

A GUIDE FOR YOUR NEXT PROJECT

Minimal frames. Exceptional views.

Minimal frame aluminium sliding doors: design, glass specifications, installation planning and budgeting.



Design guidance for your project.

Planning slimline sliding doors in London or the Home Counties? Compare layouts, glazing choices and quotation scope before you commit.

Minimal Frame Projects UK Ltd

slidingdoors-minimalframeprojects.co.uk

01 / START WITH YOUR SPACE

Plan the view. Then the opening.

The best starting point is how you want to use the room, terrace and garden.

01 Decide what matters most

Is your priority an uninterrupted view, a wide opening, easy everyday access or a balance of all three? Share your priorities before choosing a system.

02 Describe the opening

Provide approximate overall width and height, the project postcode and whether this is a new build, extension or replacement. Early dimensions help with options; manufacture needs an agreed survey and approved details.

03 Think about the whole elevation

Fixed glazing can sit alongside moving panels. Compare the amount of clear opening with the appearance when everything is closed. A full-width glazed elevation does not necessarily open across its full width.

04 Coordinate the interfaces early

Discuss structure, finished floor levels, external paving, drainage, shading and access with your architect, builder and glazing specialist before the surrounding work is finalised.

Bring these to your first discussion

A plan or sketch, approximate opening dimensions and two or three reference images are a useful start. If something is unknown, say so.

02 / COMPARE THE OPTIONS

Choose the opening that fits.

Use this comparison to ask better questions, rather than to select a system by appearance alone.

Sliding panels

Panels move along tracks and usually stack behind other panels.

Ask: How much of the opening will be clear, and where will panels stack?

Sliding + fixed glazing

Moving panels are combined with fixed panes.

Ask: Which panes need to open, and how will the frame lines align?

External pocket sliding

Moving panels slide into a purpose-designed wall pocket.

Ask: Is there room for the pocket, and how will drainage and future maintenance work?

Open-corner layouts

Two glazed elevations meet at a corner that can open, where the design permits.

Ask: What structural support and corner junction does this particular system require?

Compare the actual specification

Sightlines, maximum sizes, thermal, weather, acoustic and security performance vary by system and configuration. Ask for evidence for your proposed design.

03 / BUDGET WITH CLARITY

What shapes the price?

Compare quotations for the same scope. A lower headline figure may cover a different specification or package.

01 Size and configuration

Overall area, panel sizes, number of moving leaves, tracks and any pocket or corner arrangement.

02 System and glass specification

Frame design, finish, glass build-up and any project-specific thermal, acoustic, security or solar-control requirements.

03 Site access and handling

Delivery access, glass weights, lifting equipment, storage and the route from the unloading point to the opening.

04 Installation and interfaces

Survey, installation, drainage details, structural preparation, making good and responsibilities for adjacent work.

Ask for a clear scope, not just a number.

Confirm whether VAT, delivery, lifting, installation and making good are included. Ask about exclusions, lead times, payment stages and warranty terms. Tell us your budget for the doors and installation separately from the overall build budget.

04 / DETAILS WORTH RESOLVING

Small details. Big decisions.

Resolve these with your project team before approving the final glazing package.

01 Threshold and drainage

Ask how the proposed threshold meets the internal floor and external surface. A flush appearance still needs a coordinated weathering and drainage design.

02 Comfort and sunlight

Discuss orientation, shading, ventilation and glass options. Large areas of glazing need to be considered as part of the whole room, not just the door specification.

03 Operation and everyday access

Consider who will use the doors, how frequently they will open and whether a practical day-to-day opening is needed. View an appropriate system in operation where possible.

04 Cleaning and maintenance

Ask how to clean tracks and glass, access drainage points and maintain moving parts. Confirm what servicing and warranty conditions apply.

05 Evidence for your exact proposal

Request drawings and relevant product evidence for the actual system, dimensions and configuration. Generic brochure figures may not describe your final installation.

This guide supports early design discussions. Final suitability, structural design and applicable compliance requirements must be confirmed for your project by the responsible specialists.

Beyond the sightline.

Ask each supplier to describe the same opening, glass specification and installation scope.

