

Secondary glazing: a low-cost alternative to double glazing



Around 18% of all the heat lost from a typical house is through the windows. By reducing window draughts you can cut the heat loss and make your home more comfortable

For some householders replacing old single-glazed windows with modern double-glazing is not an option. This may be due to the cost involved, or because the house is listed or in a conservation area where original features like sash windows have to be retained.

However it is still possible to cut out the draughts and reduce heat loss through windows using various forms of **secondary glazing**. Some can be bought from your local hardware store and fitted yourself; others are more specialist. Some of the secondary-glazing options listed below are not allowed in listed buildings, so check first.

Transparent film secondary glazing

The simplest and cheapest form of secondary glazing is thin transparent plastic film which you install yourself using strips of double-sided sticky tape around the frame of the window. The material looks like 'cling-film', but if fitted properly it is wrinkle-free and almost invisible. To install, apply the tape to the frame of the window, cut the film to size and attach it carefully to the tape until it creates a seal. Then *carefully* shrink the film with hot air from a hairdryer until it pulls taught, and trim any excess film from around the edges.



Enough film to cover a large bay-window costs £10-15 and is available from DIY stores. The film is simple to remove, though it can damage paintwork.

Temporary secondary glazing

Next up, in terms of expense, complexity and permanence are the systems in which a sheet of rigid and transparent material like clear acrylic plastic is fitted to the window frame, in such a way that it can be put up or taken down as the season requires. Some systems use magnet strips to attach the secondary glazing to the frame,



Windows let the light in, but let the warmth out, too. Secondary glazing helps keep the warm air at home

others a Velcro-like material. A particularly popular method is 'clip and stick' where uPVC edging is used to clip the panel in place over the window frame. These types of glazing also help reduce noise.

Semi-permanent secondary glazing

Some of the more expensive types of secondary glazing are semi-permanent and are fixed either by screwing them into place or using a strong adhesive or sealant. They can be made of heavy materials like glass. On wider windows they can slide open on tracks to allow the windows to open as normal. This type are not generally suitable for DIY.



Sash windows are notorious for letting in cold air. You can get clear, light-weight acrylic panels to fit over the glazed frames, but these don't cover the many gaps on the sides, top and bottom that make sash frames particularly draughty.



Keeping the warm air in the house will save you money on heating. See over for other energy-saving tips ...

Turn over for energy saving tips ▶

Tips for lower energy bills

Happy paying your electricity and gas supplier more money than you need to? Thought not. Here are 10 ways to cut your bills ...

1) Give your clothes a day in the sun; and give your tumble drier a break. Clothes dried in the fresh air feel great, and there are drying days in winter, too.



2) Keep the oven door shut as much as possible; every time you open it, nearly a quarter of the heat escapes.



3) Catch 'em young. Encourage your children to switch off electric toys and lights that they're not using. They'll soon get the hang of saving energy.

4) Be a friend to your freezer. Defrost it regularly to help it run more efficiently.

5) Buying a new washing machine, TV or dishwasher? Look out for the Energy Saving Trust logo.



6) Don't over-fill the kettle (but do make sure you cover the metal element at the base).



7) Dodge the draught! Fit draught-excluders to your front door, letter box and key hole, and draw your curtains at dusk to keep the heat in.

8) Turn your heating down by 1 degree. You'll hardly notice the change in temperature, but it'll make a big difference to your heating bill.

9) Wait 'til you have a full load before doing a wash. Two half-loads use more energy (and water) than one full load.

10) Sleep tight. Make sure all the lights are turned off when you go to bed. If you want to light a child's room or a landing, use a low-wattage night light.



This leaflet is one of a series that covers a range of energy efficiency and renewable energy topics, produced by the Sustainable Energy Across the Common Space (SEACS) project, for you to view online or download to share in your community.

SEACS brought together three UK and two French local authorities – Devon County Council, Dorset County Council, Wiltshire Council, le Conseil Général des Côtes d'Armor and Lannion-Trégor Agglomération – to tackle the energy challenge that is faced on both sides of the channel.

The aim was to create opportunities for individuals, households, communities, schools and local authority buildings in both UK and France to reduce their energy consumption, implement energy efficiency measures and use clean/renewable energy where possible. The project has raised awareness of climate and energy issues and encouraged long term behavioural change towards energy use. Cooperation was the ethos of the project and participants had the opportunity to exchange and learn from each other.

For further information about SEACS project, to get ideas and view case studies to help you and your community save energy, and to find out which schools and community groups in your area have been involved, visit the SEACS website or the energy pages of your local authority's website.

www.seacs.info

www.wiltshire.gov.uk/sustainability

www.dorsetforyou.com/climatechange

www.devon.gov.uk/energy

This leaflet was first produced by the Centre for Sustainable Energy (CSE) and reprinted in this version on behalf of SEACS.

CSE's Home Energy Team offers free advice on domestic energy use to householders in Bristol and Somerset (including the unitary authorities of North Somerset and Bath & North East Somerset).

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