

# WINDOWS REPAIRS VS. REPLACEMENT

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**When your windows are old and worn, or needing an overhaul, you may be considering whether your windows can be repaired or whether they need to be replaced. The question is, how do you know which option is best for your windows?**

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**A**s one of Sydney's leading window repairs and replacement specialists, this is a very common enquiry we get from our strata clients, particularly when there is a significant cost vs potential saving to be considered.

Amongst leading Australian window manufacturers, it is commonly estimated that windows have an average life expectancy of 25 years. Of course, this number can be much higher but will ultimately come down to a few key factors, being, the quality of window material and the original installation method, environmental exposure, and, repairs being carried out promptly when required.

In this article we will highlight the most common issues that can usually be resolved with a repair, and also identify when a replacement may be the more suitable option.



## When should a window be repaired?

Whilst signs of extensive wear, operational issues, or poor insulating qualities may lead you to believe that a replacement is necessary, these are all problems that can actually be rectified with general maintenance and a few repairs. Below are some of the most common *repairable* issues;

- **Seized windows.** This is often caused by rusted or worn internal parts. In many cases the operational hardware can be replaced, therefore returning your windows to a functional state.
- **Draught seals that have disintegrated.** If your windows have become draughty and inefficient, consider replacing the weather seals as this will increase your energy efficiency as well as enhancing your comfort.
- **Irreparable timber sash.** In most cases a full window replacement can be avoided by manufacturing and replacing just the *one* problematic sash. This is far more cost-effective than having the entire window replaced.

- **Minor timber rot.** A rotting timber window doesn't automatically mean a full replacement. In a lot of cases, if caught early enough, timber rot can be effectively treated and stop any further decay.

### When should a window be replaced?

When a window reaches the end of its serviceable life, the most economical solution is a full window replacement. It is recommended that window replacements only be considered once all viable repair options have been exhausted.

Windows experiencing the below signs usually don't have a practical repair option available and will require a replacement.

- **Structural failure at joints of frame.** This can be caused by old age, or extensive timber rot in the frame members
- **Warped window frames.** Windows that have been exposed to building movement can result in the frames becoming warped and therefore causing excessive water leaks and draught entry. Once the structural integrity of the frame is lost, the window must be replaced.
- **Windows are no longer operating as intended** and the required operational hardware has been discontinued. This most commonly occurs with aluminium windows.
- **When the owners require enhanced thermal and sound insulating qualities.** Window manufacturing technology has come a long way in the last 25 years, so replacing your windows may be the best option if a more effective sound proofing or thermal insulation solution is required.

### Tips for Increasing the longevity of your windows

- **Ensure window repairs are carried out promptly when required.** Being diligent with repairs will extend the lifespan of your windows by limiting ongoing exposure to detrimental factors
- **Regular maintenance programs** should be undertaken to preserve the serviceable life of your windows.
- **Not all old and dilapidated windows need to be replaced.** Have your windows assessed by a professional who can investigate and exhaust all repair options before considering the costly undertaking of a full window replacement.
- **Implement a 7-year painting schedule for timber windows.** An unsealed timber window exposed to environmental elements will quickly rot, resulting in the need for a replacement.
- **Owners must understand that the cost of avoiding or overlooking repairs and maintenance can lead to accelerated window dilapidation to a point of disrepair.**

As with any big or costly decision, it is important to be informed. Windows are an integral part of every building, so knowing your repair options, along with scheduling regular maintenance programs will ensure the enduring life span of your assets.

*Article by Anthony Shakar  
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For aluminium or timber window repairs, replacement or maintenance advice, contact ASQB today

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