

OTTAWA WINDOW PROS

Window Styles & Types

Casement, double-hung, awning, picture, slider,
and specialty window shapes

13 Expert Answers from Construction Brain

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Table of Contents

1. Are fixed picture windows cheaper than operable ones?
2. Do casement windows cost more than double-hung windows?
3. What's a hopper window and where would I use one?
4. Can I mix different window styles on my house?
5. What type of window is best for a bathroom in Ottawa?
6. What are the fire safety requirements for basement egress windows?
7. Are sliding windows a good choice for bedrooms?
8. What window style gives the best ventilation?
9. Do I need egress windows in my basement?
10. Do awning windows work well in Ottawa's rainy weather?
11. Are garden windows good for Ottawa's climate?
12. What is the difference between single-hung and double-hung windows?
13. What type of window is easiest to clean from the inside?

Q1

Are fixed picture windows cheaper than operable ones?

Yes, fixed picture windows are typically 20-30% cheaper than comparable operable windows because they have fewer moving parts, simpler hardware, and less complex installation requirements.

Cost differences in the Ottawa market break down like this: A standard vinyl casement window might cost \$500-700 installed, while a similar-sized fixed picture window runs \$400-550. The savings come from eliminating the operating mechanism, crank hardware, weatherstripping around moving sashes, and the additional labor needed to ensure proper operation and sealing of moving parts.

Fixed windows also offer superior energy efficiency since there are no moving parts that can develop air leaks over time. In Ottawa's harsh winters, this can be a significant advantage for windows in locations where ventilation isn't needed - like above kitchen sinks, in stairwells, or flanking entry doors. The continuous seal around the entire perimeter provides better insulation performance.

However, consider the trade-offs carefully. Fixed windows eliminate natural ventilation, emergency egress options, and cleaning access from inside your home. Ottawa's building code requires egress windows in bedrooms, so picture windows aren't suitable for all locations. Many homeowners choose a combination approach - fixed windows for areas prioritizing views and energy efficiency, with operable windows where ventilation and access are important.

For maximum savings without sacrificing functionality, consider pairing a large central picture window with smaller flanking casement or single-hung windows. This gives you the cost benefits and energy efficiency of fixed glass while maintaining ventilation options.

For a free estimate comparing fixed and operable window options for your specific project, request a quote from Ottawa Window Pros.

Q2

Do casement windows cost more than double-hung windows?

Yes, casement windows typically cost 10-20% more than comparable double-hung windows, though the exact difference depends on size, materials, and energy efficiency features.

In the Ottawa market, you can expect to pay **\$450-900 for a standard vinyl double-hung window** versus **\$500-1,000 for a comparable casement window.** The price difference comes from casement windows having more

complex hardware - including crank mechanisms, multi-point locking systems, and weatherstripping that runs around the entire sash perimeter.

Casement windows offer several advantages that often justify the higher cost. They provide better energy efficiency since they compress against the frame when closed, creating a tighter seal than the sliding sash design of double-hung windows. This is particularly valuable in Ottawa's climate where heating costs are significant. Casement windows also offer superior ventilation control and unobstructed views since there's no center rail.

For Ottawa homeowners, the energy savings often offset the higher upfront cost over time. Casement windows typically achieve better air tightness ratings, which translates to lower heating bills during our long winters. They're also easier to clean from inside your home since both sides of the glass are accessible when the window is opened.

The material choice affects pricing more than the operating style in many cases. A premium triple-pane double-hung window will cost more than a basic double-pane casement window. When comparing windows, focus on the total value including energy efficiency, durability, and maintenance requirements rather than just the initial price difference.

For a free estimate comparing casement and double-hung options for your specific project, request a quote from Ottawa Window Pros to see which style offers the best value for your home.

Q3

What's a hopper window and where would I use one?

A hopper window is a window that hinges at the bottom and opens inward from the top, creating a small opening that allows air to flow in while keeping most of the window area intact. Think of it as the opposite of an awning window - instead of the top hinge opening outward, the bottom hinge allows the top to tilt inward toward your room.

