



## CARE AND MAINTENANCE TIPS & CONDENSATION CAUSES AND REMEDIES



## CARE AND MAINTENANCE TIPS

Getting The Most Out Of Your Windows And Doors

Isn't it amazing how new windows and doors make such a difference in the look and livability of your home? You can keep them looking beautiful and performing like new with simple cleaning and maintenance.

### HOW TO CLEAN AND CARE FOR YOUR WINDOW FRAMES

Your aluminum and vinyl window frames are easy to clean! Simply follow these "Frame Cleaning & Care" Do's and Don'ts.

#### Frame Cleaning & Care Do's

- DO clean window and door frames with a mixture of mild dish soap and water.
- DO test cleaners on an inconspicuous area first.
- DO rinse completely with clear water, then wipe dry with a soft cloth.
- DO clean tracks and weep holes.
- DO check weather-stripping and hardware for wear and tear.
- DO clean your insulating glass with proper cleaning agents.



Weep hole

## Frame Cleaning & Care Don'ts

- DON'T use a razor blade, putty knife or abrasive pad.
- DON'T use any petroleum-based, abrasive or caustic cleaners or solvents because they might cause permanent damage to the frame finish.
- DON'T use a high-pressure spray nozzle when rinsing your windows after washing.
- DON'T use oil-based lubricants or damage weep hole covers.
- DON'T ignore poor performing components.
- DON'T add attachments to window or glass unless approved by the window manufacturer.

## HOW TO CLEAN AND CARE FOR YOUR GLASS

Keeping your windows clean will keep them beautiful. And don't forget – insulating, low-e or heat reflective glass requires proper maintenance to continue working effectively.

### Glass Cleaning & Care Do's

- DO clean glass with a mixture of mild dish soap and water.
- DO rinse completely with clear water, then wipe dry with a soft cloth to avoid water spots.
- DO clean screens by first removing, then washing on a flat, clean surface with mild soap and water and a soft brush. Rinse, wipe dry and reinstall.

### Glass Cleaning & Care Don'ts

- DON'T wash glass in direct sunlight.
- DON'T use petroleum-based cleaners, or caustic chemicals on your glass.
- DON'T use a razor blade, putty knife or abrasive pad to clean the glass.
- DON'T use a high-pressure spray nozzle when rinsing your windows after washing.
- DON'T use abrasive or caustic cleaners because they may cause permanent damage to the finish or the glass.

## HOW TO MAKE SURE YOUR WINDOWS AND DOORS OPEN, CLOSE, LOCK AND UNLOCK EASILY FOR YEARS TO COME

Don't you love how easily your windows and doors open and close? Keep them operating smoothly by performing these steps:

- Vacuum dirt from sill and track areas regularly and before each washing.
- Check to make certain that drainage or weep holes are clear of dirt or obstructions. Weep holes can be found outside the window or door in the bottom of the frame. Use a small, soft bottlebrush to clear openings.  
*Note: If the window is "stacked", there may be weep holes between units.*
- Moving parts in hardware components and tracks and rollers should be lubricated regularly. In salt-air environments, this can mean at least monthly.
- Check weather-stripping around operable windows and door panels to be sure they seal evenly.
- Adjust sliding door rollers for proper height clearances. Most door rollers can be adjusted with a screwdriver through access holes in either the end or side of the sliding panel at the bottom. Be sure to lift the panel to take the weight off of the roller during roller adjustment.
- Rolling screen doors can be adjusted to glide smoothly. Use a screwdriver – often in all four corners – to make adjustment.
- After making roller adjustments, it may be necessary to also make adjustments in the lock strike placement. Most strikes may be adjusted by loosening screw fasteners, moving strike plate and retightening. Check for proper lock operation.

## HOW TO MAINTAIN ALUMINUM WINDOWS IN COASTAL AREAS

If the windows are new and have not yet been exposed to a corrosive environment:

- Use a light soap and water solution to wash the windows, then rinse well.
- Apply a light car wax to the extrusion. Do not apply wax without cleaning the windows first. This is especially important in corrosive environments where salt deposits may be sealed to the extrusion by the wax, allowing the salt to continue to do what it is known to do – corrode the extrusion.

