

Q & A AIR INFILTRATION

1. During the wintertime when I put my hand on my windows, it feels cold and there is moisture on the glass. Does that mean I'm losing heat in my home?

A. No. Glass that feels cold in the wintertime is normally caused by convection – the natural transfer of temperature through the glass. When moisture forms on your glass, it generally indicates elevated humidity levels in the home that causes the condensation on your windows. Controlling the amount of moisture in the air inside your home is the most effective way to reduce condensation. (Condensation Info) Simonton Windows offers optional glass packages for our product lines to help increase the condensation resistance factor. (ENERGY STAR Page)

2. Why do I feel small drafts coming into the house when I just had new replacement windows installed?

A. All windows, including those that do not have the ability to open, have some degree of air infiltration. Your home's location and surroundings can impact the amount of air infiltration you experience. Homes located in areas of high winds, especially in areas with no trees or other types of natural windbreaks to serve as a barrier to block the wind, could experience increased air infiltration.

3. What can I do to make my windows let in as little air as possible?

A. For windows to perform as designed, windows must be in the closed and locked position. First, make certain your windows are completely closed and securely locked.

Next, make sure the windows are properly sealed on the exterior of your home to reduce air infiltration. This means you'll want to check the caulking seal around the outside of your windows to make sure air does not leak into the home around the frames. If you're still experiencing significant air leakage, then contact your window installer/contractor to make certain your windows are properly installed. (Simonton install instructions)

4. Is it a good idea to place plastic on the windows during the winter season to reduce the air coming into the home?

A. At Simonton Windows, we do not recommend alterations to the product which could void the warranty, but it is a homeowner's choice. All Simonton windows pass the American Architectural Manufacturers Association's (AAMA's) required air infiltration testing, indicated by the gold sticker located inside the head (or top) of each window.

5. I close my drapes at night. When it's windy outside I can see them move. Why is this? What can I do to fix this?

A. All windows, including those windows that can not be opened, can have some degree of air infiltration, even when properly installed. There are also other factors that affect the amount of air that can pass through a window. A small picture window located on the side of a house that is somewhat protected from the wind by trees, adjacent homes or other windbreaks will naturally have less air infiltration than a large double hung window that faces an open field and the prevailing winds.

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6. I have a fixed picture window, so there are no operating parts. Yet still, there's air leaking in. What can I do?

A. Contact your contractor to make certain that your window is properly installed, sealed and that the window has adequate perimeter insulation. Glass that feels cold on fixed (or stationary) products, in the wintertime, is often caused by convection – the natural transfer of temperature through the glass. (website)

7. When I stand outside my house and look at my windows at night, I can actually see light coming out around the edges. To me, this looks like they were not installed right. What should I do?

A. If you are concerned about the installation quality of your windows or doors, we recommend that you contact your window installer/contractor to review the project work. Simonton Windows recommends that all windows and doors be installed according to general industry standards and local building code requirements. Simonton Windows provides window and door installation instructions to help ensure that all products are properly installed. By following these instructions, an experienced window installer should have no difficulties installing your windows. (install instructions)

8. I want an airtight home. I don't want to pay to heat or cool the outside. Why aren't my Simonton windows 100% airtight?

A. Quite simply, there is no such thing as an airtight home or an airtight window. Simonton windows and doors are all tested to ensure that they pass AAMA's air infiltration test. This certification is verified by the AAMA gold sticker located in the head of each window.

9. Last summer I opened my tilt-in windows to clean them. Ever since then the units don't seem to work properly and there's lots of air coming through the sides. What can I do?

A. It's possible that when you closed the windows after cleaning them, that the sash didn't properly "connect" in the balance system, which could prevent the windows from locking and sealing properly. Try opening the windows again as if you were cleaning them. When you close the windows, make sure the pivot bar on the back corners of the operating sash goes firmly back into the balance system.

There are two operating sash on a double hung window. If either operating sash is not fully seated in the balance system, the window sash will be hard to move. This can also make it very difficult for the window to lock and seal properly.

If, after trying to re-balance the system (as described above) you are still having difficulties, then consult with your contractor/window installer to gain their assistance in solving the situation.

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10. On occasion, I have noticed that some of my windows will hum or whistle. What is causing this air leak?

A. There are a number of troubleshooting techniques you can use to diagnose a “whistling window.” First, check to make sure that there is adequate insulation between the window frame and the opening. The window must also be properly sealed on the exterior, so you should replace any missing or cracked caulking as necessary.

Second, check to see if something other than the window might be the source of the whistling. Aluminum wrapping around the windows and adjacent shutters are both common culprits.

Third, after the window is properly installed and all adjustments have been made, it may be necessary to seal over any installation and jamb adjuster holes in the window frames. Also make sure the weep hole covers are in place at the bottom of the window.

If these troubleshooting tips don’t successfully resolve the problem, then contact your contractor/window installer to make sure that the windows are properly installed and adjusted

11. I feel cold air near the edge of my window; it feels like its coming from around the wood trim. What could be wrong with my window to cause this?

A. Any air that is actually coming around the window usually indicates that there is an inadequate perimeter seal/and or a lack of insulation between the frame and the window opening.