

Benefits of best practice: windows

The advantages are clear to see (2006 edition)

Home energy use is responsible for 27 per cent of UK carbon dioxide (CO₂) emissions which contribute to climate change. By following the Energy Saving Trust's best practice standards, new build and refurbished housing will be more energy efficient – reducing these emissions and saving energy, money and the environment. A crucial factor in achieving these standards is the type and condition of windows specified.

Single glazed windows can allow excessive heat loss through the glass and through ill-fitting frames. The results – condensation and draughts – make homes uncomfortable and expensive to heat. A single glazed window can lose fourteen times as much heat as the same area of well-insulated wall.

The British Fenestration Rating Council (BFRC) has now developed a Window Energy Rating (WER) label using a simple A–G scale. This allows a quick and effective assessment of the performance of the whole window.

The Energy Saving Trust's **energy saving recommended** scheme only endorses windows in Band C and above. Once endorsed, they are eligible to show the energy saving recommended logo, below.

When replacing windows, it is best practice to specify windows of Band C or above. For new housing there are two main standards*:

- Best practice – Band C or above.
- Good practice – Band D or above.

For comparison, most standard replacement windows currently fall into Band E. Double glazing to these specifications can:

- Improve sound insulation.
- Improve thermal comfort and reduce draughts.
- Improve tenants' quality of life and help to tackle fuel poverty.
- Anticipate future tightening of the building regulations.
- Improve the Standard Assessment Procedure (SAP) profile of housing stock, helping to meet key best value performance measures.
- Add value to properties.
- Reduce CO₂ emissions – helping to meet local HECA and national CO₂ reduction targets.
- Help to meet Housing Corporation Scheme Development Standards.

*New housing has a number of other criteria. See full standards information.

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Specifying windows

High specification windows are becoming more competitive in price and specifiers are therefore encouraged to obtain several quotes. There are also other important factors that affect the performance of windows. More information can be found in 'Windows for new and existing housing' (CE66).

Where can I find out about best practice?

The Energy Saving Trust offers information on energy efficiency best practice, sets standards for the housing industry and provides technical guidance, tools and training on how to meet those standards. The standards provide an integrated package of measures for all aspects of new build and refurbishment.

**For more information call 0845 120 7799,
email bestpractice@est.org.uk
or visit www.est.org.uk/housingbuildings**

The following free publications may be of interest:

- Energy efficient refurbishment of existing housing (GPG155/CE83).
- Windows for new and existing housing (CE66).



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