

Window Frame Materials

Fiberglass

Fiberglass is another composite frame material that is fairly new to windows. The manufacturing process involves pulling raw materials through a die using a continuous pulling device. Like other composite materials, fiberglass won't rot or decay and usually requires only minimal maintenance. However, when fiberglass windows are assembled the fasteners create a fragile joint that must be handled carefully prior to installation. Due to the high cost of manufacturing, fiberglass may only be available in a select set of colors but may also be painted. However, painting fiberglass windows contradicts the low maintenance benefit many find appealing.

Wood

Generally the highest priced option in windows, wood window frames serve as better insulators than aluminum. However, weather can be very damaging to wood requiring them to be painted periodically. Unlike vinyl and composite windows, if not properly protected, they can rot or warp. Some manufacturers address this problem by cladding the exterior of the window with either vinyl or aluminum, which results in an even higher ticket price.

A Word About Energy Efficiency and Frames

When selecting a window material the "K-value" (the amount of heat loss of a particular window material) is an important factor to consider. The lower the K-value for a window material, the better it insulates.

The diagram to the right illustrates the comparison of K-values for various window frame materials.

AMSCO builds its windows and doors using vinyl or composite materials. See the variety of quality vinyl windows that AMSCO offers, or learn more about AMSCO's Renaissance® Series composite windows at www.amscowindows.com.

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