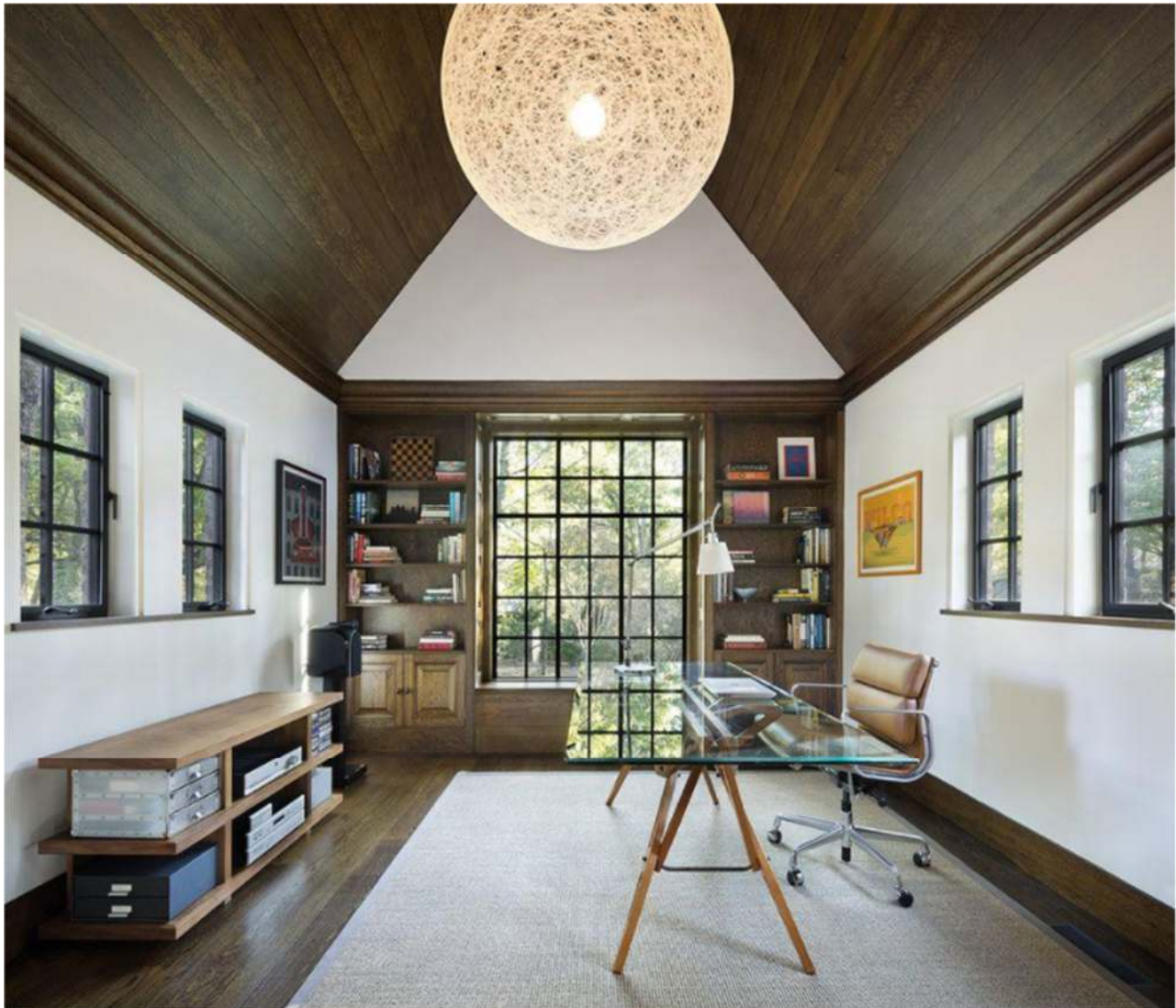


Guidelines for Cleaning and Maintenance of Steel Windows and Doors



Steel windows and doors can withstand the test of time if routine cleaning and maintenance is performed. Proper cleaning of glass, frames, and screens will help with peak performance of your windows and doors for years to come.

The cleaning and maintenance recommendations presented in this article are meant to be guidelines only and not an exhaustive list of all steps required to clean and maintain steel windows and doors. Manufacturer requirements or local conditions may dictate modifications of these guidelines. You should check for specific cleaning and maintenance instructions listed in the steel window and door manufacturer's installation and maintenance documents provided with your steel windows and doors. It is suggested that you keep a detailed record, including dates and description, of cleaning and maintenance done to your steel windows and doors, as this may be required by your warranty.

