

OTTAWA WINDOW PROS

Room by Room

Choosing windows for kitchens, bathrooms,
bedrooms, and basements

9 Expert Answers from Construction Brain

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Table of Contents

1. My powder room is tiny - what window option won't take up too much space?
.....
2. I'm setting up a home office - what window style gives me the best light without glare?
.....
3. We're having a baby - are there special window safety requirements for a nursery?
.....
4. Should the windows in my garage door match the rest of my house windows?
.....
5. Do I need tempered glass for the window next to my bathtub or is that just a recommendation?
.....
6. I converted my basement to a gym - what windows work best for that kind of space?
.....
7. What's the best window for a mudroom that sees a lot of coming and going?
.....
8. What window works best above a stove with all the steam and grease?
.....
9. Should I spend more on nicer windows for the master bedroom since that's where I spend most time?
.....

Q1

My powder room is tiny - what window option won't take up too much space?

Casement windows or awning windows are your best bet for tiny powder rooms - they open outward so they don't eat up any interior space, and you can still get good ventilation and natural light.

Casement windows are hinged on one side and crank open like a door, swinging outward. They're perfect for small spaces because the entire window opening provides ventilation, and you maintain full use of your interior wall space. In a powder room, you can position a casement window over the toilet or beside a vanity without worrying about clearance issues when it's open.

Awning windows are hinged at the top and open outward from the bottom. These work especially well in powder rooms because you can leave them open even during light rain - the angled glass acts like a little awning. They're also great for privacy since they're typically installed higher on the wall, letting in light while maintaining privacy from neighbors.

For Ottawa's climate, look for a **triple-pane casement or awning window with Low-E coating** to prevent condensation issues in your small, humid powder room. The superior insulation will also help prevent that cold draft feeling during our harsh winters. A typical casement window for a powder room (around 24" x 36") would run approximately **\$500-\$800 installed**, depending on the frame material and energy efficiency features.

Avoid sliding windows in tiny spaces - they only open halfway and can be harder to clean from inside a cramped powder room. Double-hung windows also take up space when the bottom sash is raised.

For a quote on a small bathroom window, request one through Ottawa Window Pros - an installer can suggest what gets you the most light without eating the wall.

Q2

I'm setting up a home office - what window style gives me the best light without glare?

Casement windows or double-hung windows with quality Low-E coatings will give you excellent natural light while minimizing computer screen glare. The key is controlling both the amount and direction of light entering your workspace.

Casement windows are particularly effective for home offices because they open outward, allowing you to precisely control airflow and light direction. When positioned on north-facing walls, they provide consistent, even

lighting throughout the day without harsh shadows or direct sun glare. If your office faces south or west, casement windows with adjustable exterior awnings or interior cellular shades give you maximum light control.

Double-hung windows offer excellent versatility for office lighting. You can open the top sash to let in soft, indirect light while keeping the bottom closed for privacy. This creates beautiful ambient lighting that's easy on the eyes during long work sessions. The ability to control both upper and lower sashes independently means you can fine-tune your lighting throughout the day.

For Ottawa's climate, choose windows with **Low-E coatings** that filter harsh UV rays while maintaining clear visibility. Triple-pane glass with argon fill will prevent condensation that can obstruct your view during winter months. The superior insulation also eliminates cold drafts that can make your workspace uncomfortable.

Window placement strategy matters as much as style. North-facing windows provide the most consistent, glare-free light. East-facing windows give you energizing morning light but may need window treatments for afternoon work. Avoid placing your computer screen directly opposite south or west-facing windows without proper light control.

Consider pairing your new windows with adjustable interior treatments like cellular shades or horizontal blinds that let you redirect light upward toward the ceiling, creating soft, diffused illumination perfect for computer work.

To work out the best window style and placement for a home office, request a free quote through Ottawa Window Pros and go through the options with an installer.

Q3

We're having a baby - are there special window safety requirements for a nursery?

Yes, there are important window safety requirements and considerations for nurseries to protect your new baby as they grow into a curious toddler. While Ontario Building Code doesn't have specific nursery requirements, Health Canada and safety experts recommend several critical safety measures.

Window guards or stops are essential for any window in a nursery or child's room. These devices prevent windows from opening more than 4 inches (10 cm), which stops a child from falling through while still allowing emergency egress for adults. Install these on all windows above the ground floor, and consider them for ground-floor windows if there are hazards below like concrete patios or basement window wells.

Cord safety is absolutely critical - window blind and curtain cords are a serious strangulation hazard. Remove all corded window coverings from the nursery, or cut cords short and install cord cleats high on the wall. Consider cordless blinds, shutters, or curtains with tie-backs positioned well out of reach. This becomes especially important once your baby starts pulling themselves up around 8-10 months.

