

PHANTOM SCREENS™

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What Are Solar Screens? Frequently Asked Questions About Solar Screens and Blinds



While door and window screens are a common feature on homes abroad, the UK has only recently started to adopt them. Part of the reason for their popularity is the increasing prevalence of extensions, sun rooms, bifold doors, and other glazed areas in UK homes. Homeowners are looking for a more effective solution, so we created this handy list of frequently asked questions about solar screens, door blinds, and windows tinting.

What Are Solar Screens?

Solar screens are made of special window screen mesh, often a polyester or fibreglass weave, with a PVC coating for added durability. They are installed on doors and windows to reduce solar gain, to improve privacy, to reduce glare, and to allow insect-free ventilation of your home. They can be installed internally or externally and are an increasingly popular option for bifold doors, patio doors, balcony doors, and glazed extensions.

How Do Solar Screens Work?

Solar screens work in a variety of ways, depending on the design and mesh you choose. We talk you through the mesh type and openness that is right for your needs.

If your priority is privacy, we'll recommend a solar screens mesh that provides privacy for the interior of your home during the day by creating a mirror effect when viewed from outside. Whichever screen you choose, you will see gains when it comes to controlling heat build-up in your home, keeping your home insect free, and reducing glare.

What are Phantom Screens?

Phantom Screens creates screens for doors and windows that can serve multiple purposes:

- Shading your home.
- Increasing privacy.
- Reducing glare.
- Protecting your home and fabrics from UV rays.
- Protecting your home from insects.
- Keeping garden debris out of your home.
- Increasing airflow.
- Creating climate-controlled spaces.

How to dress bifold doors: curtains, blinds, or screens?

UK homeowners are increasingly finding that their homes are not set up to cope well with the heat of the summer sun. Unlike our neighbours overseas, we do not usually have insect screens affixed to our doors as standard, nor do we tend to use air conditioning units to control the temperature inside our homes.

Compounding this, more of us than ever are opting for glazed extensions or bifold doors, which results in rooms with lots of glass that don't lend themselves to curtains.

As a result, there is a growing need for a solution that reduces glare, helps to control the temperature inside our homes, and keeps the insects and garden debris out – and that's where Phantom Screens come in.

Do solar screens block UV rays?

Yes, solar screens featuring a privacy mesh by Phantom Screens can block up to 95% of UV rays. A comprehensive range of technical fabrics is available, and each of these is designed to suit a specific

requirement. The range includes standard and fine weave insect meshes, solar shades, blackout blinds, and privacy screens.

Do solar shades keep heat out?

Yes, solar screens, also known as solar shades, are designed to help you manage the heat. They do this most successfully when installed on all windows and doors. Unlike window tinting and other methods of deflecting heat, solar screens allow you to keep your doors and windows open, which introduces a breeze to further cool your home.

Are solar screens operated manually or automatically?

Solar screens can be opened and closed manually or automatically. The mesh used in our manual screens is designed to keep insects out and performs a limited solar management function. Our automated screens, on the other hand, offer a wider choice of meshes and increased solar performance.

Phantom Screens offers a state-of-the-art Power Screen that is a fully automated system that can be designed to fully recess from view when retracted. Low-profile retrofix options, finished in any RAL colour, ensure minimal impact on architectural design.

Can solar screens be connected to a smart home?

Yes, Phantom Screens offers solar screens that can be connected to a light sensor, allowing them to self-adjust depending on the time of year and on daily sunlight levels. When the sun reaches a certain level of brightness, the screens will automatically close, maintaining a consistent light level indoors and helping to manage temperature gain.

They can also be connected to smart home hubs to enable voice activation, scheduled programs, and a host of other functionality.

Does window film reduce heat? Does window film keep heat in?

Unlike tinted window film, which is a permanent addition that doesn't allow for a breeze, solar screens can be opened and closed any time, independently of doors and windows. As a result, solar screens have become the UK's favourite method of reducing glare, controlling heat build-up, and introducing a breeze – so you can let the best of the outdoors in.

What are the benefits of solar screens?

The reduced heat load coming through the windows lowers your cooling bill. In addition to energy savings, solar screens block much of the ultraviolet radiation that causes fading and damage to textiles. Solar window screens also reduce glare, making your home more comfortable for things like reading or watching television.

What is solar gain?

Solar gain is the increase in temperature of a building, object or space caused by solar radiation. Also known as solar heat gain or passive solar gain, the amount of solar gain in your home is affected by the amount of sunlight coming through your glass doors and windows.

Phantom Screens reduce the amount of solar radiation that is transmitted into your home, which in turn helps to reduce solar gain. Unlike window screens and integrated blinds, you can also open your doors and windows while the solar screens are deployed, allowing a breeze to circulate around your home.

Are solar screens expensive?

The cost of a solar screen very much depends on the size of the opening you are hoping to screen. When you buy from Phantom Screens, the price you are quoted also includes installation by our team of experts and your purchase is covered by Phantom Limited Lifetime Warranty. Also, by reducing solar gain, Phantom Screens can help you to cut the amount of electricity you use cooling your home in the summer, which saves you money in the long run and represents a smart investment for your home.

