

UNDERFLOOR SPACE

Depending on climatic conditions, significant amounts of condensation can accumulate in enclosed crawl spaces, causing decay and other damage to the structure. The code requires ventilation openings through the foundation or exterior walls in the prescribed size and location to circulate air and dissipate condensation (Figure 5-23).

An alternative method permits a crawl space without foundation openings when equipped with mechanical exhaust ventilation or connection to the conditioned air supply of the dwelling. In this case, the code requires insulation of the exterior walls and a vapor retarder over the ground and sealed to the enclosing foundation wall.

The IRC requires access to the underfloor spaces. Access openings through the floor must be at least 18 inches by 24 inches but may be reduced to not less than 16 inches by 24 inches when access is through a perimeter wall. [\[Ref. R408\]](#)

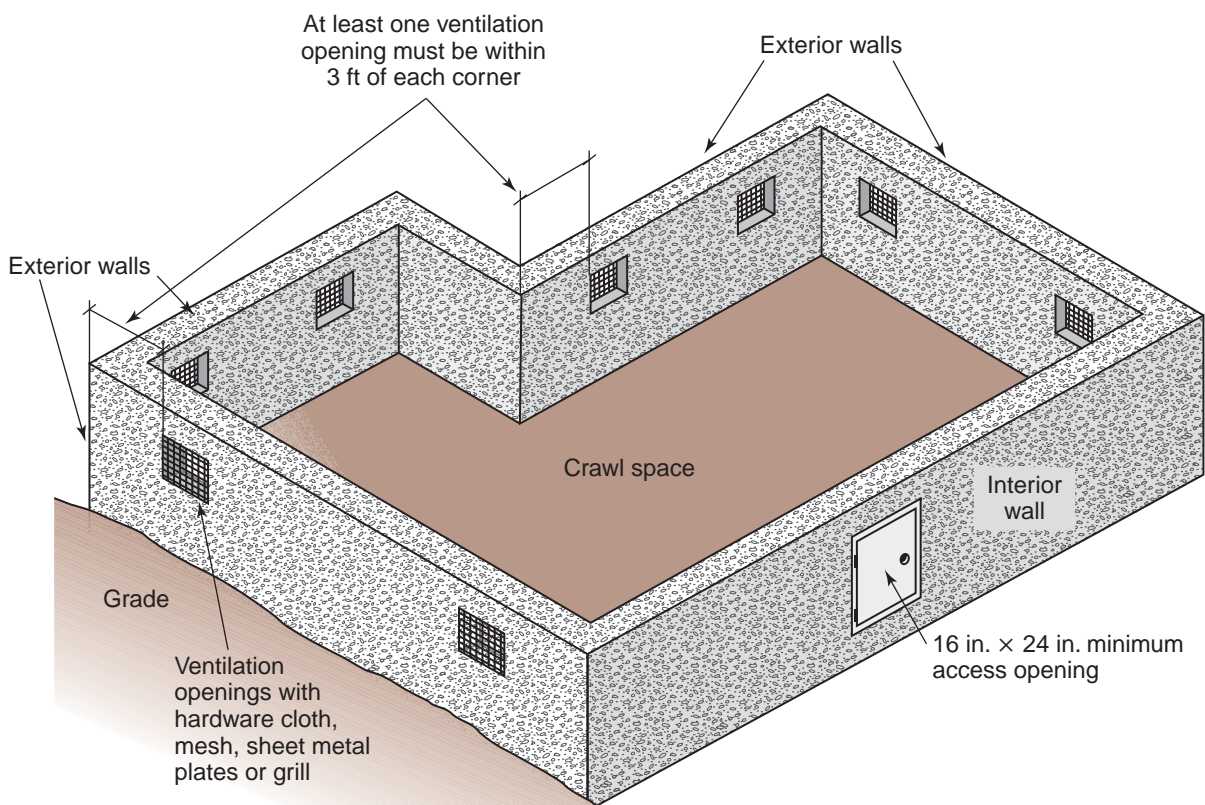


FIGURE 5-23 Crawl space ventilation and access