



# GLASS IN YOUR KITCHEN



**One never thinks that using glass as part of your kitchen could be complicated or put you or your investment at risk, but it can. If the glass used is not the right type and is not worked with or installed properly you may face problems down the line.**

The use of flat glass in the kitchen offers a broad range of application solutions - mainly cabinet door inserts, glass shelving and kitchen splash-backs, but we also find it used in top end extractor hoods and counter top extensions.

Many kitchens today are designed with a contrast look of flat panel doors and glass doors.

## **When using glass doors you have a few options:**

For a completely frameless glass-door look, you can use 6mm clear toughened glass and then UV bond hinges to it. There is no frame in this case, which creates beautiful clean lines. The only visible parts are the UV-bonded hinges (ensure you are using the correct hinges designed for this application as the use of the wrong hinge could damage the glass and the hinge.)

For framed glass doors there are a few alternatives: the standard wood-frame-door with a glass insert, or the more recent trend of an aluminum framed door with either a glass insert or a back painted glass insert bonded to the frame. Aluminum framed doors have a very modern feel and are available in various finishes and styles. All of these have 4 or 5mm glass inserts that are fitted into the aluminum frame with a plastic gasket. The gasket is designed so that the glass does not fit snug to or touch any metal directly. This avoids damage or breakage of the glass. It is very important to make sure that the gaskets have been

fitted in all doors correctly to avoid glass breakage.

For specialist back painted glass that is bonded to aluminum frames it is imperative that one understands how this is manufactured in order to create long lasting durable finished doors. Specialized paints are used to coat the glass to give it a colour finish. This coating chemically bonds itself to the glass. Once curing is complete the glass is ready to be bonded to the frame using a special neutral cure adhesive that will not damage the painted surface over time. Once the adhesive has set you have your coloured-glass aluminum framed door. Generally these doors have a very narrow frame to give a neat seamless look.

## **When looking at how you add an opening mechanism or handle to a glass door you have 3 options:**

- With aluminum framed doors you can add a strip handle to the frame.
- You can create an integrated handle grip within the carcass.
- Or, you can drill into the glass to fit a handle.

Fitting handles to glass is tricky, and also very dependent on the style of the handle. One has to drill into the glass which creates a weak spot in the glass and this is where breakages can easily occur. It is generally advisable not to drill handles into the glass, but rather to work with one of the other 2 options. However, if you are adamant that

this is the look you want here are some things to watch out for:

- Make sure the holes are not too close to the edge of the glass – 50mm is the recommended distance from the edges.
- Make sure that the glass is toughened safety-glass as the glass is then 4 times stronger than standard glass.
- Always make sure that you have a plastic grommet fitted between the handle screw and the glass to avoid the metal touching the glass.
- Be careful not to over tighten the screw when fitting the handle, as this can also cause breakage.

In terms of safety standards all glass that is low level – less than 800mm from the floor - needs to be safety-glass. Safety should always come first and should you choose price over safety there are risks. 4mm or 5mm toughened safety-glass is the recommended standard for all kitchen cabinet doors and inserts. An injury as a result of incorrectly fitted glass or the use of non-safety-glass can be a financial and legal nightmare. Ensure your kitchen company is not cutting corners and recommends the safest option first.



Coloured glass is a hot kitchen trend and it is finding its way into kitchens for splash-backs, feature walls or surrounds on bars or islands. There are some distinct practical advantages: glass is very durable, heat resistant and easy to maintain. There are seamless joints which help in limiting the need for grout lines, as with tiles, that always get dirty. The cleaning of glass surfaces is also very easy.

The aesthetic advantages speak for themselves and allow a little flair by adding a splash of colour or even a graphic image to your kitchen. Most manufacturers have many standard colours

available but custom colours can also be mixed and achieved. The addition of your own high res image or an image from an online photo library can also be produced by most key manufacturers.

All glass should be toughened safety glass as a standard for kitchen splash-backs. This allows the glass to withstand knocks and bumps from pots and plates and it also allows plug points and holes to be processed in the glass where plugs can be screwed back over the glass without any breakage of the glass or cracking.



Always use a company [with](#) a proven track record to measure and install your splash-backs and ensure that they include a warrantee on their products and painted coatings.

When designing splash-backs for your kitchen you need to bear a few facts in mind:

- The maximum length of glass that can be processed is 3100mm.
- Workout where the panels of glass will need to be split if needed.
- Consult a splash-back specialist to confirm the possibilities of out of standard designs and layouts so that cut outs can be accommodated before measuring of the splash-backs take place.

The most important thing to remember when working with tinted or coloured glass in any application is that glass changes colour or tone depending on what light it is exposed to and what it is reflecting. It is impossible for a piece of glass in a showroom to look identical in your home as it will be exposed to different light and reflections. If exact colour matches are important to you you will need to take several large samples of the glass home to see how the colour reacts in your space

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