

Working With Our Wooden Windows and Doors Successfully

Thank you for choosing Fenstür! We've put together this guide to help you prepare for installation and ensure your windows and doors maintain their beauty and performance for years to come.

BEFORE RECEIVING YOUR WINDOWS AND DOORS

To ensure a smooth installation process, follow this checklist before your wooden windows and doors arrive on-site.

1. HAVE A PLAN IN PLACE

- **Installation Plan:** Develop a clear, detailed plan for installing your windows and doors — don't wait until installation day. If you're working with an architect, they should provide this plan. Consider factors such as wall design, window placement, accessibility, and aesthetics. If you need guidance, reach out to us!
- **Materials:** Gather all required installation supplies, including straps, screws, rod and caulk, vapor permeable tape, shims, and glass suction cups.
- **Exterior Sill Setup:** Plan the installation of the bottom exterior sill to ensure proper water drainage. Ensure the sill is correctly sloped. If screwing into the window frame, pre-drill holes and apply sealant or silicone before inserting screws.

2. PREPARE FOR WATER DRAINAGE

- **Drainage Holes:** Ensure that all drainage holes at the bottom of the window remain unobstructed to allow proper water flow.
- **Sealing:** Apply a rubber gasket, silicone, or caulk between the windowsill and window face to create a secure, watertight seal.

3. PREPARE FOR EURO DOOR SILLS AND FRAMES

- **Trimming:** Keep in mind that Euro entry door sills (78/106mm thick) and frames may not align with the wall depth. Liners or returns will be needed to create a seamless trim.

4. SAFE STORAGE AREA

- **Protection:** Store windows and doors upright in a dry, climate-controlled area to maintain stable temperature and humidity levels. Choose a safe location away from foot traffic to prevent accidental knocks, scratches, or other damage.
- **Avoid Direct Contact:** Never lean windows or doors directly against one another or walls without proper cushioning. Use foam, towels, or other soft materials to prevent damage, and avoid placing them directly on the floor. We take great care in manufacturing and shipping your windows and doors. Handle them with the same level of caution on-site to prevent dents, dings, and scratches.
- **Wind Protection:** If necessary, secure the windows with ropes or straps to prevent them from falling due to wind or unexpected movement.
- **Lifting Assistance:** Plan for a lifting device if large or heavy windows require additional support during delivery and installation.

5. TIMING OF INSTALLATION

- **Late Arrival:** To minimize the risk of damage, schedule window and door deliveries as late as possible in the construction process. The less time they spend on-site, the lower the chance of accidental damage. If necessary, use plywood and plastic to temporarily cover window openings so other work can continue.
- **Climate Control:** Maintain consistent humidity and temperature levels in the installation environment. Ideally, windows and doors should only be installed once climate control can be established within 24 to 48 hours after installation.
- **Avoid Early Installation:** Unlike vinyl, fiberglass, or aluminum windows, wood windows require more careful handling. Avoid installing them too early in the build process, as environmental changes in humidity and temperature can impact their stability. Siding and waterproofing can be completed before installing windows. Work up to the openings rather than rushing window installation.

6. CLIMATE CONSIDERATIONS FOR WOOD

- **Wood Movement:** Wood naturally expands and contracts with changes in temperature and humidity. To prevent warping or damage, store and handle your wood windows and doors with the same care as millwork or kitchen cabinets throughout the construction process.
- **Stable Environment:** A consistent environment leads to better long-term performance. Maintain stable humidity and temperature levels from the moment the windows arrive on-site until they are fully installed and protected.

WHILE RECEIVING YOUR WINDOWS AND DOORS

When your windows and doors arrive on-site, follow these guidelines to ensure a smooth delivery and safe handling.

1. CLEAR PATH FOR DELIVERY

- **Clean Walkway:** Ensure a clean and clear pathway from the unloading zone to your storage area to prevent obstacles and allow for easy movement.
- **Delivery Area:** Deliveries will be made to the tailgate only. While unloading is your responsibility, the truck driver can assist if needed.