Hopper windows are most commonly used in basements because they sit well in below-grade window wells and provide excellent ventilation while maintaining security. The inward opening design prevents the window from interfering with landscaping or walkways outside, which is particularly important when the window is close to ground level. They're also popular in bathrooms, especially smaller powder rooms, where the compact opening provides privacy while allowing moisture to escape.

In Ottawa's climate, hopper windows work well for basement applications because they shed rain and snow effectively when closed, and the inward opening means ice buildup won't prevent operation during winter months.

The design also makes them naturally more secure than other opening window styles, as the locking mechanism is less accessible from outside.

For energy efficiency, modern hopper windows can be fitted with double or triple-pane glass just like other window styles. In basement applications, this is particularly important since below-grade windows can be significant sources of heat loss. Look for models with Low-E coatings and quality weatherstripping around the opening sash.

If you're considering hopper windows for your Ottawa home, they work best in locations where you want ventilation but don't need a large opening, and where the inward swing won't interfere with furniture or room usage. For a consultation about whether hopper windows suit your specific basement or bathroom renovation, Ottawa Window Pros can assess your space and recommend the most suitable options.

Q4

Can I mix different window styles on my house?

Absolutely - mixing different window styles is not only acceptable but often creates a more visually interesting and functional home design. Many Ottawa homeowners successfully combine various window styles to match their home's architecture, maximize natural light, and meet specific room requirements.

Strategic mixing works best when you maintain consistency in key elements. Keep the same frame color, material, and grid pattern (if using grids) across all windows to create visual cohesion. For example, you might use double-hung windows on your front facade for traditional appeal, casement windows in the kitchen for easy operation while cooking, and picture windows in the living room to frame your view. The consistent white vinyl frames and matching hardware tie the different styles together seamlessly.

Consider your home's architectural style when selecting window combinations. Colonial and traditional homes often pair double-hung windows with bay or bow windows for added character. Contemporary homes might combine large picture windows with sleek casement or awning windows. Ranch-style homes frequently use horizontal sliding windows mixed with specialty shapes like half-round or trapezoid windows for visual interest.

In Ottawa's climate, focus on energy efficiency across all window styles. Whether you choose double-hung, casement, sliding, or specialty windows, ensure they all meet ENERGY STAR requirements with proper insulation values. Triple-pane glass with Low-E coatings and argon fill should be consistent across all styles to maintain uniform energy performance throughout your home.

The key is planning the overall design before installation. Consider how the windows will look from both inside and outside your home, ensuring the mixed styles complement rather than clash with each other. For a cohesive window replacement project that maximizes both aesthetics and energy efficiency, request a consultation with Ottawa Window Pros to discuss your specific design goals.

Q5

What type of window is best for a bathroom in Ottawa?

Casement or awning windows are typically the best choice for Ottawa bathrooms, offering superior ventilation control and weather sealing that's crucial for managing moisture in our climate.

Casement windows are ideal for most bathroom applications because they open fully outward with a crank mechanism, providing maximum ventilation to quickly remove humid air. The compression seal around the entire

frame makes them exceptionally weathertight - important for Ottawa's temperature extremes and winter conditions. Since they're operated with a crank rather than lifting, they work well even when positioned higher on the wall for privacy.

Awning windows are another excellent bathroom option, particularly for smaller spaces or when installed above eye level. They hinge at the top and open outward from the bottom, creating a natural rain shield while still allowing ventilation. This design lets you keep the window open even during Ottawa's frequent rain showers, which is valuable for continuous moisture control.

Privacy and energy efficiency considerations are especially important in Ottawa bathrooms. Look for obscured or frosted glass options that maintain privacy while allowing natural light. Given our Climate Zone 6 requirements, choose triple-pane windows with Low-E coatings and argon fill for maximum insulation - bathroom windows face significant temperature differences between the warm, humid interior and cold Ottawa winters.

Avoid sliding windows in bathrooms as they don't seal as tightly and provide limited ventilation control. Double-hung windows can work but require more effort to operate and don't offer the same weathersealing performance as casement or awning styles.

For optimal moisture management, ensure your bathroom window installer properly seals around the frame and considers the interaction with your exhaust fan system. Want to discuss specific bathroom window options for your Ottawa home? We offer free consultations to help you choose the right style and specifications.

Q6

What are the fire safety requirements for basement egress windows?

