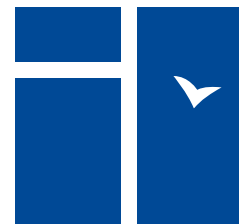


CELEBRATING  
**30 YEARS**  
TRADING

# BUYERS GUIDE TO uPVC WINDOWS



**PREMIER  
WINDOWS**

Purchasing new windows is not a decision to be taken lightly. With so many options available, finding which windows are right for you can be difficult. However, we have packed just over 30 years of window installation experience into this handy guide. This should make finding the right windows for your home an absolute breeze.

**T: 0800 854 353**

**[www.premwindowsanddoors.co.uk](http://www.premwindowsanddoors.co.uk)**



## WHAT ARE THE BENEFITS OF UPVC WINDOWS?

Here at Premier, our offering of windows are all manufactured from uPVC. This is because uPVC is truly an excellent window material.

- In terms of cost, uPVC offers excellent value for money. It's more affordable than other window materials, however, this is not because it performs poorly.
- uPVC windows are incredibly energy efficient and can easily attain Window Energy Ratings (WER) of A+ and above, which is one of the highest amongst any window material.
- uPVC resists the build-up of grime and dirt extremely well and it can be cleaned with minimal effort.
- The lifespan of well-maintained uPVC windows is around 20-25 years.
- uPVC can be finished in a variety of woodgrain textures, giving it an appearance that looks just as good as real timber.
- We have a sister company called Emplas and they manufacture all of our uPVC products. Therefore, we are able to offer quicker turnaround times on all our windows and we can directly influence quality control.



# WHICH WINDOW STYLES ARE THERE TO CHOOSE FROM?

The style of window is another important consideration. This is because styles of windows differ in the way they look and perform. Therefore, not every window style will be the right fit for your home aesthetically and practically.



## Casement Windows

Casement windows are the most popular of the UK window styles. In order to be classed as a casement window, all they have to do is open outwards. This makes casement windows highly versatile. They can also be hung either from the top, bottom or side.

## Flush Sash Windows

Flush sash windows are defined in this way because, when they are closed, their sashes sit flush with the window frame. The result is a virtually identical appearance to traditional timber windows, however, ours are built from high-quality uPVC. Modern sash windows also tend to allow more light in than older variants. This is thanks to a smaller opening device.



## Vertical Sliding Windows

Vertical sliding windows are operated via a vertically sliding mechanism. Also known as sliding sash windows or box sash windows, they replicate 17th century windows beautifully, making them a great fit for any period homes. They are suitable for a range of window layouts, including square bay, angled bay and bow.

## Tilt & Turn Windows

In order to allow for safe, easy cleaning and maximum ventilation, tilt & turn windows can be fully opened internally. They are operated via a dual hinge arrangement, allowing you to 'tilt' them inwards, ventilating your home without the risk of children climbing through them. This means they're ideal in any locations above one storey in height.



## Residence 9 Windows

Strictly designed to emulate the appearance of old timber cottage windows to the finest detail, Residence 9 windows are a form of timber-effect or timber-alternative window. This means they are designed to look like a timber window, however, they are expertly built from uPVC. Although they can be adapted to suit modern properties, they are perfect for period homes. They are also regularly approved for use in conservation areas as a replacement for old timber windows.



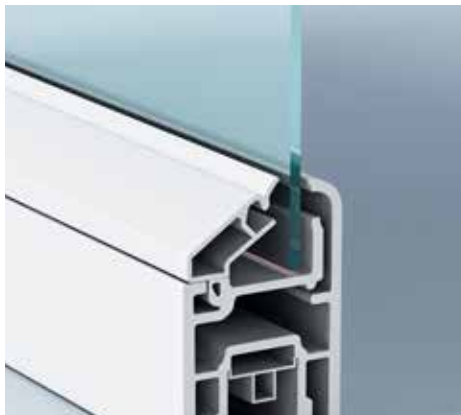
## GLAZING OPTIONS

Since the 1970s, double glazing has become the norm for UK homeowners. However, advancements in technology mean that there is a stark contrast in quality between double glazed windows of the 1970s and those on offer today. Understanding how types of glazing work is important and can help to inform you on which glazing option best suits your requirements.

### Single Glazing

In the UK, a surprising amount of homes still have single glazed windows. Whilst they keep heat in and noise out to some extent, they are unable to do so as well as either double or triple glazing. They are also much more of a security risk as they only use a single pane of glass, which is relatively easy to smash.

They do still have their place, however, particularly in areas that are subject to conservation guidelines. In such areas, single paned windows with timber frames are often found and due to the restrictions, a like for like replacement is the only window option available.