2. ASSISTANCE FOR HANDLING

- **Get Help:** Ensure you have enough people on hand to safely lift and carry the windows and doors, as they can be heavy and may require multiple people for proper handling.
- **Suction Cups:** Use suction cups to lift the windows and doors, with pump-style cups being preferable over flip-lever styles. Make sure the rubber side of the suction cups is clean and free of dust or dirt to prevent any damage to the glass.

3. PROPER STORAGE

- **Upright Position:** Always store windows in their upright position unless instructed otherwise. When stored this way, the glass is properly supported. Storing windows upside down or sideways can cause the glass to shift, leading to potential damage.
- **Avoid Deep Piles:** Avoid stacking windows too deeply when leaning them against a surface. The weight from windows stacked above can put pressure on the bottom window, potentially causing bruising or damage to the wood.

4. DOCUMENTATION

- **Delivery Note:** Keep a copy of the delivery note or order confirmation readily available. Each window frame is labeled with item numbers, and the order may indicate which window corresponds to which item number on your building plans. This will help you accurately identify and track each window for installation.
- **Included Instructions:** Make sure you have the instructional page, which provides details on adjusting window hardware, using a construction handle, and applying touch-up paint.

DURING INSTALLATION

Proper installation of your windows and doors is essential to ensure their long-term performance and efficiency. Follow these key guidelines during the installation process.

1. SHIMMING AND BLOCKING

- **Proper Shim Placement:** Knowing where to place shims and blocks is crucial to ensure the correct distribution of weight from the glass to the frame.
- **Picture Windows:** In picture windows, the glass is typically supported about 12 inches from each corner. Be sure to block and shim under these areas to properly transfer the weight, even for wider windows. For large picture windows (e.g., 10 ft wide), support is provided at only two points.
- **Shimming Tips:** Place shims snugly, but not too tightly, under the window. Avoid forcing them in, as this can distort the frame over time and lead to sagging.
- **Operable or Combination Windows:** Block beneath the jamb legs, as well as beside and under mullions and transoms. Additionally, block behind the lock points and where installation straps or screws go through the frame. For fixed glass sections, block under the glass support areas.
- **Spacing for Shims:** For picture windows, we recommend securing the window with strapping, screws, anchoring, and blocking approximately every 20 to 28 inches. For operable windows and doors, ensure they are secured at every lock point and hinge.

2. LOCK STRIKERS

- **Removing Lock Strikers:** Lock strikers can be removed to allow for screws to be installed behind them. Once the screws are in place, reinstall the strikers to fully conceal the fasteners.
- **Avoid Stripping the Wood:** When reinstalling lock strikers, always use a hand-held screwdriver. Avoid using impact drivers, as they can strip the wood.

3. PLUMB, LEVEL, AND SQUARE FRAMES

- **Ensure Proper Alignment:** Make sure all frames are installed plumb, level, and square. If necessary, adjust the window or door using the provided hardware.
- **For Euro Doors:** Euro doors are heavy, and it's sometimes necessary to install them slightly out of plumb on the hinge side. This allows for expected sagging over time, ensuring the door and frame remain aligned as it sags. If needed, contact us for a Euro door installation manual.

4. AIR AND WEATHER BARRIERS

- **Interior Air Barrier:** Apply airtight tape (e.g., Siga Fentrim 20) or rod and caulk to the interior face of the window frame to create an effective air barrier.
- **Exterior Weather Barrier:** Use vapor-permeable tape (e.g., Siga Wigluv or Fentrim 2) on the exterior face of the window frame to act as your weather barrier, allowing moisture to escape from the cavity between the window and rough opening. Siga products are available through Small Planet Supply in Vancouver. While other tapes and suppliers may be available, they might not be stocked at your local lumber yard, so plan ahead!
- **Avoid Cladding Seals:** For wood-aluminum clad windows, always tape directly to the wood frame, not the aluminum cladding. The aluminum is not designed to be airtight or watertight.