Basement egress windows must meet specific fire safety requirements under the Ontario Building Code to provide a safe emergency exit route. These requirements are critical for occupant safety and are strictly enforced during building inspections.

Minimum Opening Requirements The egress window must provide a clear opening of at least 0.35 square meters (3.8 square feet) with no dimension less than 380mm (15 inches). The bottom of the clear opening cannot be more than 1.5 meters (5 feet) above the floor level. These dimensions ensure an adult can quickly exit through the window during an emergency.

Window Well Specifications If the egress window is below grade, the window well must extend at least 760mm (30 inches) horizontally from the window and have a minimum area of 0.6 square meters (6.5 square feet). The well must include a drainage system to prevent water accumulation and permanent steps or ladder if the well depth

exceeds 600mm (24 inches). The steps must be at least 375mm (15 inches) wide with maximum 200mm (8 inches) rise between steps.

Ottawa Climate Considerations In Ottawa's harsh winters, egress windows face additional challenges with snow accumulation and ice formation. Window wells require proper drainage, waterproofing, and covers that can be easily removed from inside during emergencies. Many Ottawa homeowners install window well covers that swing open or have emergency release mechanisms accessible from inside.

Installation and Compliance Egress window installation typically requires a building permit in Ottawa, especially when creating new openings or enlarging existing ones. The work involves structural considerations, proper waterproofing, and coordination with existing utilities. City of Ottawa requirements may vary - confirm with your licensed installer who can handle permit applications and ensure code compliance.

For basement egress window installation, find experienced contractors through the Ottawa Construction Network who understand both safety requirements and Ottawa's specific soil and drainage challenges.

Q7

Are sliding windows a good choice for bedrooms?

Sliding windows can be an excellent choice for bedrooms, offering easy operation, good ventilation control, and space-saving benefits that work well in sleeping areas.

Sliding windows are particularly well-suited for bedrooms because they don't swing inward or outward, making them ideal when you have furniture, curtains, or limited space around the window opening. You can easily control airflow by sliding one panel partially open for gentle ventilation during sleep, or fully open for maximum fresh air during the day. The smooth horizontal operation is quiet and won't disturb sleep when adjusting ventilation at night.

For Ottawa's climate, sliding windows in bedrooms work especially well when you choose quality double or triple-pane units with Low-E coatings. This helps maintain comfortable sleeping temperatures year-round while reducing outside noise - important for bedroom comfort. Many homeowners appreciate that sliding windows provide unobstructed views when closed, and the large glass area allows maximum natural light into the bedroom during the day.

The main considerations for bedroom sliding windows include ensuring proper weatherstripping for energy efficiency and choosing models with secure locking mechanisms for ground-floor bedrooms. Quality sliding windows typically range from \$400-800 per window installed in Ottawa, with premium triple-pane options running \$600-1,200. Look for ENERGY STAR certified units with U-factors of 1.22 or lower to maximize energy efficiency and comfort.

For your bedroom window project, consider the window's orientation, size requirements, and whether you want matching windows throughout your home. A consultation with experienced installers can help you choose the right sliding window style and specifications for your specific bedroom needs.

Q8

What window style gives the best ventilation?

Casement windows provide the best ventilation because they open outward like a door, allowing the entire window opening to catch and direct airflow into your home.

When a casement window is opened, it acts like a scoop that can capture breezes from multiple directions and funnel them inside. Unlike sliding windows that only open halfway, or double-hung windows where only the top or bottom sash opens, casement windows give you 100% of the opening for airflow. This makes them particularly

effective for cross-ventilation when you have casement windows on opposite sides of a room.

Single-hung and double-hung windows rank second for ventilation. Double-hung windows have an advantage because you can open both the top and bottom sashes simultaneously, creating a natural convection effect where warm air exits through the top opening while cooler air enters through the bottom. However, each sash typically only opens about 50% of the window area.

Sliding windows offer decent ventilation but are limited to about 50% of the window opening. **Awning windows** work well too, especially when placed higher on walls, as they can stay open during light rain while still providing airflow.