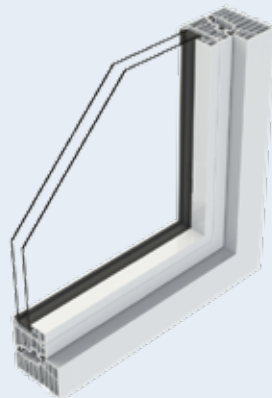


### Double Glazing

As standard, modern windows are fitted with double glazing. In 2016, 83% of UK homes were fully double glazed with an additional 10% having more than half their windows double glazed. Double glazing ensures strong levels of energy efficiency, security and soundproofing, resulting in a comfortable, secure home environment. For most homes, this option will be more than adequate.

Double glazed windows are made up of two panes of glass which are separated by a small cavity. This small cavity is usually filled with an inert gas, such as Krypton or Argon, however sometimes a vacuum is used. The combination of the cavity and inert gas reduces the amount of heat that's able to escape through the window considerably.

Under UK legislation, all new homes must have double glazing which achieves a Window Energy Rating (WER) of C, however, when used with the right profiles, double glazed windows can easily attain ratings of A and higher.



### Triple Glazing

As opposed to the two panes of glass found on double glazed windows, triple glazed versions use three. This creates an extra cavity which is, again, usually filled with an inert gas. This ensures more heat is trapped inside the home than with double glazed windows.

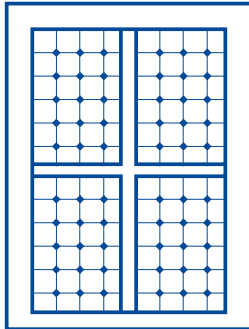
The additional pane of glass prevents more sound making its way inside too. Also, noise insulation can be improved further if the glass panes in use are different thicknesses. Different thicknesses of glass alter sound waves as they come into contact with one another, allowing less noise to get inside.

Whilst double glazing is fine for most homes, the additional thermal insulation and sound reduction on offer with triple glazing is ideal if you live in an area that is particularly cold or noisy. However, it is more expensive than double glazing.



# WHAT TYPES OF GLASS CAN WINDOWS BE FITTED WITH?

A major component of any window is the glass. It has been used for centuries and plays a key role in allowing light inside as well as keeping noise and the weather out. Glass technology has advanced considerably since its initial use, and now homeowners have a plethora of glass options available to choose from.

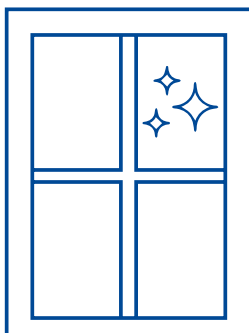
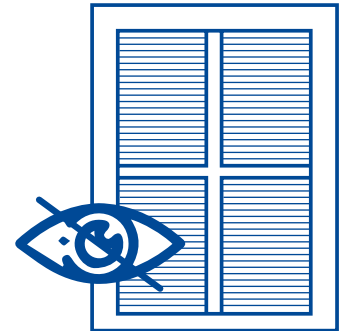


## Decorative Glass

You can put your own unique stamp on your windows by incorporating a decorative pattern onto the glass. These are available in a plentiful supply of shapes, sizes and patterns. Many consider a glass design to be more attractive than plain glass. Specific designs or styles may also be better suited to achieving a certain type of aesthetic. Stained glass designs can be incorporated into double glazed windows, but the glass design will be better protected if situated within a triple glazed unit as the central pane of glass.

## Privacy Glass

Privacy glass obscures the view through the window, making it more difficult for onlookers to view the inside of your home. It's often found on back doors and bathroom windows for this reason, however, porches and entrance doors often use it too. Despite concealing the inside of your home, it has no negative impact on the amount of light that's able to get in. It's available in a range of floral, geometric and cloudy glass designs.

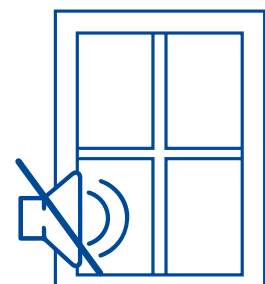


## Self-Cleaning Glass

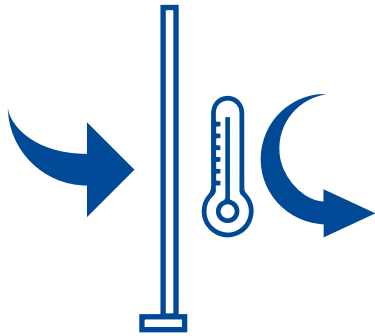
Self-cleaning glass is ideal for homeowners looking to spend less time cleaning the glass area of their windows. The glass is covered in a special coating which is activated by UV light. Once it's been activated, the coating begins to break down any organic dirt that comes into contact with it. This helps to prevent inorganic dirt adhering to the window. The leftover dirt is then washed away when rain falls onto the glass.

