



bifold**DIRECT**.CO.UK

Buyers Guide

# why

# fit a folding sliding door?



## **Ever wondered why almost every successful project on ‘Grand Designs’ has a folding sliding door in it?**

Or why every designer home in “Elle Decoration” has a double page spread with the owner framed by one of them?

We could tell you it’s because a folding sliding door adds value to your home... because it does. We could say that folding sliding doors are environmentally efficient... because they are.

But the real reason is much simpler; a folding sliding door makes your life better by transforming your living space. It opens up a multitude of possibilities in your home, making it a lighter, more welcoming environment in which to live.

No other item in your home can transform your living space, break down the barriers between inside and out and bring gorgeous sunlight flooding into your home.

A folding sliding door realises the potential of your home and the space around it.

**Literally, it opens up a whole new way of living.**

# Want to know more?

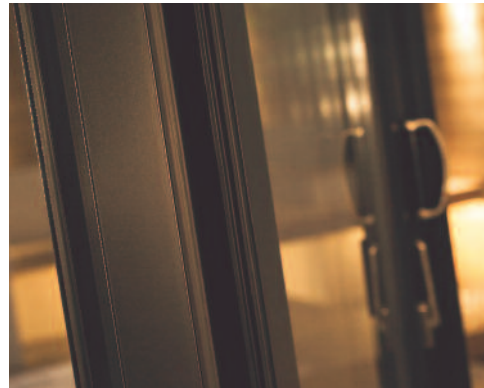
## Frame Material

There are just 3 potential materials that a bi-fold door is typically made from, UPVC, wood and aluminium.

UPVC is the everyday choice for replacement windows and doors and most people will have experience of this material. Whilst it is a perfectly good material for smaller doors and windows it is to be avoided when it comes to folding doors. The lack of strength combined with expansion and contraction as a result of heat variation can make the operation of the doors unpredictable and unreliable. A UPVC door may be less expensive, but it is unlikely to be cost effective.

Wood is the ultimate natural material and can deliver a tasteful and structurally sound option. Wood has the ability to absorb moisture which can cause warping of the door frames. This can result in poor gasket seal performance and unreliability when operating the door. In order to combat this, a severe maintenance program will need to be adhered to. This can be very expensive and time consuming.

**Aluminium is a modern alternative whose aesthetics can equal wood and whose performance and durability exceeds both wood and UPVC.**



Aluminium is lightweight and strong. That's why aluminium frames can be narrower than other materials whilst being more resistant to flex, twist, expansion and contraction with heat variation.

Perfect for a door that will be opened and closed regularly. Because of its strength, narrow frames also let in more light and improve the view when the doors are closed.

An unlimited choice of colours can be applied to the aluminium frame, including realistic wood grain effects, metallic colours and textured finishes. This makes it the perfect material for matching existing frames or making a bold design statement. More importantly, powder coated aluminium will not corrode, discolour, rot or warp.

## Glass, glazing and the requirements

Fitting high performance double glazed units into bi-fold doors will provide a secure and thermally efficient "glass wall" that will not significantly impact your energy bills.

24mm and 28mm sealed units are the industry standard for double glazing, both will help keep your home warm in winter and cool in summer.

The difference in thermal transfer performance, or "U value", between the two is negligible, although despite popular misconception it is the 24mm units that will perform better under test. Many different specifications of glass are available so whether it is keeping out the cold, limiting noise, protecting from the sun, security, or even having glass that cleans itself, the choice is yours. Your chosen

supplier should be able to help you with your choice and requirements.

Building Regulations set standards for design and construction which apply to most new buildings and many alterations to existing buildings in England and Wales.

Building regulations will dictate some of the performance characteristics and ensure that the latest safety and thermal criteria are adhered to and it is imperative that any product chosen is certified compliant to meet current UK standards as these will be required by your local authority building regulations department. Whoever your chosen supplier is, they should guide you through this process and ensure that all requirements are met.