In Ottawa's climate, casement windows are particularly valuable during our humid summers when maximizing airflow helps reduce cooling costs. They're also excellent for capturing those pleasant spring and fall breezes that can eliminate the need for air conditioning on milder days. Many Ottawa homeowners combine casement windows with awning windows above or below for maximum ventilation control.

For optimal ventilation in your home, consider the prevailing wind direction and position casement windows to take advantage of natural airflow patterns. Want to discuss the best window configuration for your specific home? We offer free consultations to help you maximize both ventilation and energy efficiency.

Q9

Do I need egress windows in my basement?

Yes, you likely need egress windows in your basement if it contains bedrooms or if you're planning to finish it as living space. The Ontario Building Code requires emergency escape routes from all sleeping areas and habitable rooms below grade.

Egress window requirements are quite specific in Ontario. Each bedroom must have at least one window or exterior door that can serve as an emergency exit. For basement bedrooms, this means installing egress windows with minimum opening dimensions of 3.8 square feet of clear opening area, with no dimension less than 15 inches. The window sill can't be more than 44 inches above the floor, and if it's a window well, it needs to be at least 36 inches wide extending 24 inches from the building.

In Ottawa's climate, egress windows also provide crucial natural light and ventilation for basement spaces, making them more comfortable and reducing moisture issues common in below-grade areas. Many homeowners find that properly installed egress windows with quality triple-pane glass actually improve their basement's energy efficiency by providing better air circulation and reducing humidity problems.

The installation process typically involves cutting through the foundation wall, excavating for a window well, installing proper drainage, and ensuring the window meets all safety requirements. This is definitely professional work that requires structural assessment, waterproofing expertise, and often a building permit from the City of Ottawa.

If you're finishing your basement or adding bedrooms, egress windows aren't just about code compliance - they significantly increase your home's value and make the space much more livable. Quality egress windows with proper installation typically cost \$3,000 to \$6,000 per window including excavation and window well installation.

City of Ottawa requirements may vary for specific situations, so confirm egress requirements with your licensed installer who can assess your foundation type and local soil conditions.

Q10

Do awning windows work well in Ottawa's rainy weather?

Yes, awning windows are excellent for Ottawa's rainy weather because they're hinged at the top and open outward from the bottom, creating a natural overhang that sheds rain away from the opening.

Awning windows are particularly well-suited for Ottawa's climate where we experience significant rainfall, especially during spring and summer months. When opened, the sash acts like a small awning or canopy, allowing you to keep windows open for ventilation even during light to moderate rain. This design prevents water from entering your home while still providing fresh air circulation - a major advantage during Ottawa's humid summer storms.

The outward-opening design also means rain runs off the glass surface rather than pooling on the sill like it might with sliding windows. This helps prevent water infiltration issues that can be common with other window styles during Ottawa's freeze-thaw cycles and heavy precipitation periods.

For maximum weather protection in Ottawa, look for awning windows with quality weatherstripping and proper flashing installation. Triple-pane glass is recommended for our Climate Zone 6 conditions, and ensure the window meets ENERGY STAR requirements (U-factor 1.22 or lower). The combination of superior weather sealing and the natural rain-shedding design makes awning windows one of the most weather-resistant options available.

Awning windows work especially well in basements, bathrooms, and kitchens where you want ventilation but need protection from Ottawa's unpredictable weather. They're also ideal for areas where you want to maintain privacy while still allowing airflow during rainy periods.

For proper installation that maximizes weather resistance, work with licensed window installers who understand Ottawa's specific climate challenges and building requirements.

Q11

Are garden windows good for Ottawa's climate?

Garden windows can work well in Ottawa's climate, but they require careful selection and proper installation to handle our extreme temperature swings and heavy snow loads. The key is choosing a high-performance unit designed for Climate Zone 6 conditions.

Energy Performance Considerations

Garden windows have more glass surface area than standard windows, which means greater potential for heat loss during Ottawa's cold winters. To compensate, you'll want triple-pane glass with Low-E coatings and argon fill - this is essential in our climate where temperatures can drop to -30°C. Look for units with thermal breaks in the frame to prevent condensation and ice buildup, which can be problematic with the extended sill area that garden windows provide.

The good news is that garden windows can actually help with passive solar heating during Ottawa's sunny winter days. When properly oriented (ideally south or southeast-facing), they can capture valuable solar energy while providing space for herbs or plants that appreciate the extra light during our long winters.

