FITTING GUIDE · FRENCH & SINGLE DOORS

How to Install Aluminium French & Single Doors

Aluminium French doors and single glazed doors are a straightforward fit for a competent builder. This guide covers measuring, fitting and glazing SOVU aluminium French and single doors supplied for you to install.

Before you start: doors and large glazed units are heavy, and fitting them involves working at the structure of your home. These guides are written so you know what a good installation looks like. If you are not confident, use a competent builder or installer. Replacement doors and windows in England and Wales must meet Building Regulations, which is usually shown by using a FENSA or CERTASS registered installer or by notifying your local building control.

Measuring

Measure the opening width and height in three places each, take the smallest figures and allow 10–15mm off each for fitting. If the doors will open out onto a patio, check there is enough room for them to swing fully open, and that nothing like an outside light or downpipe is in the way.

Fitting the frame

French and single doors fit in much the same way as bifolds. Fit any sub-cill first so it overhangs the wall by at least 25mm, level it and fix it through the thermal break. Set the door frame on packers, plumb and square, and fix it about 150mm from each corner and at no more than 500mm centres, packing behind every fixing. Seal the outside perimeter and the cill rebate with low modulus silicone.

Open the doors before you glaze them and check they swing freely without catching the frame. Test the drainage by pouring a little water into the bottom of the frame.

Glazing a French or single door

The glass must be toe and heeled, otherwise the door will drop on its hinges. On each leaf, pack the bottom corner on the hinge side and the top corner on the handle side, using a glazing paddle to lift the sash slightly as you add packers. On French doors, do the main (master) door and the secondary door the same way, each packed from its own hinge side.

Refit the beads in their original positions with a rubber mallet. The gaps around each leaf should be even; if one corner is tight, adjust the packing rather than the hinges.

Final checks

- Fit the final hinge screws once the doors swing and lock correctly.
- Adjust the lock keeps so the door pulls tight against the seals when locked.
- On French doors, check the secondary door's shoot bolts or finger bolts engage top and bottom.
- Open the main door first and close it last – this protects the locks.

Frequently asked questions

Should French doors open in or out?

In the UK most French doors open outwards, which keeps rain out better and saves room inside. Make sure there is space outside for both doors to open fully.

Which French door do you open first?

Always open the main (master) door first and close it last. The secondary door is held by bolts and should only be opened after the main door.

Why is my aluminium door catching at the bottom?

The glass has usually not been toe and heeled correctly, so the leaf has dropped. Re-pack the bottom hinge-side corner and the top handle-side corner.

Ready to order?

Choose from standard sizes with prices shown, or design your own.

Questions about your order or fitting? Call 01924 929600 or visit sovu.co.uk/contact. This guide is online at sovu.co.uk/help-and-guides/how-to-install-aluminium-french-doors/