01 **Sightlines: compare like with like**

The visible central interlock is only one dimension. Ask for the head, jamb and threshold sections as well. Check whether published dimensions describe the frame itself or the visible frame after surrounding finishes are installed.

02 **Glass and overall thermal performance**

Ask whether a quoted thermal figure relates to the glass alone or the complete glazed door assembly. Request the proposed glass build-up and the basis of any whole-product figure. Compare the same dimensions and configuration wherever possible.

03 **Daylight, solar gain and appearance**

Ask how the chosen glass balances daylight, solar gain, reflection and colour. Solar-control glass and external shading should be discussed together. Request samples if the appearance is important to the project.

04 **Weather, security and sound**

Ask for relevant test reports or certification and confirmation that the proposed layout is covered. Do not assume a result for a smaller or different opening applies unchanged to your project.

05 **Panel weight and ease of use**

Large glass panels can be heavy. Ask how the proposed panel size, hardware and track arrangement affect operation, and whether a demonstration of a comparable configuration is available.

Useful comparison request: "Please state the actual configuration, glass build-up, visible frame dimensions and supporting performance evidence included in this quotation."

Choose the glass with care.

Glass is a major part of a sliding door. Specify it alongside the frame, panel layout and building design.

01 Double or triple glazing?

Double glazing has two panes separated by a sealed cavity; triple glazing has three panes and two cavities. Triple glazing can improve glass insulation, but adds weight and thickness. Check system compatibility, panel limits, operation and the whole-door result before deciding.

02 Understand the U-value

A U-value describes heat transfer: a lower value means less heat passes through under the stated conditions. Ug refers to the glass; a whole-door or whole-window value includes the frame and edge effects. Ask for the full assembly figure and its reference size, rather than comparing glass-only figures with whole-product figures.

03 Low-emissivity coatings

Low-e coatings help reduce heat transfer through glazing. They are not the same specification as solar control. Ask how the proposed coating, cavity, gas fill and spacer contribute to the performance of the complete unit.

04 Comfort depends on the room

Review insulation, ventilation, heating, orientation and shading together. Better glass insulation alone does not resolve every source of overheating, draughts or condensation. Your designer should assess the complete space.

Ask for the written glass build-up

Request pane thicknesses, cavity widths, coatings, safety treatment and any laminated interlayer. Have the supplier confirm suitability for your actual panel sizes and project requirements.

Balance light and heat.

A clear view, summer comfort and the appearance of the glass need to be considered together.

01 Solar control and g-value

Solar-control glass can reduce solar heat entering a room. The g-value describes the proportion of solar energy transmitted: lower values mean less solar gain. Select it with the designer alongside orientation, external shading and ventilation; do not choose the lowest number in isolation.

02 Visible light transmission

Light transmission describes how much visible light passes through the glass. Compare it separately from solar gain. A specification that cuts heat may also change daylight levels, so ask for both figures for the proposed unit.

03 Colour, reflections and low iron glass

Standard clear glass can show a green tint, particularly at edges or in thicker build-ups. Low iron glass can reduce that tint, but coatings and laminated layers still affect appearance. Ask for a representative sample; low iron is not a guarantee of no tint or reflections.

04 Review samples in context

View samples from inside and outside in daylight and consider the night-time appearance when rooms are lit. Compare adjacent fixed and moving glazing together. Reflections vary with lighting, viewing angle and the selected glass.

A useful question for your designer

"How does this glass specification balance daylight, solar gain and appearance for this elevation, and what shading or ventilation does the room need?"

Specify for real conditions.

Confirm performance for the proposed glass and complete door assembly, rather than assuming all glazing performs alike.

01 Toughened and laminated glass

Toughened glass is heat treated and breaks into small fragments. Laminated glass combines glass layers with an interlayer that can retain fragments after breakage. These treatments serve different purposes and can be combined. Your supplier and designer must confirm the required safety classification for each location.

02 Noise reduction

Acoustic laminated glass and suitable pane combinations can help reduce sound transmission. Thickness, interlayers and the full door construction matter. Ask for tested assembly performance relevant to the noise source; a glass-only acoustic rating does not describe the whole installed door.

03 Large panes and handling

Glass thickness and build-up must suit the panel dimensions, support and design loads. Larger or thicker panes affect weight, hardware, handling and lifting costs. Confirm access and replacement arrangements before approving oversized panels.