5. INSULATION

- **Cavity Insulation:** Fill the cavity between the window and rough opening (the space between the interior air barrier and exterior weather sealing tape) with insulation, such as loose-pack batten insulation or Rockwool.
- **Avoid Expanding Foams:** Do not use expanding foams in new wood-frame construction. These foams can block the cavity's ability to breathe and transfer stresses from settling or building movements onto the window frame.

AFTER INSTALLATION

Once your windows and doors are installed, it's crucial to protect them during the remainder of the construction process to preserve both their finish and functionality. Follow these guidelines to ensure they remain in top condition after installation.

1. PROTECT THE WINDOWS AND DOORS

- **Prevent Physical Damage and Contamination:** Keep your windows and doors protected from physical damage, dust, dirt, paint, and other contaminants that could impact their finish and vital components, such as locking mechanisms, gaskets, and drainage channels. A common issue is the accumulation of dust and dirt around the glass area, which can be avoided by covering the windows.
- **Use Plastic Sheeting:** If you use plastic sheeting to cover the windows, be sure to cut slits in the plastic to allow the windows to breathe. This will help prevent condensation buildup inside the window frame.
- **Avoid Abrasive Covers:** Never cover windows or doors with cardboard, ram board, or other abrasive materials, as these can damage the paint finish.

2. MANAGE HUMIDITY DURING CONSTRUCTION

- **Ventilation and Dehumidification:** High humidity, such as during painting or drywall work, can damage your windows. To prevent this, take the following steps:
 - Crack open the windows briefly to allow for ventilation.
 - Use dehumidifiers to control moisture levels and protect the integrity of your windows and doors.

3. KEEP WINDOWS AND DOORS CLOSED AND LOCKED

- **Prevent Warping or Movement:** Keep your windows and doors closed and fully locked during the construction phase to maintain their proper position and prevent warping or twisting due to changes in the surrounding environment.
- **Warranty Disclaimer:** Fenstür is not responsible for any warping or twisting that occurs if the windows or doors are left open or unlocked during this phase.

4. LIMIT USE AND PROTECT HIGH-TRAFFIC AREAS

- **Minimize Use:** Limit the use of windows and doors during construction, particularly in high-traffic areas. Consider installing temporary sashes or frames to protect the units from potential damage.
- **Avoid Welding or Grinding Nearby:** Keep welding or grinding activities away from windows and doors, as sparks can cause pitting or damage to the glass, wood, or hardware finishes.
- **Hoses and Cords:** Avoid running hoses or cords through window and door frames to prevent damage.

5. MAINTAIN CLEANLINESS

- **Remove Dust Immediately:** Dust from wood, stone, concrete, drywall, or other construction materials should not accumulate on windows. If dust settles, remove it immediately to prevent potential damage.
- **Avoid Taping or Drilling:** Do not apply tape, adhesives, or nails to any part of the finished units, unless they will be covered by trim. Also, avoid drilling or damaging the wood surface. If any blemishes occur, use the provided touch-up materials right away to maintain the units' appearance.

6. POST-CONSTRUCTION INSPECTIONS AND ADJUSTMENTS

- **Final Inspection:** After construction is complete, inspect your windows and doors for cleanliness and ensure they function properly. Check that seals, rubber gaskets, and drainage areas are free of debris or contamination.
- **Handle Installation:** Install hardware, such as handles or hinge covers, just before move-in. Verify that all lift-and-slide doors and swinging entry doors have handles and locks, as these are not included with the windows (only windows come with handles from the factory).

7. BLOWER TEST FOR AIR LEAKAGE

- **Blower Test Setup:** To perform a blower test and check for air leaks, pressurize your home by taping off a door opening with plastic and using a leaf blower to blow air into the building. This simple method helps create pressure to identify leaks before you pay for an official test.
- **Leak Detection:** After closing and locking all windows and doors, use a smoke pen around their edges to detect any leaks. If leaks are found, adjust the windows or doors accordingly and immediately recheck with the smoke pen to ensure a proper seal. Conducting this test in advance will save time and costs while improving the accuracy of your blower test results.