

CARE & AFTERSALES

Cristal Aluminium Window & Door Maintenance Guide

Thank you for investing in our products. Your new aluminium windows and doors from Cristal Windows have been designed, manufactured and installed to the highest possible standards and are virtually maintenance free. This guide covers aluminium windows, aluminium residential doors, aluminium bifold door systems and aluminium patio sliding door systems. Aluminium is finished with a durable powder coating, and with a little routine care it will keep its appearance and operate smoothly for many years. Please take a few moments to read this guide.

Important – please read

Failure to adhere to any of the conditions may invalidate your warranty with the supplying manufacturer.

In particular, **never use WD-40 in any lock, cylinder or hardware** – use a light machine oil or specialist hinge lubricant on window and door hardware, and **graphite powder or a specialist lock lubricant** in door lock cylinders. **Never use abrasive or solvent-based cleaners on the powder-coated finish**, and never force a stiff handle, lock or panel.

Regular Cleaning (Monthly)

- **Powder-coated frames, sashes and door panels:** the powder coating is what protects the aluminium and keeps it looking its best, so treat it gently. Wash with warm soapy water (washing-up liquid is suitable) and a soft cloth, then wipe dry. Clean at least once per month, and more often in coastal, industrial or high-pollution areas to keep the finish in good condition. Never use solvent-based or abrasive cleaners, which can permanently dull or mark the coating. Take care not to disturb the sealants where the edge of the frame meets the wall.
- **Glass:** clean with warm soapy water or a proprietary glass cleaner and a soft, lint-free cloth. Take care with any Georgian, decorative or manifested glass, as excessive pressure may disturb the design.
- **Cills, thresholds and rebates:** wipe out the window cills, the low door thresholds and the rebates where the sash or door meets the frame to remove grit and debris. This keeps the seals clean and helps the drainage system work as intended.
- **Gaskets and weather seals:** wipe the rubber weather seals with a damp cloth only. Avoid oils, solvents and silicone sprays, which can cause the rubber to swell or perish over time.

Aluminium Windows – Moving Parts (Every 6 Months)

- **Hinges and friction stays:** wipe clean, then apply a light machine oil or a specialist hinge lubricant to the moving points. This keeps the sash swinging freely and stops the hinges stiffening or squeaking.
- **Locking mechanism:** with the window open, apply a light oil or PTFE/silicone lubricant to the locking points, keeps and rollers along the edge of the sash, then operate the handle several times to distribute it. Do not use WD-40 (it is not a long-term lubricant and attracts dirt), do not over-oil, and keep lubricant off the gaskets and glass.
- **Handles and shoot bolt locking mechanisms:** check that handle screws are tight and lubricate the handle spindle so it turns smoothly. Never force a handle that feels stiff, lubricate first and, if it remains difficult, contact us.

Aluminium Doors – Moving Parts (Every 6 Months)

- **Multipoint locking mechanism:** open the door, place an old sheet underneath, and apply a silicone spray to the moving parts along the edge of the door (the hooks, rollers and bolts), but not the lock cylinder. Operate the handle several times to distribute it, and keep the lubricant off the gaskets and glass.
- **Hinges:** wipe clean and apply a light machine oil or silicone spray to the moving points. Fixings may need to be tightened and the door adjusted over time to ensure satisfactory operation, contact us rather than attempting to reposition the hinges yourself.

- **Lock cylinder:** use graphite powder or a specialist lock lubricant in the keyhole, not WD-40. Insert the key and turn it 10 to 15 times to distribute the lubricant. WD-40 displaces water but is not a long-term lubricant and can gum up the cylinder over time.
- **Handles and door furniture:** wipe clean and check that the handle, letterplate, knocker and any spy-hole are secure and their screws are tight. Lubricate the handle spindle lightly so it operates smoothly.

Aluminium Bifold Door Systems – Moving Parts (Every 6 Months)

- **Tracks and carriages:** this is the single most important task for a bifold. Keep the running track completely clear of grit, sand and debris by brushing or vacuuming it out and wiping it clean. Grit left in the track wears the carriages and rollers, damages the seals and makes the doors drag and run heavily.
- **Hinges:** wipe the hinges between the panels and apply a light machine oil or silicone spray to the moving points so the doors fold and unfold smoothly.
- **Rollers and carriages:** apply a light silicone lubricant along the clean track. Do not use grease or heavy oil, which trap grit. The carriages are adjustable, so if the panels begin to drag, drop or fail to meet cleanly, contact us to align them rather than forcing the doors.
- **Shoot bolts and locking points:** lubricate the top and bottom shoot bolts and the locking points on the access (traffic) door and the meeting stiles, then operate them several times. Always engage the shoot bolts and lock fully when the doors are closed.

