

Care of Timber Windows on Site

How to get the most out of your Timber Windows after delivery

Timber windows produced by Members of the British Woodworking Federation are accurate components designed and manufactured using the best available techniques to produce performance rated components. The way they are handled and stored on site can affect their long-term performance. Good practice avoids damage, maintains quality and saves money.

Windows are available as joinery items supplied; with a primer or stain base coat for site glazing and finishing; as factory glazed components requiring site finishing; s factory glazed and fully finished windows. Each type needs careful handling and protection although the actual requirements vary slightly..

Delivery and storage

Check windows at the time of delivery

Windows should be checked at the time of delivery to ensure that they are in accordance with the order schedule, the delivery is complete and that each window, including any protective packaging, is not damaged.

For long term performance of the window and finish, it is important that this moisture content is maintained during storage on site and during the construction process. BS 644: Timber Windows recommends that the moisture content of timber windows should be between 13% and 19% although fully factory finished windows may be of lower moisture content.

Wherever possible the sequence of deliveries should be co-ordinated to site requirements in order that windows are not kept on site unfixed for longer than necessary.

The storage place should be prepared in advance and the windows unloaded straight into it.

Handle windows carefully

Windows should be lifted by the main frame (not by the opening casements or the glazing bars) and carried in a vertical position to avoid any tendency to distort. When windows are protected by shrink wrapping, or other protective packaging, this should be kept in place as long as possible.

Windows should be stored under cover

This is the case, even if fully finished, preferably inside a building. If they have to be stored outside they must be kept clear of the ground on level bearers and protected from dampness and sunlight with a tarpaulin.

Polythene sheeting should not be used as this can act like a greenhouse and encourage damp or humid conditions.

There must be space for air circulation around and between the windows.

When stored inside a building, windows should be protected from dirt and damage but without restricting air circulation.

Protect Windows During Site Operations

Ensure that the moisture content of the timber is kept close to the level at which it was when the window was manufactured.

Whenever possible store windows in the sequence they will be needed with codes or identifying marks visible to avoid double handling. Avoid dragging them across each other if stacked.

Windows which have projecting sills or have the hardware fitted must, if stacked, have spacers between them to avoid damage.

Preglazed windows need a little extra care, to avoid damage and glass

breakage. Retain the protective packaging and make sure it is not possible for water to lay in glazed rebates by storing vertically.

Preglazed and prefinished windows should ideally be fitted into preformed openings and not 'built in' to masonry walls.

Treat windows like a piece of furniture

Prefinished windows should retain their protective packaging until the latest possible time but make sure it cannot collect water if it has small tears in it. Care should be taken when removing packaging to avoid damaging the finish.

Jet-washing is a common way to damage joinery, glass units and weather seals. BWF advises not to adopt this methodology for cleaning (there is a more detailed fact sheet on the problems of jet-washing available via the BWF Website).

Note: *Whilst every effort has been made to ensure the accuracy of advice given, the federation cannot accept liability for loss or damage arising from the use of the information supplied in this publication.*

Installation instructions, further guidance and a list of BWF window manufacturers is available via www.bwf.org.uk

