



What You Need To Know When Choosing an Exterior Door

Exterior doors for your home come in a variety of materials, colors, and designs. New materials, such as vinyl have provided manufacturers with the ability to create exterior doors that need little maintenance, provide security, energy efficiency and add value to your home. The front door of a home greets your guests and its styling says a lot about the home owner.

Wood

Wood exterior doors are desirable for their natural beauty and structural strength. They are widely available in a number of different woods ranging from pine, oak, cedar, mahogany, and walnut. They do however require significant protection from the elements as well as regular maintenance. Manufacturers are required to treat wood with a preservative to help prevent rotting but ongoing maintenance is the only way to ensure that your wood exterior door lasts and performs.

Steel

Steel exterior doors are actually made from a combination of materials. The interior structural components (rails and stiles) are often wood, the inner core is filled with insulating foam and the outer skin is made of galvanized steel. The inner wood structure gives it stability and strength. The foam core provides good insulation and the steel skins are durable, resistant to warping or rotting and require little maintenance.

Steel exterior doors can be painted any number of colors. They are also available with pre-finished PVC coatings that simulate a wood-grain finish.

Fiberglass

Fiberglass exterior doors are relatively new and are constructed in the same fashion as steel exterior doors with wood stiles and rails and an inner core of injected foam. The outer skin is fiberglass. Fiberglass is very strong, durable and energy efficient. In addition to a flat painted surface, fiberglass can also be embossed to give it the texture and appearance of wood.

Vinyl

Vinyl exterior doors are also relatively new. They employ a multi-chambered vinyl structure for both the frames and panels (sashes) utilizing a steel, aluminum, or wood re-enforcement to add strength and prevent distortion. Vinyl doors are good thermal insulators because of their multi-chambered designs and offer good thermal performance ratings. Vinyl is a very durable material and is resistant to extreme weather conditions. It is also very resistant to breakage and provides good protection against forced entry through the door. Vinyl doors will not rust, dent or scratch, and require no special maintenance.

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