In Ottawa's climate, energy efficiency matters for comfort and safety in a nursery. Cold window surfaces can create drafts and condensation issues that affect air quality. Triple-pane windows with Low-E coatings maintain more consistent temperatures and reduce cold spots that could make your baby uncomfortable. Proper installation with quality air sealing also prevents drafts that can disturb sleep.

Consider the window placement and operation when planning your nursery layout. Casement or awning windows that crank open are often safer than double-hung windows that slide, as they're harder for small children to operate. Keep cribs and furniture away from windows to prevent climbing access.

To make nursery windows safer without giving up efficiency, request a free quote through Ottawa Window Pros and ask an installer about opening restrictors and safety glazing.

Q4

Should the windows in my garage door match the rest of my house windows?

Matching your garage door windows to your house windows isn't required, but it creates better visual harmony and can boost your home's curb appeal. The choice depends on your home's style, your budget, and how prominent the garage is from the street.

Visual cohesion is the main benefit of matching window styles. If your garage faces the street or is attached to your home, coordinating the window shapes, grid patterns, and frame colors creates a unified look that enhances your property's overall appearance. For example, if your house has white vinyl windows with colonial grids, using similar styling on your garage door windows ties everything together nicely.

However, **practical considerations** matter too. Garage door windows are typically smaller and more decorative than functional house windows. They don't need the same energy efficiency features like triple-pane glass or Low-E coatings since garages aren't climate-controlled spaces. This means you can achieve a similar look with more basic window inserts that cost significantly less than your main house windows.

In Ottawa's market, garage door window inserts typically range from \$150-400 per set depending on the style and size, while a full garage door replacement with coordinated windows runs \$1,500-3,500. If your garage isn't highly visible from the street or you're working with a tight budget, you can choose complementary rather than identical windows - perhaps the same frame color but simpler grid patterns.

The best approach is to step back and look at your home's front elevation. If the garage door is prominent, investing in coordinated windows is usually worth it for the improved curb appeal and potential resale value.

Q5

Do I need tempered glass for the window next to my bathtub or is that just a recommendation?

Yes, tempered glass is required by the Ontario Building Code for windows within 600mm (about 2 feet) of a bathtub or shower. This isn't just a recommendation - it's a mandatory safety requirement to prevent serious injury from glass breakage in wet, slippery bathroom conditions.

The Ontario Building Code specifically requires **safety glass** (tempered or laminated) in what's called "hazardous locations." Bathrooms qualify because of the combination of water, soap, and the potential for slips and falls. When someone falls against regular glass near a tub, it can shatter into dangerous shards. Tempered glass breaks into

small, relatively harmless pieces, while laminated glass holds together even when cracked.

In Ottawa's climate, bathroom windows also face unique challenges from temperature fluctuations and humidity. The temperature difference between a hot shower and cold winter air can stress regular glass. Quality tempered glass handles these thermal stresses much better and provides better long-term durability.

Most modern bathroom windows come standard with tempered glass when installed by experienced professionals, as they're familiar with code requirements. However, if you're replacing an older window yourself or working with an installer who does not raise it, you need to specifically request tempered glass. The glass should be marked with a small etched stamp indicating it meets safety standards.

For your window replacement project, ensure your installer knows about the proximity to your bathtub. City of Ottawa requirements may vary - confirm with your installer, but the OBC requirement is clear. A professional installer will automatically specify tempered glass for this location and ensure proper installation to handle bathroom moisture and temperature changes.

Q6

I converted my basement to a gym - what windows work best for that kind of space?

Basement gyms need windows that handle moisture, provide ventilation, and maximize natural light while maintaining security and energy efficiency.

For a basement gym conversion, your window selection should prioritize **moisture resistance** and **ventilation capability**. Basements naturally have higher humidity levels, and exercise equipment adds even more moisture to the air. Look for vinyl or fiberglass frame windows with excellent water resistance and thermal performance. These materials won't warp, rot, or develop condensation issues like wood frames might in high-humidity environments.

Egress windows are often required by the Ontario Building Code for basement conversions used as habitable space - this includes home gyms. These larger windows provide emergency exit capability and bring in significantly more natural light than standard basement windows. Casement or awning windows work particularly well because they can be opened wide for ventilation during workouts, helping to manage humidity and air quality.

In Ottawa's climate, **triple-pane glass with Low-E coating** is essential for basement windows. The temperature differential between your heated gym space and cold Ottawa winters can create serious condensation problems with lower-quality windows. Proper insulation around the window frame during installation is equally critical to prevent thermal bridging and moisture issues.

Security considerations are important for basement windows since they're at ground level. Look for windows with multi-point locking systems and consider laminated glass or security film. Window wells should have proper drainage and covers to prevent water infiltration and debris accumulation.

