

PRESS RELEASE

Fenestration renovation

Installing new windows can make a big difference when renovating your home. For best results, it is advisable to select windows that not only match your home's architectural style, but that also incorporate features that will improve its energy efficiency as well. Cobus Lourens from leading window and door manufacturer, Swartland, offers some advice on how to navigate through this process.

12 December 2017, Johannesburg: Installing new windows in your home is a major renovation and a considerable investment. However, it can yield wonderful results – not only improving your home's overall aesthetics, but also improving the functionality of the windows themselves, and the indoor comfort of your home. Read on for some helpful tips from Cobus Lourens from leading window and door manufacturer, Swartland, that will help you select windows that are best suited to your particular renovation.

Cobus notes that before you start, there are two major factors that you need to consider, namely:

- **Appearance:** Look for windows that capture the look you wish to achieve. Do they suit the style of your house, and do they open and close the way you want them to?
- **Energy efficiency:** Are the windows compliant with the SANS 10400 National Building Regulations? All Swartland's windows for example, are SANS 613 certified and compliant. They have all been tested for deflection, structural strength, water-resistance, air-tightness, operating forces, and the best possible energy efficiency.

Cobus advises that the easiest way to select windows that deliver on both appearance and performance, is to follow these three easy steps:

1.) Choose your style

The size and the aesthetic look of the windows you want are quite straightforward decisions to make. However, it is imperative to consider the operating style as well. Cobus explains: "The operating style is the way your windows will open and close. It not only has an effect on the functionality of the windows themselves, but also impacts on their energy efficiency.

"Generally speaking, fixed or picture windows offers the best energy efficiency as they don't open. Double glazed windows are also a great choice for improving your home's insulation. Swartland's Cape Culture range of double-glazed timber windows have been rated as the most energy efficient windows in South Africa through an independent test by the South African Fenestration and Insulating Energy Rating Association (SAFIERA)."

He offers an overview on the various types of windows styles you can choose from:

- **Fixed:** A fixed window is basically a casement or awning window that doesn't open.
- **Slider:** The slider window has one or more sashes that slide open horizontally.
- **Sliding sash:** With a bottom sash that slides up, the sliding sash window allows controlled airflow into your home.
- **Picture:** Like fixed windows, picture windows do not open. It is best if they offer a low-profile frame to maximise the glass surface, allowing for vast and uninterrupted views to the outdoors.
- **Casement:** Hinged on the side, casement windows swing outwards like a door, providing excellent air circulation in your home.
- **Bay:** Bay windows allow you to expand the area in your home. Made up of a combination of windows attached at an angle, these windows extend beyond the wall to open up and enlarge the room in question.
- **Awning:** An awning window is a casement window that is hung horizontally. Hinged on top, it swings outwards, shielding from the rain, while always providing good ventilation.

2.) Choose your frame material

When it comes to windows, you can choose from a wide variety of frame materials, however the two most popular options are timber and aluminium:

Aluminium windows: Aluminium windows and doors, such as the KENZO range from Swartland for example, are becoming an incredibly popular choice for homes and commercial buildings alike. They are best known for their exceptional durability, however, they also boast modern good looks, let in plenty of light, are exceptionally low-maintenance, and they won't rot, mould, peel, fade or corrode. They also boast very slim profiles, says Cobus: "Due to the inherent strength of aluminium as a material, you need less of it to securely hold the glass and hardware. For this reason, you can fit a lot less frame and include a higher proportion of glass, which in turn, affords you the best and most unhindered aspect or views to the outdoors."

Timber windows: There is nothing that beats the rich and inviting beauty of wood – it adds a certain inviting and warm luxury to any space it graces. It is true that wooden windows are an attractive feature in any home, however, timber is also an incredibly good insulator, and if properly maintained, good quality timber windows such as those from Swartland, should last for a very long time. Although they do require yearly maintenance, Cobus recommends the use of a water-based sealant for a low-maintenance solution: "There are a number of benefits associated with using water-based sealant on your windows, including the fact that it is much easier and quicker to apply, it is eco-friendly, quick drying with low VOC levels, and UV inhibitors to protect against sun damage." He says that in order to save time, you can always opt for Swartland's Ready-2-Fit range of timber windows, which come pre-sealed and pre-glazed directly from the factory.

3.) Choose your glazing

Today, there is a wide variety of glazing options to choose from, and by understanding your home's heating and cooling needs, you can determine your overall glass selection priorities. Says Cobus: "It is possible to combine energy efficient glass with other options, including glass that reduces noise, enhances the occupant's safety from intruders, and even glass that offers a high level of protection from veld fires, to create the perfect solution for your particular home. At Swartland, you can select whichever glazing best suits your needs."

He offers an overview on the different types of glazing that are available for residential purposes:

- **Clear float glass:** This is the most basic material used for windowpanes. Clear float glass offers no additional performance benefits in terms of insulation or reduction in solar heat gain. It can also shatter, and may produce dangerous shards of glass if broken – it cannot be used for large format windows or doors.
- **Tinted glass:** Tinted glass absorbs and re-radiates solar energy, thereby reducing sun glare, heat and providing climate control. It can absorb as much as 45% of incoming solar energy.
- **Reflective glass:** Offering a greater level of solar control when compared to tinted glass, reflective glass is made by adding a metallic coating during the manufacturing process to create a highly reflective appearance.
- **Toughened safety glass:** Toughened glass is made from clear float glass that has been strengthened via a thermal tempering process. Apart from increased strength, toughened glass will shatter into small pieces, which makes it ideal for large windows and doors.
- **Laminate glass:** This kind of glass comprises two or more layers of glass that have been permanently bonded together with an interlayer. The lamination results in the glass panels holding together in the event of breakage, and as such it is classified as Grade A safety glass. The interlayer can be selected to deliver special performance characteristics, such as improved insulation, security, and sound insulation for example.
- **Low E glass:** Low Emissivity glass, better known as Low E glass, has a microscopically thin coating of metal oxide on the glass surface that allows the sun's heat and light to pass through the glass, while at the same time, blocking heat from escaping the room. This reduces heat loss and improves insulation.

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