

Five things to check before you order new windows

Work down the list in this order. An answer near the top can change the ones below it.

☐ 1 Is your home listed?

If it is, speak to the council before anything else. Any change that affects a listed building's character needs listed building consent, inside as well as outside.

Council's answer and date

☐ 2 Is it a house or a flat?

Replacing windows on a house is usually permitted development: allowed without an application. Flats don't have those rights, and councils treat like-for-like swaps in flats differently, so ask yours and get the answer in writing. Check your lease too.

Notes

☐ 3 Has the council removed your rights?

Two things can remove them: an Article 4 direction, which is a council order covering a particular area, or a condition on the planning permission your home was built under. Ask the council. In London, that's usually your borough council.

Council's answer and date

☐ 4 Will the new windows look similar to what's there now?

Replacing like for like is the clear case. If you want to change the style, the colour or the material, ask the council's planning team first. A new bay window counts as an extension.

Notes

☐ 5 Who will certify the work under building regulations, and will you get the certificate?

Every replacement has to meet building regulations, even when no planning permission is needed. Either an installer registered with a government-authorised scheme certifies the work, or a building control body approves it. Keep the certificate.

Installer's scheme, or building control

For most houses, there's nothing to apply for. Don't pay anyone to apply just in case. If you'd like it confirmed in writing, you can ask the council for a lawful development certificate.

The full guide: [Do you need planning permission to replace your windows?](#) · If you're comparing options for your property, [send PCW the basic requirements](#) and we can explain the practical trade-offs before you decide.