

# LOG HOME LIVING

---

## ***Getting Started on Windows and Doors***

By Editorial Staff/Loghome.com

You've bought property and want to enjoy the best views you can. This means you should pay attention to the windows and doors you purchase.

The most important move you'll make is to do your research and get opinions from professionals on the types of windows and doors that would be best for your situation and your budget.

Your window and door options, of course, are practically endless. Windows and doors are usually included in your log kit, and chances are they're pretty good for what you'll need — not too high-end, but not cheap, either (you get a major discount on these items from major manufacturers because a log producer can get these products in bulk).

Talk with your designer or architect about window location, type and customization options. You might be interested in long life for windows in a full-time residence, but low maintenance for a retirement home. For a vacation home, you might want sturdy and unbreakable windows. Many of these options should be available in a log kit, but you may want to upgrade.



The layout of your home will determine the location of windows and doors. In most log kits, you have the ability to move doors around in the layout and swap out doors for windows (and vice versa). Your goal for interior doors is to avoid one door swinging into the space dominated by another door (for example, a French door leading to a deck hinging back on a closet door). Sometimes a sliding or a bifold door can be the answer.

Most people building log homes like to customize one set of windows — and most frequently it's the great room window wall. Your design professional will have plenty of information on the type of glass available for any customization.

If you do plan to customize windows, look around for local deals. Your local lumberyard or window/door dealer may have a reasonable deal, and buying in bulk generally reaps discounts.

The most common door to be customized by log-home owners is the main entry. Custom doors usually are not cheap and finding just the right artisan can take some time, so keep in mind that you can upgrade to a custom front door down the road.

Picking windows depends on the space and room. Window varieties include casement, awning, double-hung, sliding and fixed (non-opening, such as arch, bay, picture and transom windows). Different types are more appropriate for some rooms than others. A casement window might be perfect over the kitchen sink, or in a bathroom, but might not be appropriate in your dining area.

Windows come with vinyl frames, metal frames, vinyl over wood frames, or solid wood frames. Vinyl and metal can be less expensive because the raw material and manufacturing costs are lower. And vinyl and metal last because they don't rot. But many people prefer wood-framed windows, and a wood-framed window is more visually harmonious with a log home. It's not necessarily true, however, that a wood-frame window is of higher construction quality than one using vinyl or metal — check into the reputation of the manufacturer and read the warranty information.

Another area to explore is the hardware. Some windows and doors are more costly because of better hardware construction and materials. The hinges and sash locks may be inexpensive stamped metal rather than cast metal. Stamped hardware will work fine for years, but cast hardware lasts longer, and simply feels and sounds better when you operate it. In addition, commercial-grade hardware is built to last, and certainly costs more than residential equipment.

As for frames, wood is a better insulator than metal or vinyl. But metal and vinyl can be extruded with interior spaces that are filled with insulation. So a non-wood-framed window can be just as energy efficient if not better

than a wood frame. When shopping for windows, pay more attention to the glass and the number of layers (single, double- or triple-pane) and their heat-blocking tintings than the frames. Look for Energy Star-rated windows, which meet or exceed Department of Energy guidelines for heating and cooling requirements.

#### Dynamic Skylights

For adding more dynamic light to a room, little can compare with a skylight. And unlike generations past when a skylight was an invitation to drips during the rainy season, today's sky-light — whether standard or custom — is a solid and sound architectural element when properly installed.

Skylights today come in a wide range of styles, from the traditional single-slope fixed window that allows ample light to a remarkable range of multiple panes, grilles, angled and weather-resistant styles. With rooflines varying in style and pitch in a single home, it's also possible to create multiple angles from pyramids to trapezoids to nearly any style desired.

About the only limitation (beyond imagination) are the structural considerations. Architects and engineers can guide the planner in determining those areas in which structural integrity may be compromised, even though glass strength, frames, mullions and grilles are much stronger than they were years ago.

Whether the homeowner wants just a little added overhead interest, or something all the way up to a large solarium, manufacturers and builders are able to deliver.

---