



**THE SASH
WINDOW
WORKSHOP**

**Traditional Windows and
Doors: *Assessing Your Needs***



Replacing windows and doors in your home is a big decision. This guide will help you ask the right questions to get it right the first time.

Ask Yourself The Right Questions

Think about the following before asking companies to quote.

One sign of a good company is that they will take the time to talk through your issues on the phone, ask you the right questions and help you to work out your options.

1. Why are you considering replacement windows or doors, what are the problems?
2. What particular benefits are you expecting?
3. How long do you intend to stay in the property?
4. Are you looking for a short-term or long-term solution?
5. Have you set a budget?
6. Have you assessed the condition of your windows and doors?



There are many companies that are hungry for your business. Put them through their paces to establish the quality, value and service. Reputable companies won't mind.

Choose The Right Company

- Only get quotes from companies that carry the FENSA logo. FENSA is an official body that offers customer protection and sets standards.
- Select a maximum of three companies to quote. Too many quotes can cause confusion and make comparison difficult.
- Ask if sales staff are employed, rather than commission based.
- Ask about the products and services offered. This will help establish your options.
- If possible, visit the company you are thinking of buying from, see how the windows are made and how they work. It will be time well spent.
- The best windows in the world don't count for anything unless the installation is good. Look for companies that employ time served fitters rather than using subcontractors.
- Check out the warranties. Are they sensible? Overly long warranties can mean nothing. Ask about after sales service.



Salespeople who tell you what you need, without listening to your particular issues, are concerned with sales, not service. Don't let someone persuade you into buying something you don't want.

The Salesperson's Visit: What To Expect, What To Demand

- Don't accept a hard sell, it's unnecessary and unprofessional. Good companies help and advise by listening to your needs and then explaining all the options.
- Listen carefully. Does the salesperson know what they are talking about? Can they answer all your questions? Are they thorough in their survey? Do they explain your options and make things clear?
- Defective windows don't always need to be replaced. There are many other options. Always explore these options before deciding on replacement.
- Make sure any quotation is in writing, comprehensive, professional and well presented. If anything appears ambiguous, question it. Costs should be transparent with no hidden extras.
- Be cautious of companies that offer big discounts, was the price over inflated in the first place?



Depending on the condition of your windows and your requirements you may be able to upgrade or repair the existing windows, minimising disruption and saving you money.

Identifying The Right Option: Alternatives to Replacement

- Is the frame in a good condition but the opening parts poor? It's possible that new sashes can be put into the existing frames.
- Does black dust settle around the inside edges of the sashes? Do the windows rattle? If so, they may require draught sealing.
- Draught sealing is excellent for stopping draughts, rattles, dust and dirt, but cold comes in through the glass. If you have a large area of single glazing and are looking to reduce heat loss, the only way to improve the window's performance is by fitting double glazing or secondary glazing.
- If the sliding/ opening parts of the window are substantial, thick and in a good condition it may be possible for the originals to be double glazed as opposed to replacing the window.
- Broken sash cords or panes of glass can easily be replaced by a professional.
- If noise reduction is important to you, be careful. Acoustic laminate glass helps a great deal and won't spoil the aesthetic appearance of your windows, but it won't eliminate noise altogether. Other factors within your home, such as unseen leaks in the structure or wooden floors, can also contribute to noise.



Before work starts, ask all the questions you need. Experienced companies don't see this as an imposition, but part of giving you good service.

You've Chosen The Company and The Products. What Next?

- Make sure that you receive a proper briefing on how to prepare for installation and what to expect during the work.
- Be aware that replacing old windows can be dirty and disruptive and could affect window surrounds, cornices, plumbing and cables. If you have any doubts, ask.
- Your work may require scaffolding. Consider if there are any other works that you could co-ordinate with your window work to save cost later.
- Traditional windows are an investment, but they need to be maintained. Regular and careful painting will prolong a window's life by many years. Your supplier should be able to offer advice.
- Ask for a receipt for any deposit you pay and wherever possible a deposit protection insurance.



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