

PRESS RELEASE

Wow! What a view!

Imagine an entire wall fitted with floor-to-ceiling glass that slides easily and gently aside, weather permitting – allowing all the light and beauty from the outdoors inside all year round. Successfully using sliding doors to maximise your outdoor views can make a cost-effective and dramatic impact on your indoor spaces. We speak to Cobus Lourens from leading window and door manufacture, Swartland, on a guide on what to consider when investing in sliding doors.

04 July 2017, Johannesburg: Otherwise known as gliding or bypass doors, sliding doors are an extremely popular option for patio doors. They flood interior spaces with natural light, provide easy-to-open and convenient access, and virtually uninterrupted views of the outdoors beyond. Says Cobus Lourens from leading window and door manufacturer, Swartland: “Sliding doors are a great option for patio doors – a good quality sliding door should not only look good, but it needs to be easy to operate, secure, energy efficient, and easy to maintain.” Here are some important considerations offered by Cobus on what you should consider when investing in a sliding door:

1.) Single or multiple panes

The choice of style is largely related to the architectural style of the house in question, but Cobus notes that as a general rule of thumb, there are most often two types of sliding doors to choose from: “You can choose sliding doors that boast multiple glass panels or lites, which are visually similar to French doors, and ones with single large panes of uninterrupted clear glass. You can also choose to add side lites to either side of the sliding door, or even top lites – these can expand on the outdoor views and the inlet of natural light.”

2.) Size and space

By definition, sliding doors usually comprise one stationary panel, and a corresponding panel that slides on top and bottom tracks sideways over the stationary one. However, Cobus explains that sliding doors can comprise two, three or even four panels, of which some will slide and others will be fixed. He notes that one of the many benefits of sliding doors is that they incorporate very large panes of glass that can offer some of the most uninterrupted views: “Compared to fold-a-side doors, sliding doors typically only open 50% of the aperture, however, the doors themselves consume less space.

“Also, the wider the door leaves, the larger the glass panes, which command great unimpeded views when compared to fold-a-side doors with several narrower door leaves, each with a frame around them. Another benefit is that compared to swing doors, sliding doors require much less space to operate, which makes them a great space-saving solution when space is at a premium.”

3.) Choose a material

Any sliding door leading to the outdoors will need to withstand exposure to the elements, and in order to make this happen, you need to seriously consider what material it is made from. Says Cobus: “Ideally, you want to choose a material that is aesthetically pleasing, durable, easy to maintain, and energy efficient with regards to insulation. Although sliding doors are made of lots of different materials, the only two that offer all of the afore mentioned qualities are timber and aluminium.”

- **Aluminium:** Sliding doors made from aluminium, such as Swartland’s KENZO range for example, are becoming increasingly sought after, Aluminium is an affordable, light and durable material that is corrosion-resistant and performs well in the majority of climates. It is powder-coated, so it doesn’t need to be painted, and it boasts narrow profiles for a sleek and subtle visual appeal.
- **Timber:** If it is sourced from sustainably managed forests, wood boasts unsurpassed green credentials as a building material – it offers excellent insulation, it is durable and long lasting, and like aluminium, it is very easy to recycle. Wood also offers rich and warm good looks, and if sealed with a water-based sealant, it no longer requires a lot of maintenance to keep it looking its best. Says Cobus: “As part of our environmental responsibility, we have always strived to make quality products that are durable and long lasting. Which is why we kiln-dry our wood to a moisture content of 8%. This process helps keep the wood in perfect balance with atmospheric conditions, thereby stabilising the timber and minimising movement or warping.”

4.) Energy efficiency

Electricity is becoming increasingly expensive, so when building or renovating, it is always a wise idea to do everything in your power to minimise the costs of heating and cooling your home, and selecting the right sliding doors is a critical step. Says Cobus: “Choosing energy efficient glazing for these doors will not only save you a lot of money over their lifespan, but it is also the responsible thing to do regarding the environment.”

The technical term for the glass that is installed into windows or sliding doors is glazing. You can select various glazing coatings that can play a massive part in the insulative qualities of your windows and doors, says Cobus: “Low-E glazing, or low emissivity glass, for example, is coated with a thin metallic substance that increases the window’s ability to reflect, rather than absorb heat. Although Low-E glazing costs more than normal glazing, it can save you lots of money in the long run, as it ensures excellent insulation.” He notes that apart from insulation, glazing can also come with coatings that offer other desirable qualities, such as protection, safety, security, solar and sound control, UV-protection, and decoration: “It is the law to fit all sliding doors with 5mm safety glass.”

5.) Operation and security

There is nothing worse than trying to open a sliding door and it sticks and jolts open, notes Cobus: “Any high-end sliding door should offer easy and smooth operation that doesn’t require a lot of effort. This all lies in how well the door is constructed and weighted, as well as the quality of the hardware that is used for the tracks. Swartland for example uses imported German-manufactured hardware to facilitate effortless opening and closing, as well as optimum security and durability.”

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