

Replacement Windows Buyer's Guide



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Once your home gets to be a certain age, different parts start needing to be replaced. Whether it's the roof, or the windows or an entire addition, there's a lot to take into consideration. While there's no agreed-upon set age at which windows should be replaced, there are a number of reasons to do so, which include damage and energy-efficiency issues. Once you've decided to replace your windows, there are a number of things you will need to consider, including materials, window style and choosing a contractor.

This guide will explore everything you need to know when buying and installing replacement windows including: *What Are Replacement Windows; Signs That You Need Replacement Windows; Double-Hung vs. Single-Hung Windows: Which One Is Best For You; How To Find The Right Windows Company; How To Buy Replacement Windows; and Choosing The Right Windows Company*

I) What Are Replacement Windows

Despite sounding rather simple, replacement windows are actually anything but. It's actually all but impossible to entirely replace every single bit of window material that was installed when your house was built. What your contractor will remove are the sash(es) and some of the mechanisms that hold them in place. In spite of part of your original window still remaining, that doesn't mean you can't make some pretty drastic changes. For example, you could replace a sliding window with a picture window, or a picture window with an openable casement window.

Know also that unless you have the training necessary to replace and install new windows, this is not a do-it-yourself project. Unless you are a qualified professional, you should not even consider trying to replace your windows on your own. Replacing a window is a very complicated process and performing it wrong could reduce the value of your home, result in windows that will not last long or will develop problems more easily, and require you to spend additional money on fixes or replacements, so it's best to leave this one up to the professionals. Now that you have a good idea what exactly replacing your windows will entail, it's time to get into knowing when your windows should be replaced.

II) Signs That You Need Replacement Windows



Replacing your windows is not a decision to be made lightly. After all, it could mean days or even weeks of construction at your home, a possibly hefty investment, and leaving areas of your home more open to the elements than you would like, in spite of any protective barriers erected. So before you start shopping around for contractors or new windows designs you'd like to put on your home, or before you just dismiss outright the notion that you need replacement windows, look for any of these very tell-tale signs.

If your windows are damaged, broken, warped or otherwise in bad shape, and repairs cannot be made or would not be worth it, you need to start looking at replacing them. Damage could be indicated by anything from cracks on the glass or frames to constant leakage and drafts.

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If your energy bill is sky high and your windows are old, or you can easily pay to replace them, you might also want to consider replacing your windows simply to increase the energy-efficiency of your home and lower your heating and cooling bills in the process. Newer windows do a much better job than older ones of keeping out drafts and preventing you from heating and cooling the outside. It's also beneficial for the environment.

If your windows are getting increasingly difficult to open or close or if any mechanisms have broken, it might be time for new windows. Mechanisms can break fairly easily on several different types of windows, and a lot of the time they are not repairable.

A lesser known sign is that if you have double-paned windows of any kind and they feel cold to the touch, it means they aren't keeping out outside air as well as they used to.

Remember that replacement is not the only option you have. You could also opt to repair your windows or upgrade them in a less-drastic fashion. However, some of the time your house will simply need new windows put on. Windows are not meant to last for the life of the home.

III) Double-Hung vs. Single-Hung Windows: Which One Is Best For You



There are many different types of windows to choose from, but the ones that might confuse window buyers the most are double-hung and single-hung windows. These names may sound confusing, but they are some of the most common and popular windows on homes today.

Double-hung and single-hung windows are actually very similar - they both consist of two sashes interlaid over one another. The only difference is that in single-hung windows, only the bottom sash can open, while in double-hung windows, both sashes can open.

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Double-hung windows are more readily available than single-hung windows, are very popular and carried by most stores and contractors, so finding a competitive deal on them is relatively easy. They also allow more air to move through your house when open.

Single-hung windows are less likely to have their mechanisms break and do a better job of sealing off outside air than double-hung windows do. They are also a little cheaper on average than double-hung windows.

