

PRESS RELEASE

What to consider before buying fold-a-side doors

If you are thinking of investing in new fold-a-side doors to create the perfect indoor-outdoor link between your home and garden, then read on for some advice from Cobus Lourens from leading window and door manufacturer, Swartland.

26 April 2017, Johannesburg: It is easy to understand why fold-a-side doors have become so popular over the last decade or so – they have the ability to dramatically change the feel of a space, bringing extra light and the outdoor views beyond into your indoor living spaces. They can also open up to create a seamless flow between your home's indoor and outdoors spaces – not only transforming your living spaces, but also creating new ones.

Says Cobus Lourens from leading window and door manufacturer, Swartland: "One of the main appeals of fold-a-side doors is their ability to bring the outdoors in – allowing your home's exterior spaces to function as an additional room that flows off the interior spaces. They also work wonderfully when they are closed – affording stunning views of the outdoors and pulling in lots of natural light, thanks to their full height and width glazing."

He says that although these doors work well in both large and small spaces, the benefits for smaller spaces are particularly positive: "Fold-a-side doors offer an impressive visual aspect to the outdoors, and if you are short of indoors space, they aid in creating the illusion of added space. The cleaner and wider the outdoor views, the bigger the indoor space will appear."

Different materials

According to Cobus, the best quality fold-a-side doors are made from either timber or aluminium. Timber is a popular choice, says Cobus: "There is nothing quite as beautiful as solid wood door frames such as those from Swartland's Cape Culture range for example – the natural grain and patina of the wood gives them a definitive organic beauty that will never date. Swartland sources its timber from sustainably managed forests, which makes the timber it uses both beautiful and eco-friendly. Timber is also a brilliant insulator, making it the most energy efficient choice of all the materials, but it is a little heavier than aluminium. It also requires regular maintenance to keep it looking at its best, but if maintained properly, it will last for decades."

Cobus notes that aluminium fold-a-side doors are fast gaining ground as a popular material as well: "Swartland has recently added fold-a-side doors to its very popular KENZO aluminium range of windows and doors. Aluminium is a really great material to use as it has so many benefits – it is lightweight, durable, strong and due to its durable powder coating, it requires little or no maintenance at all. Aluminium fold-a-side doors are made to a standard frame profile with precision engineering, making them really easy to open and close and their narrow frames fit snugly out of the way when completely opened."

Quick and easy to install

There is no doubt that adding quality fold-a-side doors to your home will make it more desirable, and hence increase its overall market value. Cobus elaborates: “Fold-a-side doors are a very much on-trend addition to a home and they can go a long way to transform it – both from an aesthetic and a functional point of view. Whether you are building a new home, or you are renovating an old one – fold-a-side doors remain a relatively simple and quick feature to install.

“Homeowners can choose to either have a set of fold-a-side doors custom-made to fit a particular space, or they can choose set sizes that are available off-shelf and create the opening to fit these sizes. Of course, the latter is far more affordable, and it will afford a much quicker turnaround time as well. Once the opening has been created by the builder, fold-a-side doors can be fitted in a single day – first the frame is fitted, and then the panels simply slot in. It is imperative to hire a professional to install the doors however, as fold-a-side doors can be a significant investment, and they won’t function properly or look any good aesthetically if they are not properly fitted,” explains Cobus.

Numbers and thickness

Fold-a-side doors are made up of a number of panels or leaves. It is a good idea to work out how many leaves you would like to use for your installation, says Cobus: “I always recommend an odd number of panels, as this allows you to open the first panel like a conventional door, so that you don’t have to open up the entire door if you just want to quickly pop in and out of the garden. If you choose an even number of panels, when you open the first panel, the second panel will also begin to open, so you can’t operate them as mentioned prior.”

Another consideration is to look at the thickness of the actual frames themselves, notes Cobus: “One of the main reasons homeowners install fold-a-side doors is to get the maximum view of the outdoors – the thicker the frame of the doors, the more solid material there will be blocking the view. Also, be sure to consider how thick all the panels will be once stacked up on one side when the doors are fully open, and be sure to accommodate this into the overall plan for the outdoor space in question.”

Consider security

Essentially, fold-a-side doors comprise a wall of folding glass, which may not seem to be the safest option when it comes to securing your home from unwanted intruders. However, in reality, it is a lot harder to break in or through these doors than is commonly assumed. Cobus explains: “Double glazing and toughened glass are very difficult to break through. You can also choose glazing with various films that can be applied to the windows to dramatically improve its security, without detracting from the benefits of the expansive glazing.

“Good quality door frames should be a safe structure too, with multi-point locking systems. Things to look for include internally beaded frames, high-security hinges, solid cast security handles and anti-drill key cylinders that are all designed to give homeowners that extra level of reassurance.”

Check the guarantee

Find out what kind of guarantee the doors come with. For example, Swartland’s Fold-a-Side Doors are available in its Cape Culture and KENZO ranges, which come with a 10-year guarantee, and in its Winsters range, which come with a 5-year guarantee. The company also offers its customers access to a full service back-up team comprising specially trained and highly qualified artisans to help you with anything you may need assistance with.

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Released on behalf of Swartland (www.swartland.co.za) by The Line (www.theline.co.za).