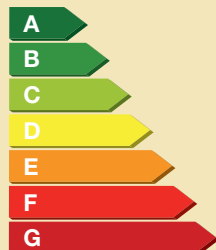




## Energy Ratings - what are they?

Energy ratings have been introduced on a number of products within your home to measure their thermal performance. At this time the test criteria does not exist for doors, only for windows.

The thermal performance of your door is measured using calculation criteria laid out by the Glass & Glazing Federation, not using the energy rating A-G system as shown. It is imperative that any door system you purchase is certified compliant by an approved BFRC (British Fenestration Ratings Council) member to ensure that the thermal properties of the door meet current building regulations.



## Security

As with any type of external door, security is a high priority and folding sliding doors are no exception.

It is important that the door design allows for accredited locks, manufactured by a reputable company, are incorporated within the door system. Important features that

should be integrated within the main locking system include a multipoint lock with hooked locking points and shoot bolts.

The hinges of a door can also be an area of weakness on some products and it is important that they have been designed to withstand attack.



## Planning Control

If you're replacing tired old patio doors with a new bi-fold, it's very unlikely that you'll need any sort of planning permission. However, if you live in a conservation area there may be strict regulations about what you can and cannot do to your home, particularly when it comes to replacing doors and windows.

Even if you do live in such an area, powder coated aluminium bi-fold door frames are increasingly being accepted as an alternative to wooden frames by many local authorities.

If you're not sure, it's best to check with your local authority to find out if your home is subject to any planning restrictions or conservation policies.

In all circumstances your chosen supplier should be able to guide you through the process if required.

The profile from which the door is constructed is also important. The strength and integrity of the door relies on this. Getting the right balance between size and strength of profile as well as the aesthetics of the overall door is key to having a product that will perform to incredibly high standards in all areas.

Most insurers will require the minimum of a 5 lever key cylinder to be fitted to the multipoint lock. There is a wide variety of options available and it should be possible to upgrade from the minimum requirement to "anti-bump", "anti-drill" and "anti-snap" cylinders for additional security.

Installation is another key area that contributes to the security of any door. It is important to ensure that the installation is carried out by competent professionals recognised as such by the manufacturers of the product.



## Who is the manufacturer?

There are generally two types of manufacturer, the first are manufacturers that design and build their own products. The second are fabricators that purchase components from systems companies and fabricate the doors themselves.

Manufacturers that design and build their own products will have a full understanding and complete control over the quality and specification of the items being produced. All components that create the door system should be designed exclusively for use in a folding sliding door. Knowing that every part of the door has been carefully designed and crafted fit for purpose gives you complete peace of mind.

It is important that you understand who the fabricator is and confirm that the doors are being produced to the system design company's specification and quality standards.

The manufacturer should be directly available to discuss your requirements and assist you with your designs.

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## Guarantees / Warrantees

It is important to identify who is offering the guarantee for the products you are purchasing. These can often be offered by a re-seller and not the manufacturer. Make sure you clarify the guarantee the manufacturer is offering and what is covered within it.

## Why should you choose an Easifold door?

Because we are dedicated to creating the world's most desirable sliding folding doors which are both UK designed and manufactured. We use simple and elegant forms, innovative design, technically superior engineering and skilled craftspeople to produce inspiring and high performance doors.

Our customers are people who seek excellence, who believe that a product should bring more to their life than just functionality. We believe our bespoke Easifold door is the most thoughtfully designed, highest specification, best performing bi-fold door on the market today.

## And this is why:

Ensure your choice ticks all the boxes.

- ✓ 1. Designed and manufactured in Great Britain by us.
- ✓ 2. Unmatched 20 year manufacturers guarantee.
- ✓ 3. Ultra slim aluminium frame delivers more light, better views.
- ✓ 4. Bespoke components and hardware designed by us.
- ✓ 5. Direct contact with the manufacturer.
- ✓ 6. Bespoke five point locking system, security hinges and shoot bolts.
- ✓ 7. Bespoke 'Finger Safe' door gaskets.
- ✓ 8. The industry's most flexible lead times – popular colours delivered when you need them.
- ✓ 9. Certified thermal performance to meet all current UK building regulations.
- ✓ 10. Certified severe weather rated.

