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November 2020 Newsletter – Wood Front Doors are tops according to Mike Holmes, home renovations specialist!



Style # 84 in Oak with clear thermal glass.

Mike Holmes: Don't knock your front door's value to your home

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They say first impressions are everything, and the first thing people see when they visit your home is your front door. It's a big contributor to curb appeal, so people often give it a bit of an upgrade — maybe an extra coat of paint — when they're selling their home.

But there's a lot more to a door than just its looks. My door and window guy tells me that too often homeowners change their front door for the wrong reasons, and it usually comes down to cosmetics — whether it's for a change in style, design or colour.

For example, they might want a door that's bigger and/or wider, going from a 34-inch panel to a 36-inch or 40-inch one, because it might look more modern. Or they'll want a front door made from solid wood, with some nice bevelled glass and some fancy new hardware. But very few homeowners ever ask about a door's performance, such as better locking systems or better sealing.

I don't blame homeowners for not asking. It was only recently that the building code changed slightly to require performance ratings on doors, so it's going to take time for that education to filter down to homeowners and buyers.

When it comes to performance, there are some basic things your front door must do.

The obvious one is to keep intruders out, so it has to be strong and durable; it must have a solid frame — one that can't be kicked in.

It should also open and close properly. If it's jamming or sticking, or not locking securely, you need to contact a professional.

But it's also really important that your front door stops water from coming in, and air from leaking out. If you've noticed the weatherstripping at the bottom of your front door has shrunk, or you're getting water coming in, it's time to replace the door. Another red flag is air leakage. If you can hear and/or feel drafts, again, it's time for an upgrade.

These are all good reasons to change your front door. Any features beyond these are a bonus, and if you are willing to invest thousands of dollars in a front door, please make sure you get what you pay for.

As far as materials go, the top three are wood, fibreglass and steel.

Wood doors are top of the line and they look great — but like all wood, they must be properly maintained. Wood is also the most expensive. And think about it, in Canada, we deal with a lot of temperature changes — one day it's -10C, the next it's 12C. Wood shrinks and swells, and if old wood doors aren't clad and are exposed to the elements, its frame will rot away.

Storm doors can add that extra bit of protection for your door and your home. Not many people like them, but I'm a fan. Overhangs also provide some protection from the elements.

Wood

Attractive but expensive, wooden doors are popular for their beauty. They are heavy, secure, and resistant to wear and damage. Fixing scratches or dents that appear on a wooden door is much easier than fixing these problems in other door materials, but wood does need protection from the elements and requires periodic repainting or refinishing.