IV) How To Find The Right Window Company



When looking at window replacement companies, there's almost as much detail to consider as with the windows themselves. What most people do when in need of any kind of contractor is to ask for recommendations, and this is generally a pretty solid option. Companies know this and thrive on referrals and recommendations, so they'll do as good a job as they can for you in order for you to be impressed and hopefully recommend their business to someone else. Ask anyone you know what their experience was and what they liked and didn't like about working with the contractor they recommended to you.

You can also look at ads. Construction companies frequently place ads in local newspapers, do direct mail flyers and even come door to door, spreading the word about the services they offer. Companies know that many customers find them via the Internet now, and particularly Google and Google Maps. Visit sites like Google, Yelp and Angie's List to put in what you're looking for and generate a list of local businesses that offer those services.

► Learn more about our Replacement Window Solutions here:
<https://www.wmgb.com/replacement-windows/>

Online reviews have become a critical part of how to evaluate who you're going to do business with. The internet has helped hold contractors accountable and let the cream of the crop rise to the top. This has taken a lot of the guesswork out of figuring out who you can trust. As you compare reviews from trusted sites like Google and Facebook, make sure that you take into account the star rating, quantity of reviews and how recent they are.



Make a list of any companies you find that look promising. Now is the time to do some further research and see which of the companies on your list are worth reaching out and requesting a bid from. Any reputable contractor will be licensed, insured, bonded and lead safe certified. Check with any relevant trade organizations as well as the Better Business Bureau to see if there appear to have been significant problems in the past, and that they're properly registered and certified by all relevant authorities.

IV) How To Buy Replacement Windows



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First, you'll have to decide on a style. Besides the double-hung and single-hung styles mentioned above, there are a number of others, including picture (or fixed) windows, casement windows, awning windows, sliding windows and more. Look at what is available from home improvement stores as well as what your window installation company might recommend. Also, go with your gut - it's your house, and if you think a particular window style will look best on it, don't be afraid to go with that option, or even order it custom if you have to.

Next, you need to choose materials. The two most common are wood and vinyl, and each have their pros and cons. Vinyl is usually vastly cheaper, requires almost no maintenance and lasts longer, though it doesn't always look the best on a house. Wood, on the other hand, looks more aesthetically pleasing on homes, especially upper-end ones, and can be more easily customizable but is more expensive and requires frequent maintenance.

If you want customized options and not just the ones offered at your local home improvement store or what the contractor carries, that can be arranged as well. In a lot of cases, replacement windows need to be customized in order to best match the house they're going to be put on. That is something else you are going to have to ask contractors about when soliciting bids. Sketch out or describe as best you can what you are looking for, as well as take photos of your existing windows and home, to give a contractor a better idea of what you might need and what the job will entail.

V) Choosing The Right Company



Once you've found a handful of companies you'd like to reach out to, start contacting and interview-ing them one by one. Some things you will want to ask about include price, styles offered, more about their business, any applicable warranties and estimated time frame for completion.

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Always, always make sure any contractor you do business with is fully insured with liability and work-er's compensation. Ask for a certificate of insurance and keep it for your records, along with all other information about the project. Ask each company you're relatively serious about hiring to provide a bid. Don't just go with the lowest cost - go with your gut. Was the contractor personable, respectful and knowledgeable? Did they provide you information and bids on time? If they provided them late, that's a fairly good indicator of how they will work on your project as well. If you have not already done so, be sure to carefully vet each company that makes it into your final choices.

Replacing existing windows with custom windows can be a more involved process than you might realize, but with the right professionals it should go off without a hitch. When you're looking for replacement windows Michigan, contact us for a free estimate.



Our Expert Home Improvement Consultant will measure and inspect the exact window project that you have in mind; help you select the right styles, colors and quality that suit your unique needs and tastes and finally leave a "down to the penny" price to make it easy for you to plan and budget.

Still have questions or like a FREE Replacement Windows Estimate? Contact us now for more information (616)226-9547

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