Solar screens tend to be a cheaper and easier alternative to complete window replacement, for example to Low-E glass. It's also important to remember that Low-E glass is not only costly to install, but also doesn't allow for a breeze.

Phantom Screens can also help to keep garden debris out of the house and stop insects from coming in, which means they save you time that would otherwise be spent cleaning rooms and money that would be spent on electric insect zappers, fly traps, and other similar items.

Finally, they help to reduce glare, which means you have more options when it comes to arranging your rooms comfortably. This allows you to make fuller use of your home and can help you to avoid costly replacements of sun-damaged textiles.

Can bifold door screens be installed outside?

Yes! Our screen frames are powder coated to marine grade to protect them from the elements, so they can be installed indoors or outdoors. Phantom Screens provides high quality solar screens that are custom designed to fit your home. The motorised components of a powered Phantom Screen are protected from the elements inside a head box. Phantom Screens Executive Power Blinds are also secured along all four edges, to hold the mesh securely. This makes them suitable for outside installations, even in a windy country like the UK.

How long do solar screens last?

A Limited Lifetime Warranty is offered with each purchase, and this is backed up by exceptional care and customer service to ensure that your solar screens continue to improve your view for as long as you live in your home. As the sole UK distributor, Phantom Screens manufactures in the UK to the highest quality standards to ensure years of hassle-free operation.

Which is better: solar screens or window tinting?

Solar screens are more effective at reducing heat transfer than window tinting. This is because tinted windows and doors must be closed in order to effectively manage solar gain, which prevents proper ventilation.

Home window tinting is usually done with solar window film, which is sometimes of low quality and may begin to peel after a few years. Also, a film with a dark tint may significantly affect the view for people inside the house, while a film with a shiny outer coat can give windows a dark or shiny external appearance. They can also make the glass appear brightly coloured from the outside because they reflect light. Some housing associations prohibit such window films due to their undesirable appearance. In addition, applying window film can void some window manufacturers' warranties.

Solar screens, on the other hand, can be installed on the inside or the outside of the home. They can also be installed recessed and colour matched to your existing framework, making them all but invisible when not in use. Unlike tinted windows, screens can be opened or closed independently of doors and windows, so you can react to the conditions.

Do solar shades provide privacy?

Yes, to a greater or lesser extent depending on the mesh used. Solar shades, also known as solar screens, have an open-weave fabric that allows light and air to pass through and this can create a mirror-like appearance during the day so you can see out, but passers-by can't see in. At night, some meshes help to cut reflections when viewed from inside the property. This can help to reduce visual noise and to give your rooms a great feeling of serenity.

Do window screens save energy?

Yes, solar screens can reduce solar heat gain and introduce a breeze. This means you can spend less on cooling your home. Unlike other solutions, such as integrated blinds, solar screens prevent solar heat gain while maintaining your view and ensuring proper ventilation of your home.

Do solar shades work?

Yes, solar shades perform several functions, which make them a versatile and efficient addition to your home with minimal impact on its design. Dark fabrics provide excellent glare control by reducing the visible light that comes through your doors and windows. Phantom Screens block up to 95% of harmful UV rays, so they not only protect your skin, but your furniture, rugs, and other furnishings too.

Do solar screens help lower energy bills?

Yes, solar screens are effective when it comes to lowering energy bills by reducing heat transfer through your windows and doors while still maintaining your view. For maximum energy efficiency and temperature control, it is advisable to protect all windows and doors.

Do solar screens save money?

Yes, since solar screens save energy, it is common to see a return on your investment in the form of the money you save on your electricity bills. Solar screens can also prolong the life of cooling equipment and protect furniture from the effects of sun bleaching, which reduces repair costs.

What are shade screens?

Solar screens, also known as shade screens, are designed to block the sun, but not the view. They can be installed indoors or outdoors, depending on your needs. They are fitted with solar screen fabric. This mesh is available in a wide variety of colours, styles, and openness factors. Various mesh types exist, and each is designed to provide a varying degree of solar shading, privacy, and insect-free ventilation.

Do solar screens keep heat in?

Solar screens can be deployed while the windows and doors are open, so they do not retain as much heat as integrated blinds and window films do. Solar screens help to prevent heat build-up by reducing glare and heat while allowing a breeze to circulate. Thermal comfort gains are made by retaining heat in the evenings while deflecting energy during the day - helping to improve SAP ratings.

If you have any questions about solar screens that you'd like to see answered here, [get in touch](#) and let us know.

How much does it cost to have solar screens installed?

Phantom Screens are manufactured to order and installed by our team of experts to ensure they function exactly as intended. The price of solar screens varies depending on the type of screen, the installation method, and a variety of other factors.

If you'd like to know how much it costs to have solar screens or door screens installed, please contact us so we can ask you a couple of simple questions which will enable us to give you a more accurate guide.

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