

A Guide to Trickle Vents

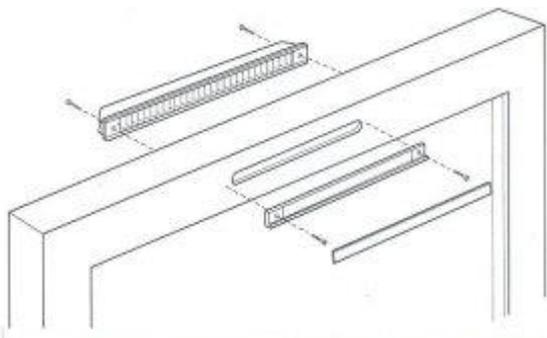


Trickle Vents

Trickle vents, head vents, night vents... slot vents... Call them what you will, they are often the Marmite of the double glazing world. People either love them or hate them. Whatever your feelings they serve a purpose though. We've put together a brief guide to save you losing your head over them.

What is A Trickle Vent?

In basic terms, when a window is manufactured a slot is drilled into the plastic frame and a cover is placed over it. The cover has a control on it which allows you to open and close the slot at will to let air gradually trickle into your home.



Trickle Vent Options

Through Frame Design: This is where the trickle vent is often positioned through the head of the frame.

Over Frame Design: When it is not possible to fit the trickle vent through the frame. Ventilation is routed over the frame or head of the window.

Glazed In: The trickle vent is fitted into the glazed area along the top of the sealed glass unit.

Framing Materials: Trickle vents can be fitted in all types of framing materials such as UPVC, timber, steel and aluminium.

Why Do We Need Trickle Vents?

In recent years the drive has been more focussed towards increasing the energy efficiency of our homes. But whilst we have been busy making sure our homes don't leak too much energy, it has also made them more airtight. Which can have a bad effect on the air quality inside your home and contribute towards problems with condensation.



Although we want to keep our homes warm and avoid draughts, we actually need a certain level of ventilation in order to provide a healthy and comfortable internal environment. So before when we had draughty old windows that would let in a breeze, we didn't need to have trickle vents. Now that we have new windows with better seals against the elements, we need to find a way to allow a change of air within our homes.

There are three main kinds of ventilation:

Purge: Where we want to rapidly circulate the air within our home, this is when you open a window.

Extraction: If you have a room where occasionally it is exposed to air pollutants and you want to control when it is ventilated. For example, when you turn on your extractor fan in a kitchen or bathroom.

Background: This is a small ventilation opening that usually always allows the air to circulate slowly, and this is your trickle vent.

The main purpose of ventilation is to remove polluted air from your home and replace it with fresh air from the outside. Ventilation of your home is necessary to provide a healthy and comfortable environment.

Trickle Vents and Window Security

An open window can leave your home vulnerable to a break-in, providing an easy point of entry. Window trickle vents provide you with a consistent supply of ventilation without compromising your home security. You can benefit from fresh air whilst leaving your window locked in a closed position.

Reduce Condensation

If your windows do not have trickle vents and you are replacing them then you don't have to have trickle vents installed. However, you might like to consider them if you –

- find your home stuffy,
- have problems with condensation,
- or would like to increase ventilation within, for example, a bathroom or kitchen.

All new houses and new build extensions must now have trickle vents fitted as standard in order to comply with building regulations. So, if you are buying new windows for this purpose you will need to bear this in mind.

uPVC Trickle Vents

Lastly, it is sometimes possible to retrospectively fit trickle vents to existing plastic windows. So if you are experiencing a problem with condensation and do not have a form of background ventilation, you could consider fitting trickle vents to your existing uPVC windows. It can be a time consuming and tricky job, but might be worth it if it could alleviate your problems.