CUSTOM WINDOWS
A GUIDE TO USEFUL TERMS

presented by

VERSATILE
WOOD PRODUCTS

ingenuity • win together • build to last

At **Versatile Wood Products**, Versatile Wood Products spends a large portion of its professional life making custom windows work. Like a master baker blends the same ingredients to produce a culinary masterpiece, our custom window designs are grounded in extraordinary mastery of ordinary window components. Just some of the ordinary elements that make custom windows work.

Here you will find various terms with pictures and diagrams, all done by our team. We hope you'll find this look at the history and meaning of some of the window world's more obscure terminology informative, useful and maybe a bit entertaining.

Custom Windows Glossary

1. AIR INFILTRATION

The amount of air that passes between a sash and a frame; Measure in terms of cubic feet of air per minute per lineal foot of crack (margin).
Air infiltration is the major cause of heat loss or gain in a home. A reduction in air leaks will provide a more comfortable environment and improve energy efficiency in the home. Some ways to prevent air from leaking through windows include using caulking or weatherstripping and replacing glazing compounds. One of the best solutions for historic homes is to have failing windows restored; windows can also be replaced. Restored windows can last many years with proper maintenance.

2. ARGON GAS

An inert, colorless and odorless gas used to fill the airspace between the insulating glass panes. This greatly increases the overall performance of the glass; Argon gas is less conducive to heat than air.

The glass panes are sealed to keep the gas from escaping. This ensures a consistent interior temperature as well as overall energy efficiency. This method works for all window frames and allows for unobstructed views and reliable insulation.

3. ASTRAGAL

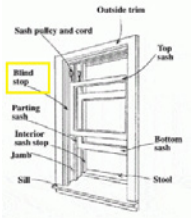
A vertical member attached to the meeting edge of one door panel of a pair, bridging the opening and holding one door panel inactive, while the other panel is active; the inactive panel can be unlatched and made operable after the active panel has been opened. Also sometimes used in casement window pairs.

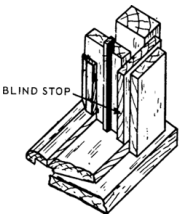
4. BALANCE

A mechanical device used in hung windows to counterbalance the weight of the sash during operation. These can be weight-and-pulley or spring balance.

5. BLIND STOP

A sash or window frame member applied to the exterior vertical edge of the side and head jamb in order to serve as a stop for window sash or screens.





6. CASEMENT

A window unit that swings open from one of its vertical edges. These windows are normally operated with either a casement lock and stay bar system (the traditional hardware) or a mechanical crank system with a concealed hinge.

7. CHECK RAIL

The bottom rail of the top sash and the top rail of the bottom sash of a double hung window that meet horizontally in the center of the unit or the two vertical members of sash in a slider window that meet in the center. This is also sometimes called the meeting rail.

8. COTTAGE STYLE

A Double Hung window with a bottom sash that is taller in height than the top sash.
The configuration commonly seen in Craftsman style houses (1900 to 1930) features the six lite upper sash paired with a unobstructed larger lower sash.

9. DAYLIGHT OPENING

The visible area of glass that is seen, which is slightly smaller than the actual glass size.

10. DIRECT GLAZE

A window that is glazed directly to the frame, with no sash. Common in storefront and midcentury to modern picture window applications.

11. EXTENSION JAMB

Lumber extending from a window or door frame to accommodate different wall thicknesses.
Why do you need an extension jamb? Since the energy crisis of the 1970s brought on the demand for thicker insulation, most contemporary houses are framed with 2×6 studs. Windows, though, are generally still configured for 2×4 walls, so the jambs have to be extended to bring the window flush with the drywall.
Fine Homebuilding Magazine has an extremely detailed article on the process for properly measuring and installing jamb extensions—**you can check it out here.**

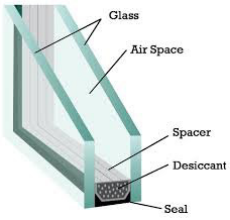
12. FRAME

The horizontal and vertical members of a door or window unit which surround the sash, are used to secure the door or window unit into the rough opening and to the building, and/or to which the hinge and lock strike hardware are normally attached.

Components include:
Head Jamb: The top horizontal member
Side Jamb: the vertical side members
Sill: The bottom horizontal member

13. INSULATED GLASS

Glazing comprised of two or more panes separated by a hermetically sealed airspace. Heat transmission through this type of glass is a fraction of single pane. The space may be filled with an inert gas such as argon for additional performance.



13. MULLION

A stationary vertical member separating multiple window units while having a continuous head and sill. Window gangs with mullions are called “mulled assemblies”.

14. MUNTIN BAR

A slender wood profile traditionally used to divide separate smaller glass (true divided lites, or TDL). For best performance with insulated units, simulated divided lites (SDL) are used on a single piece of glass with an embedded grid pattern. For both TDL and SDL, the profiles match the profile seen on the sash detail.

15. SASH

The portion of a window that is separate from the frame and may be either stationary or operating, consisting of stiles (vertical members) and rails (horizontal members) to be filled with glass.

16. SINGLE GLAZED

Single pane glass, as opposed to double- or triple-pane insulated glass units. Usually uses putty for the exterior glass stop.

17. TEMPERED GLASS

Glass that has been heated to increase its strength. When broken, it shatters in tiny fragments, reducing the possibility of injury. Required by code in certain locations.

18. TRANSOM

A frame area immediately above a door or window opening containing fixed glass, an operating sash or panel, or other filler.

VERSATILE
WOOD PRODUCTS

503.238.6403 • info@versatilewp.com • versatilewp.com
portland, oregon