

Smart Window Shopping:

What You May Not Know



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WINDOW NATION

WINDOWS • SIDING • DOORS

Some Basic, Yet Important Information

Demand for windows and doors will increase 6.6% to \$31.2 billion in 2014, according to a study provided by the Freedonia Group, Inc.

Reasons for increased demand include:

- Increase in value to homes after installation of replacement windows
- Increased energy efficiency of homes, leading to lower utility bills as well as more stable temperature control within the home.
- Yearly tax credits offered for the installation of replacement windows.

However, some remodelling projects will not yield such high returns on investment. It is important to consider the quality of materials, as well as the quality of labor and the company with which you choose to do business in order to determine which windows will ultimately guarantee the greatest return.

The Do's and Don'ts of Window Shopping

Do Hire Licensed Professionals. Installation is the most important part of a window job.

There are many horror stories throughout the remodelling industry, and a large number of them can be attributed to poor installation.

A high percentage of installers are not professionally trained, leading to improperly finished installs, and many problems throughout the windows' lives. Unfortunately, many companies outsource their installers, and therefore will not cover any installation issues in their warranties. Find a company that employs their own installers, so as to avoid the blame game if issues ever arise with your new windows. You don't want the installer blaming the manufacturer, and vice versa.

Save yourself the time and money, and be sure your chosen contractor is certified with InstallationMasters. Visit www.installationmastersusa.com and search for listed certified contractors in your area. (As found on their website – "InstallationMasters™, prompted by the Building Environment and Thermal Envelope Council (BETEC) through the U.S. Department of Energy (DOE) and development by the American Architectural Manufacturers Association (AAMA), is a nationwide training and certifications program for new construction and replacement installers of windows and exterior glass doors in residential and light commercial markets.")

Do Hire an EPA Lead-Safe Certified Company

Homes that were built before 1978 are designated to be withholding lead substances, which may be released during renovations.



Certified Lead-Safe Companies use special practices to prevent the release of these harmful substances, protecting your family during any home renovations being performed. Lead is especially dangerous to children under six years of age, and can affect their brains and developing nervous systems. It is extremely important that your contractor takes the right precautions in renovating your home, if it was built before 1978. In order to be sure they will take those precautions, be sure that they are an EPA Lead-Certified Firm. Check for this seal -



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Failing to hire a Certified Lead-Safe Company can end in health problems and lawsuits, things you and your family would like to steer clear of.

Do Consider ALL Other Traits of Your Chosen Company

It is important to retrieve as much information as possible when choosing your replacement window contractor. Be sure to uncover the following details:

- Their rating with the Better Business Bureau. Also check to see if they are accredited.
- Their online reviews with credible sources such as Angie's List and other 3rd party sites like Guild Quality
- How long the company has been in business, and years of experience.
- Details of their warranty. Will you be covered for all product and installation issues?
- How many replacement window projects have they completed?
- What do their previous customers say? You want a company that has a high rate of customer referrals.
- Check your state policy. If contractors must be licensed with the state, check their licensing number and whether they are in good standing.

Do Not Shop Only According To Price

We understand more than anybody that these days are all about saving money. However, some decisions will lead to higher costs throughout the years. Going with the lowest-priced windows may seem like a good idea at the time, but as time passes, those cheap windows will begin to experience major problems that will ultimately lead to **MORE** replacement windows. **Nobody, we repeat, NOBODY should have to replace their replacement windows.**

When receiving an estimate from a company, the price should include all features of the windows- glass option, material of the window, locks, color, screens and installation. Once all pricing information is known, go with the best warranty, not necessarily the best price. Paying a slightly higher price in the beginning is guaranteed to save you major costs you would otherwise incur with cheaper windows down the road.

So think of your window investment in terms of lifetime costs, rather than the initial cost. If a higher priced window will save you more money on your utility bills, then it will yield a lower lifetime cost, which is a more positive effect than having a lower initial cost.

Do Consider Your Options when it Comes to the Actual Window

There is an array of options for replacement windows in this day and age, most likely many more than when your home was built! It's important to realize that change for an old home may increase its value. Consider new styles, better glass options as well as multiple materials when choosing your new windows. Remaining consistent with the windows you currently have will surely devoid you of many great possibilities to make your home more energy efficient, better looking, and higher in value.

Do some research on the following products, so you will have an idea of what you are looking for when the sales rep comes to do your in-home estimate. Below are some reasons why a window shopper would choose the following options.

1. Vinyl Windows

Vinyl is energy-efficient, maintenance-free, long lasting and is compatible with numerous glass and color options.

2. Wood Windows

Wood windows are widely loved for their beauty and aesthetics. Wood finish on the interior of a home is a major plus. Many people choose wood due to historical requirements.

3. Fiberglass Windows

Fiberglass windows are extremely durable, efficient and are maintenance free.

4. Double Pane Glass

Meaning two panes (layers) of glass in your window, double pane is the industry standard and meets Energy Star requirements.

5. Triple Pane Glass

Meaning three panes (layers) of glass in your window, triple pane exceeds energy star requirements, adds security, contributes to sound deduction and is the most efficient.

6. Krypton and Argon-filled Glass

Both are inert gasses that are heavier than air, creating an insulator in between the panes of glass. Argon is the most common. Krypton is heavier than argon, but is significantly more costly.

7. Subcontractor vs. Factory-Trained Installers

In order for a product to perform up to standard, it must be installed correctly. If an inexperienced contractor installs a window, but doesn't follow the manufacturer's requirements, the window warranty will become void. By making sure your contractor is a **factory-trained installer**, you are guaranteeing that your windows will be installed according to the EXACT guidelines from the manufacturer. Therefore, if ever a problem occurs, your windows will be covered under warranty by the manufacturer, because they were installed correctly.

In Conclusion

To put it simply - Windows are an investment. Unfortunately, many make bad investments with the wrong company, leading to more costs and more replacement windows down the road. We're taking on the home improvement industry, educating any and all people with open ears. Do your research, and whether or not you choose to make Window Nation your window company, we hope you find precisely what you're looking for.

