



repairing **WOOD WINDOWS**

Frankfort, Kentucky

FAST FACTS

**PLANNING &
COMMUNITY
DEVELOPMENT**
FRANKFORT, KENTUCKY

WHY SHOULD I RESTORE INSTEAD OF REPLACE?

Historic wood windows are an important character-defining feature of most old buildings. A restored wood window will outlast any modern replacement window unit several times over, in large part because the first growth lumber used in period construction is far more stable, dense, and rot resistant than any wood now available.

Despite their value, historic windows often get the blame for a building's energy loss, when only 10% of a building's energy is lost through windows. A refurbished historic window can last another century, while a modern replacement window unit will last only 15 (most vinyl) to 25 (medium quality wood) years.

CAN I RESTORE THE WINDOW MYSELF?

Wood window repair is labor intensive but uncomplicated. Routine maintenance will eliminate much of the need for major repairs. Even if you're a beginner, much of the work can be done yourself. There are also professional restorationists that specialize in wood windows that you can hire. Contact the Planning Department for a list of these specialists.



WHY DON'T MINE WORK?

SYMPTOM	PROBLEM	SOLUTION
Can't open window	Painted shut	Score painted joint with blade or window zipper
Window won't stay open	Ropes cut	Replace with new rope or add new hardware
Putty is missing/crumbling	Putty is past lifespan	Remove old putty and add new putty
Broken glass	Broken glass	Remove putty and glazier joints, replace glass
Peeling paint, soft wood	Moisture/rot has attacked window through rain/condensation	Remove paint, consolidate wood, epoxy missing components or add wood
Loose corner joints in sash	Sash jamb is loose	Tighten joint with wedge or new wood dowel and glue
Rattling, drafty windows	Shrinking of wood, loss of wood dowel holding joint	Add spring bronze weatherstripping or build-up jamb as needed

WHAT TOOLS & MATERIALS DO I NEED?

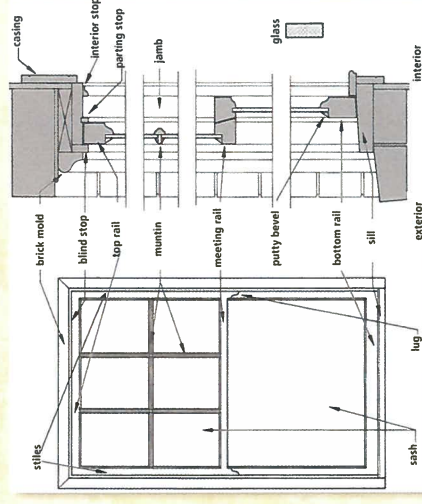
- Mask
- Caulk
- Hammer
- Heat Gun
- Screwdriver
- Paint Zipper
- Glazing Putty
- Small Pry Bar
- Sandpaper
- Linseed Oil
- Tack Cloths
- Utility Knife
- Paint Scrapers
- Primer & Paint
- Vacuum Cleaner
- Weather Stripping



WHAT ARE THE STEPS FOR RESTORATION?

1. Break paint seals using window zipper
2. Remove "stop" on one side of the window, remove bottom sash and remove rope, if attached. Label sashes as you remove.
3. Remove parting bead to remove the top sash, remove rope if attached.
4. Remove old paint*, if necessary, and putty (steam, scrape, chemical, heat)
5. Brush on boiled linseed oil (caution: combustible) into muntins and other exposed wood. Oil is a water repellent but may attract mildew.
6. Repair any rotted wood, loose corners, missing muntins and replace glass.
7. Apply a wood preservative, if necessary
8. Replace putty.
9. Paint only those areas that are exposed. Use painter's tape. Wax bare wood if necessary
10. Install new ropes.
11. Add weather-stripping.
12. Reinstall sashes.

*Follow EPA guidelines for possible lead-based paint!



WHAT RESOURCES ARE AVAILABLE?

There are many resources available online and elsewhere to help you repair your historic wooden windows. Preservation Brief 9: The Repair of Historic Wooden Windows, published by the National Park Service, provides a detailed explanation of wooden window repair. You can find this brief and other information at <https://www.nps.gov/tps/how-to-preserve/briefs.htm>.

The City's Planning & Community Development Department is your local resource available to help you with any questions you may have about your historic property, including windows. You can reach us at 502-875-8500 or online at www.frankfortky.gov/historicpreservation.