## Sound Reduction Glass

Windows fitted with sound reduction glass feature an incredibly broad outer pane that is 10mm in depth and an inner pane that is 6.4mm thick. They reduce the amount of noise coming into your home considerably. If you want less noise to come into your home but don't relish the additional expense of triple glazing, sound reduction glass is ideal for you.



# WHAT TYPES OF GLASS CAN WINDOWS BE FITTED WITH?



## Low-e Glass

Utilising an invisible coating, low-e, or low emissivity, glass works by reflecting heat back inside your home. It also allows more solar radiation through than standard glass, leading to an increase in heat through passive solar heat gain. This ensures for a warmer home in the winter time, but it can lead to homes becoming too hot during the hotter months.

## Toughened Glass

There are other terms for toughened glass, namely laminated or security glass. It is typically thicker than standard glass and can be up to 5 times as strong. For those who are looking to bolster the security levels of their windows, it's worth considering.



# HOW DO WINDOW FRAMES AFFECT THE WINDOWS PERFORMANCE?

Modern frame technology has come a very long way and directly affects the window's performance. A key area that is affected by the frames is the window's insulating properties.

## uPVC Window Frames

Modern uPVC window frames are fitted with multiple chambers of air. The use of multiple chambers allows more heat to be trapped inside the frame, resulting in an improved thermal performance. Most modern uPVC windows feature at least 3 chambers but some can have as many 9. Residence 9 windows, for example, have 9 chambers. Having more chambers usually improves the window's thermal performance. However, as the frames only account for one area of the window, it is worth noting that a 9 chambered uPVC frame which has poor double glazing may perform worse than a 4 chambered profile which has excellent double glazing.



# STYLES OF WINDOW FRAMING

How the window frame is styled will have an effect on how well the window fits your property. We have looked into the different styles of window framing that are available, in order to give you an idea of which is likely to be better suited to your home.



## Chamfered Frames

These are also referred to as bevelled and feature a flat, streamlined profile. Chamfered frames tend to be slimmer, meaning more glass is present and more glass = more light coming through the window. Because of their clean, slender appearance, they are often considered ideal for achieving a contemporary aesthetic. New builds, as well as many 1920s style properties, such as mock Tudor houses are often fitted with windows featuring chamfered frames.

## Ovolo Frames

Ovolo framing is curved in shape and is often considered the best choice for cottages and period properties. However, ovolo frames are often found on larger windows, particular those fitted on conservatories. Many consider them to have a more decorative finish than chamfered frames.





# WHAT FURNITURE IS AVAILABLE FOR WINDOWS?

There are plenty of different furniture pieces that you can choose to have fitted onto new windows. This ensures you're able to create a window that is unique to you and your home. However, the furniture can also have a significant impact on whether the window is more contemporary or traditional in style.



## Handles

Generally, window handles are fitted with locking cylinders. In most modern windows, these are espag handles which operate a multi-point locking system. Different handle designs are available, as is a range of different colour finishes. Monkey tail or pear drop design handles perfectly complement any windows looking to achieve a classical appearance.



## Window Stays

A window stay is a small metal bar which is fitted onto a window to hold it in a specific open or closed position. Peg window stays are traditional in appearance and can make any attempts to make a home appear more traditional feel increasingly authentic.



## Trickle Vents

Trickle vents allow fresh air to circulate into a room and polluted air to circulate out. As breathing in polluted air can be harmful, trickle vents ensure for a healthier home environment. They also allow homeowners to ventilate their home safely, as they negate the need for the window to be opened to allow air in and out. However, they have been criticised for reducing the energy efficiency of the window by some homeowners, so bear this in mind.

Whilst they are optional for most homeowners, if you're replacing windows that have already been fitted with trickle vents, then your new window/s must have them fitted. It's a legal requirement for trickle vents to be installed on windows that are being fitted onto an extension or a new-build home too.

# WHAT MAKES A WINDOW SECURE?

Whilst we have all left a window or two open whilst popping out now and again, particularly on hot days, an open window is the perfect invitation for any nearby burglars. Always keep them shut, even if you're only leaving the house briefly.

When buying new windows, you should ensure they meet PAS24:2012 certification, which is the minimum required security standard for residential properties in the UK. However, there are a number of other things you should look out for too, which are covered below.



## Multi-Point Locks

Multi-point locking systems are commonly found on a variety of windows. They secure the window at a number of points around the frame, making it more difficult for potential intruders to find a weak point they can exploit to gain entry. Multipoint locks are engaged and disengaged via an espag window handle, which most double glazed windows are fitted with.



## Internal and External Beading

Window glazing is held in place against the frame by a small strip known as a 'bead', which runs along each edge of the window sash.