Aluminium Patio Sliding Door Systems – Moving Parts (Every 6 Months)

- **Tracks and runners:** keep the bottom track completely clear of grit, sand and debris by brushing or vacuuming it out and wiping it clean. Grit in the track wears the rollers, damages the seals and makes the door stiff and heavy to slide.
- **Rollers and wheels:** apply a light silicone lubricant along the clean track so the door glides smoothly. Do not use grease or heavy oil, which trap grit. The rollers are height-adjustable, so if the door runs stiffly or catches, contact us to adjust them rather than forcing the door.
- **Locking mechanism:** apply a light oil or PTFE/silicone lubricant to the hook bolts and keeps, then operate the handle several times to distribute it. Always engage the lock fully when the door is closed.
- **Brush and pile seals:** wipe the brush weather-pile seals clean with a soft brush. If a seal becomes dislodged or flattened, contact us, do not pull or trim it.

Operational Tips

- **Windows:** always **fully engage the locking mechanism** when closing the window. Push the sash gently to the frame and turn the handle to its locked position so all the locking points engage, and support the sash rather than letting it slam.
- **Doors:** always **lift the handle fully to engage the top and bottom hooks** before turning the key to lock. A door left sitting only on the latch can move over time and is one of the most common causes of avoidable service calls. Lifting the handle every time takes a second and keeps the door operating as it should.
- **Bifold doors:** fold and stack the panels gently in the correct sequence and **never force a panel that is dragging**. For everyday comings and goings, use the access (traffic) door rather than folding the whole set back, which reduces wear. Engage the shoot bolts and lock fully when the doors are closed.
- **Patio sliding doors:** slide the door smoothly using the handle and **never force a door that is sticking**. A stiff slide almost always means the track needs cleaning or the rollers need adjusting. Engage the lock fully when the door is closed.

Inspection & Adjustments (Yearly or As Needed)

- **Weather seals and drainage:** your windows and doors have built-in drainage slots and drain holes in the frames, thresholds and door tracks that allow water to flow outside. These must remain unblocked. Every 6 months, clear the slots with a soft brush and flush through with water. If a weatherseal becomes dislodged from its groove, slide it back into position immediately to avoid damage when the window or door is closed.
- **Trickle vents:** if your windows are fitted with trickle vents, wipe them clean and check they open and close freely so background ventilation continues to work and helps control condensation.

- **Hinge, keep, carriage and roller screws:** check the hinge, keep, handle, carriage and roller screws for tightness. If a sash, door or panel begins to drop, rub, catch or run stiffly, contact us to adjust it, do not attempt to reposition the hinges, carriages or rollers yourself.
- **Condensation:** a little condensation on the inside of the glass in cold weather is normal and is a sign the glass is insulating well. Wipe it away and ventilate the room; persistent misting between the panes should be reported to us.

What to Avoid

- Aggressive cleaning methods, abrasive cleaners or scouring pads on the powder-coated frames, sashes, door panels or glass
- High-pressure jet washers, power washers or steam cleaners – the pressure can force water past the seals and blow out gaskets
- Water-fed or extending cleaning poles used with force, which can catch and knock off face-fitted parts such as astragal (Georgian) bars and trickle vents
- Bleach or solvents of any type (white spirit, methylated spirit, cellulose thinners, acetone / nail varnish remover) on the powder coating or gaskets
- WD-40 in any lock, cylinder or on the hardware – **it is not a suitable long-term lubricant** and attracts dirt
- Grease or heavy oil in the bifold and patio door tracks, which trap grit and wear the rollers – use a light silicone lubricant instead
- Painting or applying silicone over the frames, hinges, gaskets or drainage slots
- Adhesives or tack of any type for temporary protection or fixing seasonal decorations
- Forcing a stiff handle, lock, panel or sliding door – **clean the track or lubricate first** and contact us if it remains difficult

A note on window and door cleaning

Modern high-powered jet washes and water-fed cleaning poles can **damage the powder-coated finish and seals, and dislodge or knock off face-fitted parts** such as astragal (Georgian) bars and trickle vents, and can force water past door and window gaskets.

Before booking a window cleaner, **check that they are insured for any accidental damage**. Damage caused by pressure washing or aggressive pole cleaning is treated as neglect and **would not be covered under your Cristal Windows warranty**.

Summary Maintenance Schedule

FREQUENCY	TASK
Monthly	Clean the powder-coated frames, sashes, door panels and glass with warm soapy water and a soft cloth; wipe out the cills, thresholds and gaskets
Every 6 months	Lubricate window hinges and locks, door hinges, multipoint locks and cylinders (graphite powder), and bifold and patio door carriages and rollers (light silicone); clear all drainage slots and tracks and flush through with water
Annually	Inspect seals, hinges, trickle vents, thresholds and drainage; tighten hinge, keep, carriage and roller screws; report any sash, door or panel that drops, rubs, catches or runs stiffly

Why This Matters

Following these simple steps will help ensure your aluminium windows and doors **keep looking great** with minimal effort, **operate smoothly** for years, **maintain their security and insulation performance**, and **protect your warranty** and the longevity of the products.

Questions about caring for your windows and doors?

We're always happy to help. Call us on **01252 810777** or email **sales@crystalwindows.co.uk**, and visit www.crystalwindows.co.uk for more information and brochure downloads.