These guidelines were written with regard for the safety of workers and bystanders; however, normal safety procedures take precedence over any guidelines provided here. Appropriate personal protective equipment, such as gloves and eye protection, should be worn when working with cleaning and maintenance materials. Consult OSHA standards, local laws, or building regulations when working above sidewalks, pathways, or other locations where falling debris may cause injury to personnel or property.

CLEANING GLASS



- Use a mixture of mild non-abrasive soap or non-alkaline detergent and warm water.
- After cleaning, rinse completely with clear water, then wipe dry with a soft cloth or squeegee. Test cleaners in an inconspicuous area first.
- Do not use abrasive, petroleum based or caustic cleaners. Overspray of these types of cleaners can be damaging to the finishes on the steel windows and doors, including muntins, hinges, or hardware.
- Do not wash glass in direct sunlight, if possible, to reduce streaking of glass.
- Do not use a razor blade, putty knife, steel wool, or abrasive pad on the glass surface.
- Do not use a pressure washer or high-pressure sprayer to wash or rinse windows. This can dislodge seals and gaskets.
- Dispose of cleaning materials safely and properly.

CLEANING FRAMES (INCLUDING SASHES)

Washing the metal frame surfaces at the same time the glass is cleaned will aid in the longevity of your steel windows and doors.

- Before washing, vacuum dirt from sill and track areas. Check to make sure that all drainage or weep holes are clear of dirt or obstructions.
- Tracks and weep holes can be cleaned using a dry paint brush or vacuum brush attachment. Baffles on weep holes should move freely, to allow water to drain and reduce air infiltration.
- Use a mixture of mild non-abrasive soap or non-alkaline detergent and warm water.
- After cleaning, rinse completely with clear water, then wipe dry with a soft cloth. Test cleaners in an inconspicuous area first.
- Do not use abrasive, petroleum based or caustic cleaners. Overspray of these types of cleaners can be damaging to the finishes on the steel windows and doors, including muntins, hinges, or hardware.
- Do not use a razor blade, putty knife, steel wool, or abrasive pad.



CLEANING SCREENS

- Gently vacuum screens with a brush attachment. If you can remove the screen, you can gently vacuum the screen, or wash it on a flat, clean surface with mild soap and water using a soft brush.
- After cleaning, rinse with clear water, wipe, or air dry and then re-install screen.

FREQUENCY

Follow the recommendation of your steel window and door manufacturer. It is beneficial to wash steel windows and doors on a regular basis, at intervals between every 3 months and 12 months, depending on how much dirt and salt is in the atmosphere.

INSPECTION & MAINTENANCE

Refer to your steel window and door manufacturer owner's manual for specific maintenance instructions. An annual inspection of all working parts, gaskets and joint sealants will assure many years of trouble-free performance.



Moving hardware parts, hinges, tracks, and rollers should be lubricated regularly with a light oil. For safety reasons, lubrication is not recommended for friction hinges because they can swing too freely without restraint. Cam handles and spring catches should be cleaned of any dirt and then lubricated with light oil, working the mechanism back and forth to assure the lubricating oil penetrates. Roto operators can be removed, and a light oil put on the gear teeth. The track under the ventilator should be cleaned and sprayed with a light oil or silicone. Check all attaching screws on all hardware and keepers to make sure they are tight. If any hardware is broken, worn or damaged, repair or replace these components to ensure security & energy efficiency of your steel window or door.

Check all gaskets and weatherstripping for cracked, torn, warped, brittle, gummy, or missing sections. Replace all damaged gaskets and weatherstripping to prevent energy loss due to air or water infiltration. Check to be sure all glazing beads are securely installed.

Check the joint sealant between the steel window or door unit and the wall opening. If deterioration is observed, the original sealant should be removed, the joint cleaned up, and new sealant applied which is compatible with the original sealant.

Steel windows or doors with multi-point hardware should be checked for smooth operation. Adjust any keepers if necessary to assure even locking. Check door locks for smooth operation.



Check the finish of the steel window or door. Small areas of finish that are chipped or scratched can be repaired by using touch up paint available from your steel window and door manufacturer. Since this will likely be air drying paint, it will not weather as well as the original finish. Therefore, regular checks or repair on these areas will be necessary. Large areas of finish damage or rust should be repaired by specialist contractors.

The cleaning and maintenance guidelines outlined above were developed from steel window and door manufacturer experience. With proper care and execution, experience has shown that steel windows and doors can last for decades at a time.



About the Steel Window Institute (SWI):

The members of SWI are leading manufacturers of windows and doors made from hot-rolled purpose-made steel sections and such related products as casings, trim, mechanical operators, screens, and moldings that are manufactured and sold by members of the industry for use with steel windows and doors. SWI members lead the way for steel windows and doors with testing requirements such as air-water-structural and impact. Proprietary specifications produced by each SWI member are available from individual members upon request.

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