If windows are already installed and have been exposed to the elements:

- Use mineral spirits to remove any salt deposits, dirt, etc.
- Use a light soap and water solution to wash windows, then rinse well.
- Apply a light car wax solution to the extrusion annually. Do not apply wax without cleaning the windows first. This is especially important in corrosive environments where salt deposits may be sealed to the extrusion by the wax, allowing the salt to continue to do what it is known to do – corrode the extrusion.

In corrosive environments, it is recommended that windows be rinsed regularly to reduce salt deposit build-ups and ease the annual cleaning process.



# WINDOW CONDENSATION

## CAUSES AND REMEDIES

### **WHAT IS THIS WATER ON MY WINDOWS?**

Water or frost on windows is condensation. Condensation is formed when warm moist air comes in contact with cooler dry air. An example of this is when a bathroom mirror “steams up” after a hot shower. Just like that mirror, the inside or outside of your window can sweat or fog because of temperature differentials.

### **ARE MY WINDOWS TO BLAME?**

Faulty windows do not cause condensation. Glass is usually the first place you notice condensation because glass surfaces have the lowest temperature of any surface in a house.

### **THEN WHAT’S THE CAUSE?**

The moisture in the air causes condensation. The reason you may observe more condensation in your home is because of modern energy-efficient homebuilding techniques and products.

The insulation and construction materials used today are designed to keep cold air outside. This is especially true of new windows. While energy-efficient designs and weather-stripping keep cold air outside, they also keep warm moist air inside. Older window designs were less efficient and consequently allowed moisture to escape.

If you didn’t have as much condensation before replacing your old windows, it’s probably because they were drafty. Good windows and insulation all create barriers to the air exchange of a home. When combined with the additional water vapor (moisture) from showers, cooking, or from clothes dryers not vented to the outside, the result is excess moisture and a high relative indoor humidity level.

### **HOW CAN CONDENSATION BE REDUCED?**

The key lies in controlling the humidity inside your home. First, let’s understand where the moisture comes from. During the hot humid summer, your house absorbs moisture. The same principle applies to a newly constructed or remodeled home, due to the abundance of moisture from the building materials used in construction.

During the beginning of the winter when you start to heat your home, condensation occurs. After a few weeks, your home will begin to dry out and you'll see less condensation. Opening a window briefly is a quick temporary solution. The drier cold air will enter the room while the moist air is allowed to escape.

Other solutions that may reduce condensation include:

- Cracking open a window or door daily to air out your house.
- Opening a window or running exhaust fans longer in the kitchen, bathroom and laundry room.
- Opening drapes and blinds, allowing air to circulate against windows.
- Turning off any humidifying devices in your home.
- Installing and using a dehumidifier.

If you live in a northern climate, the above steps, as well as the following points, may be relevant:

- Adding storm windows or replacing existing single-pane windows with insulated windows.
- Keeping plants in a sunroom or in rooms that are infrequently used during extreme cold weather.
- Adding waterproofing protection to basement floors and walls.
- Removing radiator pans until sweating has been eliminated.
- Making sure that open-faced gas heaters are connected to a chimney and using them as little as possible.

## **WHEN SHOULD I BE CONCERNED?**

Window condensation should only occur when there are extreme temperature differences between indoor and outdoor spaces. In addition, there should only be a fairly small amount of water on the glass. Condensation will be seen on the inside of a window during winter months, and will present itself on the outside of a window during summer months.

If you find condensation between the two layers of glass in an insulated window, the airtight seal has probably been broken and the glass will need to be replaced.

If there is too much moisture inside the home, you will see evidence during both the cold and warm seasons. Moisture spots on the ceiling or walls, peeling paint, rotting wood, delaminating plywood, moisture on exterior walls, and fungus, mold or mildew growth are signs of a more serious moisture problem. Should you experience these symptoms, an expert heating & cooling contractor should be contacted in order to solve the problem.



CUSTOM WINDOWS+DOORS