

Livingetc

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Light-filled homes

Bright, sunny spaces full of ideas to steal

WIN!
SIX STYLISH
WEEKEND
BREAKS

EXOTIC COLOUR
HOT DECORATING
HUES

URBAN COWBOY
HOME'S COOLEST
NEW TREND

GLASS ACT

STUNNING DESIGN PROJECTS
TO LET THE LIGHT IN

PLUS

STYLISH FRONT DOORS
14 BEST CONSOLE TABLES

Relaxed



HOMES • DECORATING • SHOPPING • DESIGN • ENTERTAINING • LIFESTYLE

Guide to GLASS TYPES

Modern glass is more eco-friendly and versatile than ever

Glass technology has moved on in leaps and bounds over recent years, and there is now a whole range of different types of glass that offer varying levels of solar protection, as well as 'self-cleaning' and 'smart' glass that changes from clear to opaque.

- Glass is rated by its U value, which refers to the rate at which heat is lost. The lower the U value, the better. Single panes are around 5.4; Low-E double glazing is 1.5 to 1.2, while Super Insulating Glass (quadruple glazed panels from IQ Glass) has a rating of just 0.38.

- Low emissivity or Low-E glass is an energy-saving product that lets light and warmth in, reflects internally produced heat back into a room and minimises the amount of heat that can escape back out. This is ideal for extensions, as they require less heating in colder months. Try Planitherm by Saint-Gobain Glass or PilenergiKare Triple by Pilkington.

- Solar-control glass has a tint or special coating that helps to regulate heat. In summer, it reduces indoor temperatures by absorbing or reflecting the heat back outside, while in cold weather it works in the opposite way to trap warmth. It's ideal for use in skylights, extensions and large expanses of glass. Look at Pilkington Suncool and Pilkington Activ Blue.

- Triple glazing has a very low U value, typically in the range of 0.9 to 0.6, which means much larger areas of glass can be used without sacrificing comfort. Filling the spaces between the panes with gases such as argon also improves the U value, while three panes can have extra safety, security and sound-proofing features.

- Self-cleaning glass, such as Pilkington Activ, has a coating that reacts with sunlight to break down organic dirt so it is washed away by rainwater, making it ideal for skylights and glass roofs that are difficult to clean.

- It is possible to buy glass that changes from clear to opaque at the flick of a switch, providing instant privacy without blinds. It can be expensive, but look at Priva-Lite, Smart-Tint and Blink LCD.

- For heated glass, head to IQ Glass or The Heated Glass Group for information.



This strategically placed glass wall allows light from a sun-filled landing to filter down to the hallway below. Architect Your Home could install a wall like this from £1,000.

Focus on INTERIOR WALLS, DOORS AND WINDOWS

Interiors get a design twist – along with an extra boost of light – when glass replaces solid walls and doors

Internal glass walls and windows are a great device for maximising limited light, as you can 'borrow' from the adjacent room. When compared to the cost of more standard building materials, glass may seem expensive, but it can make an incredible difference to the feel of an internal space. Surprisingly, it also works as a more efficient sound barrier than a regular partition wall. However, glass walls and doors can introduce hard lines and angles, so you may wish to offset this, for example by adding texture and colour to your scheme.

EN-SUITE SCREENS

Glass walls or windows can work particularly well between a master bedroom and an en suite, which may not have its own external window. Use a curtain or blind to protect your modesty, or choose frosted or sandblasted glass. 'In one home, we installed a frosted-glass wall, which also formed the side of the shower, so the light was able to permeate right through the space,' says architect Chris Romer-Lee at Studio Octopi.

FLEXIBLE BOUNDARIES

Sliding glass doors create an instant open-plan feel. They can be used between a kitchen and a living space to create one large room – and then close to form a barrier for noise or cooking odours when necessary. They are also a great way to allow bed and bathing spaces to flow together. Frosted designs can be slid shut to provide privacy.

ROOM DIVIDERS

'Occasionally, we use something more traditional such as a metal-framed glazing system by a company like Crittal,' says architect Lee Hopwood at Stiff & Trevillion. 'This adds a nice architectural touch and helps to define the two separate spaces while still letting the light through.'

A CREATIVE APPROACH

Try knocking through several tall, slender internal windows in a row rather than one large opening. This can bring an interesting, almost medieval-st architectural twist to an otherwise ordinary space while retaining more privacy than a large window



Porous Designs extended this kitchen into the side return, but cleverly retained the original external glazed door to maximise natural light in the living room. The only extra costs were for redecoration and new hardware.



In order to add impact to this space, architects Feix & Merlin sourced a Crittal-style glass partition with super-thin bars to separate the bedroom from the en suite. The cost, including installation, came in at around £5,000.



Reclaimed sash windows are a more characterful alternative to modern internal glazing. These windows are from Retrouvius, and cost £30 each. A joiner should be able to install reclaimed windows like these from £2,500.

PHOTOGRAPHY (ABOVE LEFT) SHARYN CAIRNS; ARCHITECTS: STEVEN WHITING; STYLIST: INDIANNA FOOD

AN ARTIFICIAL WINDOW

'If you have a completely internal space, such as a bathroom or basement room that has been constructed without a natural light source, you can create the illusion of an exterior window with glass and artificial light,' says architect Paul Archer. It's possible to build a recess and install fluorescent daylight tubes behind a panel of etched glass. 'This illuminates the room, and gives the impression there is daylight beyond.'

DOOR TRANSFORMERS

Even if your budget is more limited, something as simple as replacing solid doors with sleek glass designs or doors with large glass panels can make a huge difference.

SAFETY MATTERS

Remember that with all glass walls and doors, the glass needs to be toughened or laminated safety glass that won't shatter if broken. On unframed panels, dots or etching are also a good idea to prevent accidents.



The lightness of these glass balustrades balances out the heavy stair treads. Part of a larger project by Verity & Beverley, the balustrades cost £4,000.

Focus on GLASS BALUSTRADES

A clear winner for hallways and landings

'Often stairs are built into the centre of a property, where there isn't a great deal of natural light. This can make them feel dark and dingy,' says architect Lee Hopwood. 'Using sleek glass balustrades with minimal fixings looks really modern and can make a stairwell feel much lighter.' Staircases made entirely from glass are a real feat of engineering, but are less popular than they used to be, as every tiny section needs to be cut individually, which can be an expensive business. 'Instead, team a glass balustrade with open treads to really help light bounce through to the lower levels,' suggests Lee Hopwood. 'For maximum effect, consider installing a skylight directly above the staircase to help draw rays through the building and make all the floors feel lighter.'