to meet the requirements of **Part F of the Building Regulations (Ventilation)** and the associated **Approved Document F**.

Practical Examples:

1. **Trickle Vents:** Small adjustable vents installed in window frames or walls that allow controlled airflow.
2. **Airbricks:** Perforated bricks placed in external walls to facilitate airflow, often used in older properties.
3. **Passive Stack Ventilation:** A system that uses natural air pressure differences to draw fresh air through background vents and expel stale air through roof vents.

Synonyms:

- Trickle ventilation
- Passive ventilation

Related Terms:

1. **Mechanical Ventilation with Heat Recovery (MVHR):** A system that extracts stale air and supplies fresh air while recovering heat from the outgoing air.
2. **Extract Fans:** Fans installed in high-moisture areas (e.g., kitchens, bathrooms) to remove humid air.
3. **Air Permeability:** A measure of how airtight a building is, influencing the effectiveness of background ventilation.
4. **Condensation Risk:** The likelihood of moisture forming on cold surfaces, mitigated by adequate ventilation.
5. **Building Regulations Part F:** UK regulations governing ventilation standards in new and existing buildings.