Nowadays, most windows are internally beaded. Concerns that external beading posed a security risk led to it being used less frequently. However, this was seen as more of a problem on older uPVC windows. Some modern uPVC windows are beaded externally, in order to retain a traditional aesthetic.



## Key Operated Handle

Modern windows are fitted with a key operated handle, which often but not always operates a multi-point locking system. Locking the window makes gaining entry more difficult, whilst it can also prevent young children from operating them. This is provided the key is kept out of their reach.



## Window Restrictors

These are concealed between the window frames and can be an important safety and security measure. They work by restricting the distance that the window can be opened, which can be ideal if you have young children, as you can make it more difficult for them to climb out the window. They are also useful for those who'd like to leave the window open slightly whilst they are in the house but not situated near it.

## Secured by Design



Official Police Security Initiative

## Secured by Design

This is an official UK Police scheme, which recognises high levels of security amongst a variety of home-improvement products, including windows. Many types of window are able to achieve this accreditation, regardless of the material they're constructed from. Look out for whether or not it's available, if security is a major concern to you.

# ENERGY EFFICIENCY AND INSULATION FOR WINDOWS

How well a window insulates your home is important; if it insulates your home poorly, more heat is able to escape, meaning more energy is required to heat your home.

Therefore, it's important to understand what to look out for when looking at how energy efficient a set of windows are.



## Window Energy Rating

The most common method for determining the energy efficiency of a window is by looking at the Window Energy Rating (WER). This should be fitted onto the window in the form of a label. Whilst there are different providers of energy rating labels, the most popular ones are operated by the British Fenestration Rating Council (BFRC), the British Standards Institute (BSI) and CERTASS. The BFRC label uses a scale of A++, which is the highest total energy efficiency rating to E, which is the lowest. The BSI label uses a scale of A+ to G and CERTASS use one which goes from A\* to E.

Our casement windows and tilt & turn windows can achieve Window Energy Ratings of A++, so you have access to some of the most efficient windows found anywhere.



## U Values

Another method for measuring the thermal performance of a window is to look at its U-value. They are calculated by the equation  $W/m^2k$ , which measures heat loss in watts (W) per square metre of material, when the temperature (k) outside is at least one degree lower. The lower the U value, the better the insulation the material provides. For materials with a U value of 0, no heat is able to escape.



## Sound Insulation

If you are looking to replace single glazed windows with double glazing, you'll notice a significant difference in the amount of noise making its way inside your home. In short, your home will be considerably quieter than before. However, if you happen to reside near a busy road, a trainline or other noisy location, triple glazing is recommended as it provides additional insulation from sound.

# HOW TO DECIDE ON THE RIGHT WINDOW INSTALLER IN YOUR AREA

Perhaps you've decided on the right windows for you and now you've found two different companies that install them. But how do you decide which installer is going to do a better job? Whilst price does have an influence, windows which are cheap without good reason, like a promotion of some kind, should have their quality brought into question. There are also other ways that can help you determine which installer is right for you.



## Product Guarantees

When buying new windows, it's important to look at whether or not the company offers a guarantee on all the window components and the installation. If they are not prepared to offer one that covers both aspects for at least 10 years, it pays to steer clear of them. If a company cannot guarantee your new windows for at least 10 years, chances are they won't even last for 5.

## Accreditations

Who the company is accredited by gives a good indication of the quality of the installer. For instance, accreditation by schemes like Which? Trusted Trader are only granted to companies that have proven their outstanding credentials in a number of aspects, including credit checks, customer experiences and installation quality.



## Learning about a window company's reputation

It is possible to learn about a company's reputation via word of mouth or online. Two useful online review formats you might consider are **checkatrade.com** and **Google reviews**. If a friend or family member has had work performed by a specific company, their own experiences of them, good or bad, can be invaluable too.

# PAYING FOR NEW WINDOWS

Once you've decided on your perfect set of windows, the next part is paying for them. Several companies, like us here at Premier, offer a range of finance options.

Opting for finance instead of paying outright is better suited to those who'd rather spread payments out over a longer duration of time. However, if your credit history isn't very good, finance may not be available to you.

Common examples of these includes:

**3 YEARS  
INTEREST  
FREE CREDIT**

**BUY NOW  
PAY LATER**





# BUYERS GUIDE uPVC WINDOWS



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## FINAL CONSIDERATIONS

Upgrading your windows will always add value to your home. However, be sure to speak to an installer about which ones will maintain the unique character of your property years after they've been fitted. Plus, if you're only looking to replace a single window, for example, if it's totally different from your existing ones, think about whether potential buyers will want to pay full price for a home that contains one window that is markedly different from the others.

We hope this guide has provided you with all the information needed to choose the right windows for your home. However, if you would like more information, feel free to get in touch with the team here at Premier Windows. We're happy to answer any enquires and are available to call on 0800 854 353 or can be contacted online.

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