For a professional assessment of your basement gym window needs, including egress requirements and proper sizing, request a consultation with Ottawa Window Pros. An installer can look at the space and recommend the best window solution for a converted basement gym.

Q7

What's the best window for a mudroom that sees a lot of coming and going?

Vinyl or fiberglass windows with low-maintenance features are your best choice for mudrooms - they handle moisture, temperature changes, and frequent use without warping or requiring constant upkeep.

For a high-traffic mudroom, you'll want windows that can handle the unique challenges this space presents. **Vinyl windows** are excellent because they won't rot, warp, or need painting despite constant exposure to wet boots, coats, and temperature fluctuations as doors open and close. **Fiberglass windows** are another top choice - they're incredibly durable and expand/contract at the same rate as glass, preventing seal failures from thermal stress.

Casement or awning windows work particularly well in mudrooms because they open outward and won't interfere with storage or movement inside the space. They also provide excellent ventilation to help dry wet gear and prevent moisture buildup. If you need natural light but want privacy from neighbors, consider windows with obscured or frosted glass - perfect for mudrooms where you're changing boots or storing outdoor equipment.

Ottawa's climate makes energy efficiency crucial even in mudrooms. Look for triple-pane windows with Low-E coatings to prevent condensation and ice buildup during our cold winters. This is especially important since mudrooms often aren't heated as consistently as main living areas. Proper installation with quality weatherstripping will also prevent drafts that could make your main house harder to heat.

Consider the window's height and placement - positioning windows higher on the wall keeps them out of the splash zone from wet gear while still providing light and ventilation. Many Ottawa homeowners also appreciate tilt-in sashes for easy cleaning, since mudroom windows can get dirty quickly from tracked-in debris.

For a free estimate on mudroom windows that can handle Ottawa's weather and your family's busy lifestyle, request a quote from Ottawa Window Pros.

Q8

What window works best above a stove with all the steam and grease?

Casement windows or awning windows work best above stoves because they open outward and away from the cooking area, allowing steam and grease to escape without coating the window mechanism.

The key consideration above a stove isn't just the window type, but the **material and finish**. Vinyl windows with smooth, non-porous surfaces are ideal because grease and steam wipe off easily without staining or absorbing into the frame material. Wood windows can absorb grease and moisture over time, while aluminum frames may show

water spots more readily.

Casement windows that crank open are particularly effective because the entire window opens outward, creating maximum ventilation. The crank mechanism stays inside where it's protected from grease buildup. **Awning windows** (hinged at the top) also work well since they open outward and can stay open even during light rain, which is helpful when you need ventilation while cooking.

For Ottawa kitchens, consider **triple-pane glass with Low-E coating** even above the stove. While you might think single-pane would be fine since it's getting warm air, the energy efficiency matters for your overall heating costs, and quality glass is actually easier to clean than cheaper alternatives.

Installation height matters too - the window should be at least 24 inches above the cooktop surface, and you'll want a proper range hood regardless of window type. The window complements but doesn't replace proper kitchen ventilation.

For a free estimate on kitchen window replacement that handles cooking conditions well, request a quote from Ottawa Window Pros. An installer can recommend the style and materials that hold up best in that spot.

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Q9

Should I spend more on nicer windows for the master bedroom since that's where I spend most time?

Absolutely - investing more in your master bedroom windows makes excellent financial and comfort sense. Since you spend 6-8 hours sleeping there nightly plus additional time getting ready, the quality of those windows directly impacts your daily comfort and energy bills.

Premium windows in your master bedroom deliver measurable benefits. Triple-pane windows with low-E coatings will eliminate cold drafts in Ottawa's harsh winters, reduce outside noise for better sleep, and prevent condensation that can damage window sills and walls. You'll notice the difference immediately - no more waking up to frost on windows or feeling cold air near the bed.

The master bedroom is also typically your largest bedroom window opening. A single large window or multiple windows in this room represent significant heat loss if they're older or lower quality. Upgrading to premium triple-pane windows here often provides the best return on investment compared to smaller windows throughout the house.

For Ottawa's climate, consider these upgrades for your master bedroom: Triple-pane glass with argon fill (U-factor 0.20 or lower), quality vinyl or fiberglass frames that won't warp, and proper professional installation with air sealing. These features will keep the room consistently comfortable year-round and may qualify for Canada Greener Homes Grant rebates.

A strategic approach is upgrading your master bedroom first, then other frequently-used rooms. You can always upgrade remaining windows later, but starting with where you spend the most time gives you immediate comfort improvements and energy savings. For a free estimate on premium bedroom windows, request a quote from Ottawa Window Pros to discuss options that fit your budget and comfort goals.

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