



Glass trends

Rebecca Clayton, technical sales executive at IQ Glass looks at the changing trends in glazing, due largely to constant innovations in technology

As in all elements of design, trends change over time. This is therefore true of architectural glazing. Various things throughout all areas of life affect these trends, from technology to fashion and popular design.

Minimal framing is still a strong, current trend in architecture and design. Using thin framed sliding doors, frameless structural glazing and hidden supports can create a clean, fully glazed reveal and allow floor to ceiling glass elevations.

Sliding doors will allow the biggest range of minimal framing options available for moving parts closely followed by pivot doors. Sliding doors will give better weather and thermal performance with framings of as little as 21mm. Well-designed sliding door systems can hold massive pieces of glass of up to 12 sq m in a sliding panel to allow large, nearly frameless faces of glazing.

When using fixed glazing structural glass

assemblies will create a frameless glass appearance, the glass spacers and a silicone joint on show where panels meet. For larger glass constructions glass beams and fins can be used instead of framing to support these frameless elements, continuing the fully glazed appearance.

On these thicker elements of glass the use of low iron glass is preferred. Glass has a natural green tint to it which is much more noticeable on thicker elements of glass such as glass fins and beams, which are normally 4 x 10mm pieces of glass. By reducing the iron content in the glass you reduce this greening tint so these thicker elements of glazing appear clearer and less noticeable on a frameless glass installation. Low iron glass is also preferable on large areas of glazing where different glass thicknesses will be very close to each other such as a framed piece of glass next to structural glazing. As framed glazing will use thinner pieces of glass than frameless structural glass there would be a difference in the tint if low iron glass is not used.

This frameless effect is also important at the head and the base of the glass element in both

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moving and fixed parts. If you can create a flush floor finish inside to outside the illusion of extra space will be dramatic – the internal space flowing seamlessly into the garden. This is referred to as indoor-outdoor living and is a popular design technique, especially in smaller spaces.

Most slim framed sliding doors and pivot doors will be able to create this seamless appearance across the floor and ceiling tracks.

An emerging trend in architectural glazing is flush glazing. It has become popular with the growth of frameless structural glass assemblies where two structural glass units meet, either in line or on a corner. A flush glazed corner or joint is achieved with the glass covering the spacers within the unit. Opening door and window systems are now advancing to recreate this flush glazed effect on all areas of a build. By stepping the external panel of glass over the framing you can create a flush external finish and hide all the framings and fixings with only framing visible from the inside of a space.

The surrounding glass that covers the frame is generally back painted to hide all fixings and framings, usually in black or dark grey to match the parent design of structural glazing.

Many different types of window and door configuration and combinations are available to give you control over the look and functionality of your flush glazed window and door systems.

These types of windows and doors are fast becoming popular and can contrast brilliantly with traditional brick and timber as well as modern rendering.

One type of window solution is often underrated and that is the picture window. These are fixed elements of glazing with all frames completely hidden within the building finishes. Generally one piece of glass, a picture window will create a striking window feature and is great on properties with a fantastic view. Essentially, walls frame the view so no framings distract from the image – hence the name ‘picture window’. This works very well with rendered buildings where you can easily hide all fixings.

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