04 Safety, security and specialist uses

Safety glazing is not automatically security-rated, fire-rated or suitable as a barrier. If the project has any such requirements, request the relevant evidence for the complete proposed assembly and confirmation from the responsible designer.

Further reading: glass manufacturer guidance

[Pilkington: solar-control glass](#) | [Pilkington: acoustic laminated glass](#). General guidance only; these references do not specify an MFP product or promise its performance.

09 / THRESHOLDS & SITE PLANNING

Design the flush finish.

Agree the relationship between the door, structure, floors and drainage before work closes up the detail.

01 Set the finished levels

Ask your architect and installer to coordinate internal finished floor level, external paving level, track depth and any recess in the supporting structure. A brochure photograph is not an installation detail.

02 Confirm where water will go

Ask how water entering the track is collected and discharged, who provides any external channel or outlets, and how these remain accessible. Review the detail for the site exposure and the selected system.

03 Agree the support and junctions

The supporting opening and its movement need project-specific coordination. Ask who checks the supporting structure, tolerances, fixings and connections to the surrounding weatherproofing.

04 Plan delivery and lifting

Provide photographs and dimensions of the delivery route. Flag narrow streets, restricted parking, steps, scaffolding, overhead obstacles and limited garden access. Ask who books lifting equipment and prepares a suitable working area.

Before you approve

Ask for the threshold section, finished levels, drainage route and responsibility schedule to be agreed by the relevant project team. Avoid ordering from approximate enquiry dimensions.

Budget the whole package.

A useful budget separates the glazing package from the surrounding building work. Prices need a project-specific quotation.

01 Glazing package

Record the system, opening dimensions, panel layout, colour or finish, glass build-up and hardware. Ask whether design drawings and the final survey are included.

02 Delivery and installation

Separate delivery, specialist handling, lifting, installation labour and site attendance. Check assumptions about access, working hours, storage and how many visits are included.

03 Work by your builder or others

Identify structural alterations, support preparation, floor recesses, drainage connections, plastering, paving, decorating and disposal. Establish who prices and carries out each item.

04 Commercial details

Ask for VAT treatment, quotation validity, payment stages, estimated programme and warranty terms. Confirm what happens if dimensions, finishes, access or installation dates change.

Use this budget structure

Glazing package + delivery and handling + installation + associated building work + agreed project contingency + applicable VAT = your overall project allowance. Check for double counting between supplier and builder quotations.

Answers before you enquire.

Use these points to prepare a focused conversation with your glazing specialist.

01 Does minimal framing mean no frame?

No. A minimal-frame design reduces the visible framing; it still relies on an engineered frame, tracks, seals and fixings. Some surrounding frame sections may be concealed within the building finishes.

02 Will every panel slide away?

Not necessarily. The clear opening depends on the number of tracks, fixed and moving panels, stacking arrangement and any wall pockets. Ask for a plan showing the doors fully open and fully closed.

03 Can I choose the glass later?

Glass affects weight, appearance, comfort and performance. Discuss it before approving the final system and dimensions, particularly where sound, solar gain or other project requirements matter.

04 When should I request a quotation?

Early enough to coordinate structure, thresholds and access. A preliminary quotation can use drawings and approximate dimensions, but final manufacture requires the agreed survey and approval process.

05 Can you give me a price per square metre?

A rate alone may omit the effects of layout, hardware, finish, lifting and installation. A quotation for a defined opening and scope is more useful for comparing your options.

When contacting MFP, tell us which decisions are settled and where you need advice. You do not need to know the system name to start a discussion.

12 / YOUR PROJECT CHECKLIST

Ready for a useful quotation?

Complete what you know. Leave uncertain items for discussion rather than guessing.

Project postcode / location

New build, extension or replacement

Approximate opening width x height

Preferred layout / system, or "please advise"

Budget for doors + installation (state VAT basis)

Target installation date / current project stage

Include with your enquiry

Plans or a sketch; photographs of the opening and access; any technical requirements from your architect; and your contact details. Dimensions at enquiry stage are preliminary.

Discuss your sliding-door project

Visit our website to request a project quotation.