

# Care & Maintenance Instructions

## A GUIDE FOR HOMEOWNERS

We are dedicated to creating exceptional products for any home or business. Each product is inspected to exceed our high-quality benchmarks while meeting industry-wide standards.

To ensure your products perform at their optimum levels, you must implement proper care and maintenance. Regular inspections and attention will help extend the longevity of your windows and doors, prevent costly repairs, and protect you from voiding your product's warranty.

This guide outlines best practices as well as what to avoid.

### ESSENTIAL BEST PRACTICES

- Wash your products with light pressure—excessive scrubbing can lead to damage, like scratches.
- Clean and rinse each window or door individually to prevent cleaning agents from permeating for long periods of time.
- Clean aluminum frames very carefully after they are installed. These frames are extremely susceptible to corrosion caused by various chemicals on a construction site.
- Avoid leaning on your window or door screens. These products are not designed to protect you from falling.

### WHEN TO CLEAN YOUR PRODUCTS

At a minimum, clean all the materials listed in this guide once a year. If you live in a coastal area, clean all these materials at least once a month. More frequent cleanings may be necessary depending upon your environmental factors.



### IMPORTANT PRECAUTIONS

Do not use the items below on your windows, screens, doors, or hardware. These improper tools may void your warranty and/or damage your products.

- **A power washer or garden hose**
- **Metal tools or sharp objects, like razor blades, putty knives, and abrasive pads**
- **Petroleum-based products, abrasive or caustic cleaners/solvents, and hydrochloric/phosphoric acid**

# How to Clean Your Products



## GLASS

1. **Begin by rinsing** your glass with clean water to remove dirt and dust particles that can cause scratches during the cleaning process. As mentioned above, avoid using a power washer or garden hose.
2. **Apply a soft, water-saturated cloth** or a pre-mixed glass cleaner to the surface.
3. **If you prefer** a pre-mixed glass cleaner, follow the printed instructions carefully. Rinse and dry any run-down quickly to prevent the cleaning solution from leaving a residue on your glass.
4. **Rinse your glass** thoroughly with clean water to prevent the cleaning solution from leaving a film on your glass. As stated above, avoid using a power washer or garden hose.

### GLASS CLEANING TIP

For the best results, clean your glass during cooler temperatures without direct sunlight.

### IMPORTANT

Wash your glass frequently to remove surface dirt and prevent stains.

## FRAMES

1. **Begin by rinsing** your frames with clean water to remove dirt and dust particles that can cause scratches during the cleaning process. As mentioned above, avoid using a power washer or garden hose.
2. **Clean the interior and exterior** of your window or door frames with a mixture of mild soap and water. To ensure a safe application, test your cleaning solution on a small area before you apply it to the entire surface.
3. **Apply a light, car-wax solution** to your frames once a year. Make sure to apply the wax after you have cleaned the frames. Otherwise, the wax may seal salt spray deposits to the frames, allowing corrosion to occur.

## SCREENS

1. **Remove your screen** carefully and place it on a clean, flat surface.
2. **Use a soft brush** with a combination of mild soap and water to gently remove dirt, salt, and other deposits. As noted above, refrain from using objects that may cause punctures or tears.
3. **Once your screen is completely dry**, reinstall it gently.

## HARDWARE

- The wheels on your sliding glass door(s) do not need lubrication since they contain a sealed ball bearing housing.
- A light oil lubricant, like mineral oil, or a light plant-based oil, like hemp, olive, or grapeseed, may be used to preserve easy operation on hinges, thumb turns, and other moving parts.
- Inspect and clean your weatherstrip with a damp cloth or a mixture of mild soap and water. Rinse and dry the weatherstrip thoroughly. If your weatherstrip is damaged, replace it promptly to ensure a proper seal.
- Routinely inspect and clean your water drainage (weep systems) to maintain proper drainage.
- Wipe your tracks and sills with a damp cloth, or use a vacuum to remove dust and dirt.

# Condensation

Water or frost on windows is condensation. It 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. During the hot humid summer, your house absorbs moisture. This also 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.

### Other solutions that may reduce condensation include:

- Cracking open a window or door daily.
- Opening a window or running exhaust fans longer in the kitchen, bathroom and laundry room.
- Opening drapes and blinds, allowing air to circulate.
- 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?

If you see 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.

Moisture spots on the ceiling or walls, peeling paint, rotting wood, delaminating plywood, moisture on exterior walls, and fungus, mold or mildew growth indicate a more serious indoor moisture issue. Please contact a heating and cooling contractor if these issues arise.