Structural and Weather Resistance

Ottawa's heavy snow loads and ice storms require garden windows with robust construction. The extended projection means they catch more wind and weather than flush-mounted windows, so proper flashing and weatherproofing are critical. Professional installation is especially important because improper sealing can lead to ice dam formation around the extended sill area.

Practical Benefits in Ottawa

Many Ottawa homeowners love garden windows in kitchens for growing fresh herbs year-round - particularly valuable during our long winters when fresh herbs are expensive. The extra shelf space and improved ventilation (most garden windows have operable side vents) make them practical for our climate where indoor air quality matters during months of closed-up living.

For a free consultation on whether a garden window suits your specific Ottawa home and exposure, Ottawa Window Pros can assess your situation and recommend the best energy-efficient options for our local climate conditions.

Q12

What is the difference between single-hung and double-hung windows?

Single-hung windows have only the bottom sash that moves up and down, while double-hung windows have both the top and bottom sashes that can move independently. This fundamental difference affects ventilation, cleaning, and overall functionality.

Single-hung windows are the more basic and affordable option. Only the bottom portion (sash) slides up to open the window, while the top sash remains fixed in place. This design limits your ventilation options since air can only

enter from the bottom opening. However, single-hung windows are typically 10-20% less expensive than double-hung models and have fewer moving parts, which can mean less maintenance over time.

Double-hung windows offer much more versatility since both the top and bottom sashes can slide independently. You can open just the bottom for standard ventilation, just the top to let hot air escape while maintaining security, or both for maximum airflow. Many double-hung windows also feature a **tilt-in design** where both sashes can tilt inward for easy cleaning from inside your home - a huge advantage for second-story windows.

In Ottawa's climate, double-hung windows are often preferred because they allow for better **natural ventilation control**. During summer, you can open the top sash to let hot air escape while keeping the bottom closed for security, or create a natural convection current by opening both. The cleaning convenience is particularly valuable given our harsh winters when exterior window cleaning becomes challenging.

Energy efficiency is comparable between both styles when you choose quality models with proper sealing. The key factors are the frame material, glass package (double or triple-pane), and installation quality rather than the operating style. For Ottawa homes, focus on windows with U-factors of 1.22 or lower to qualify for energy rebates.

For a free estimate comparing single-hung and double-hung options for your specific home, Ottawa Window Pros can help you evaluate which style best meets your needs and budget.

What type of window is easiest to clean from the inside?

Tilt-in double-hung windows are the easiest windows to clean from inside your home. These windows have both upper and lower sashes that tilt inward, allowing you to clean the exterior glass surface while standing safely inside.

With tilt-in double-hung windows, you simply unlock the tilt latches at the top of each sash and gently pull the top of the window toward you. The sash pivots on hinges at the bottom, giving you full access to clean both sides of the glass from inside your home. This feature is especially valuable for second-story windows or windows above landscaping where exterior cleaning would be difficult or dangerous.

Casement windows are the second-best option for easy cleaning. Since they crank open fully to the outside, you can reach around from inside to clean the exterior surface of most casement windows, though this depends on the window's location and your reach.

In Ottawa's climate, easy-to-clean windows are particularly important because our winters create significant condensation and our springs bring pollen and debris that can quickly dirty exterior glass surfaces. Many homeowners find that investing in tilt-in double-hung windows pays off in reduced maintenance time and eliminates the need for professional window cleaning services.

Sliding windows and fixed picture windows are the most challenging to clean from inside, as you typically need to remove screens and clean from the exterior. Single-hung windows (where only the bottom sash moves) also limit your cleaning access compared to double-hung versions.

When selecting replacement windows, consider tilt-in double-hung windows with easy-release screens for the ultimate in maintenance convenience. For a free estimate on easy-to-clean replacement windows, request a quote from Ottawa Window Pros.

Disclaimer: This guide is provided for informational purposes only by Ottawa Window Pros. It does not constitute professional advice. Always consult qualified, licensed contractors and your local building authority before starting any construction or renovation project. Information is current as of March 15, 2026 and may change. Visit ottawawindowinstall.ca for the latest answers.