

# Anatomy of a Window

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Surprised by all the choices you have when it comes to picking a new window? It can be a lot to take in, but hopefully this small guide can help you understand the different choices you will need to make.

## Frame

Exactly what you think it is – the component surrounding the window itself. It is comprised of the head (the horizontal top piece) the jambs (the two vertical side pieces) and the sill (the horizontal bottom piece), and can come in a few different materials listed below.

### Vinyl:

Vinyl frames are less expensive than fibreglass, easy to install, and can last for up to 30 years. Furthermore, they come ready in a variety of colours and will not fade in the sunlight. One thing to be aware of: high heat, dark colours or poor installation can cause some warping in lower end frames.

### Wood:

Wood frames are a favourite. They are classic, beautiful, and sturdy. They insulate not only temperature-wise, but also keep sound out better than any other frame material. And, if taken care of, wood frames will last as long as the house. The two disadvantages to wood frames are the cost (much higher) and regular maintenance required (painting).

### Fibreglass:

Fibreglass frames are also fairly inexpensive, but more expensive than vinyl. They are also sturdier and stronger than vinyl and less likely to change shape or size in



varying temperatures. Fibreglass is more insulating than vinyl so it does a better job at keeping your home the right temperature. These frames are better at mimicking the look of wood frames, but they can fade in the sunlight and will require more maintenance.

## Glazing

You know this – it's the part you look through.

### Glass Surfaces (double or triple):

Here in Alberta your windows need to have at least two panes of glass, but we recommend three. We have more to tell you about double vs triple paned windows. Check the Ultimate blogs again soon to learn more.

### Low E Coating:

Coats the glass to limit the amount of ultraviolet and infrared light that can pass through the window. It makes your windows more efficient by keeping the heat of direct sunlight out. It also softens the light that comes into your home so it isn't blinding on a sunny or snowy day.

### Spacer Bar:

A small frame that adds space between the two or three panes of glass. The spaces are filled and sealed with a gas, usually Argon or Krypton, which increase the efficiency and improve the insulating properties of the window. Argon and Krypton are similar. Krypton is slightly better at insulating, but also slightly more expensive.

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