

Egress Window sizing & Tempered Glass location requirements

At least one window in sleeping rooms shall meet the following requirements:

- (1) Grade floor windows must have a clear opening area of at least 5 sq. ft. The maximum height difference between the finished grade, either above or below the window sill, is 44". Any additional height will require going to the 5.7 sq ft window size.
- (2) 2nd and 3rd floor windows must have a clear opening area of at least 5.7 sq. ft.
- (3) The minimum clear opening width is 20". For a double hung window this would be the area between each side jamb, for casement windows it would be from the jamb to the sash when the window is fully open.
- (4) The minimum clear opening height is 24". For a double hung window this would be the area between the sill of the window unit up to the sash when it is fully open, for casement windows it would be the area between the sill and the window jamb head. Do Not order a window with a 20" x 24" opening, this would be less than a 4 sq. ft. opening.
- (5) The finish sill of the window cannot be more than 44" off the finish floor.
- (6) These opening sizes need to be met in the normal operation of the window without special keys, tools or knowledge. Tilt sash windows will not meet the minimum openings unless they meet the sq. ft. requirements.
- (7) When window wells are used the base shall be a minimum 9 sq ft with a minimum horizontal projection of 36 in. When casement windows are used the 36" width shall be measured from the sash in the fully open position over to the opposite wall.
- (8) Window wells deeper than 44" will need a permanently installed ladder or steps for egress. Ladders shall be at least 12" wide, project from the wall at least 3" and have a rung spacing not to exceed 18". The ladder shall extend the full height of the window well. If steps are built in it is recommended that the tread be a minimum 5" in depth and that one or more handrails be installed as well.

If there is a door that leads directly to the outside then these sizes are not as critical.

Tempered glass is required in some locations. The following list is not all-inclusive.

- (1) Glazing in doors and enclosures for hot tubs (both inside and outside), whirlpools, saunas, steam rooms, bathtubs and showers or any part of a wall enclosing these areas where the bottom of the glass is 60 inches or less off the drain, needs to have tempered glass.
- (2) If a window meets all four of the following criteria the glass needs to be tempered.
 - (a) Exposed area of an individual pane is greater than 9 sq. ft.
 - (b) The bottom edge is less than 18" above the floor.
 - (c) The top edge of the same piece of glass is 36" or more above the floor.
 - (d) If one or more walking surfaces are within 36" horizontally of the glazing.

For further information consult the 2000 edition of the International Residential Code or consult the Building Permits Office.

