WINDOW FILM GUIDE

Install day, inspection and care for solar, privacy, decorative and security film. What to do before we arrive, what's normal while the film dries, how to judge the finished job, and how to keep it looking right for years.

BEFORE INSTALL DAY

- **Clear 4 feet around the windows,** in every direction. Move desks, chairs, plants and anything else out of the way.
- **Clear the sills and the glass.** Take down signs, decals, tape and anything stuck to the windows.
- **Blinds and window treatments:** raise or remove them, or let us know ahead of time so we can plan for it.
- **Access:** make sure we can get to every window on the schedule, inside and out if the film goes on the exterior.

INSTALL DAY

- **We check the glass first.** Before we recommend a film, we check your glass against the manufacturer's film-to-glass guidelines. The wrong film on the wrong glass can crack it.
- **We clean the glass,** then apply the film with a water-based solution and squeegee it out.
- **Large windows may need a seam.** When glass is bigger than a roll of film, two pieces are joined with a straight seam, parallel to the frame. That's normal, not a defect.
- **Security film gets wet glazed.** Once the film has dried for several days, we come back and run a bead of structural silicone around the edge that bonds the film to the frame, so the glass stays in the opening after an impact. Doors get a mechanical attachment instead.

> **Light gap.** Film is cut just short of the frame, which leaves a thin line of light at the edge. It lets the water out during install and keeps the film from catching on the frame and peeling. It's more noticeable with darker films. Per the IWFA guideline, a normal gap is 1/32" to 1/16" for standard film, and up to 1/8" for thicker safety film.

WHAT'S NORMAL WHILE IT DRIES

Water stays trapped between the film and the glass for a while after install. Until it dries out, you may see **light haze, small water pockets and some distortion.** These aren't defects. They go away as the film cures. How long that takes depends on the film's thickness and the weather; cold or damp weather slows it down.

FILM THICKNESS	TYPICAL VISUAL CURE
Up to 4 mil (most solar, privacy and decorative film)	About 30 days
4 to 8 mil	About 60 days
8 to 12 mil	About 90 days
Over 12 to 17 mil (heavy security film)	About 140 days

Cure times: International Window Film Association (IWFA), Architectural Visual Inspection Guideline for Applied Window Film.

Wet glazing sealant: don't touch, clean or pick at the silicone bead for 7 to 14 days while it cures. It reaches full adhesion in 14 to 21 days. (DOWSIL 995 technical data, at 77°F and 50% humidity.)

GOOD TO KNOW BY FILM TYPE

Solar and privacy film

Privacy film ranges from translucent to fully opaque. Matte, blackout and mirror films limit the view through the glass. Dark and mirror films block the view in daytime, but **at night, with the lights on inside, people can see in.** No film gets around that.

Safety and security film

A thick, clear polyester film that holds broken glass together. Because it's thick, small imperfections show more than in standard film, and it takes longer to cure.

> **Security film is not hurricane-proof, earthquake-proof, bullet-proof, bomb-proof or burglar-proof.** It makes glass more shatter-resistant. In a windstorm or earthquake, it can reduce injuries from flying glass and may limit debris or water coming in, depending on how severe the event is, the glass type, the framing and the force of the impact.

THINGS THAT CAN SHOW AFTER INSTALL

- **Old glass shows its age.** Scratches and flaws already in the glass can be more visible once film is on it, especially in older buildings.
- **Tiny specks of dust.** Glass is installed in real buildings, not clean rooms. A few small, scattered specks are normal.
- **Painted wood frames.** The water we use can make heavy or old paint chip, bubble or swell. We'll point out frames like this before we start.

HOW TO INSPECT THE FINISHED JOB

This follows the IWFA's architectural inspection guideline:

- **Stand at least 6 feet back,** on the room side, looking straight at the glass (a 90-degree angle).
- **Use daylight, but not direct sun.**
- **Look at the main viewing area.** Leave out a 2-inch band around the edge of the glass.
- **Timing:** you can check how clearly you see through the glass right away. Judge the final appearance once the film has cured (see the table on page 1).

Under those conditions, small things like dust, hair or fibers, fingerprints under the film, tiny bubbles, water haze, light scratches, creases or edge lift are acceptable as long as they're **not noticeable**. If one of them stands out at 6 feet, it's a problem, and we'll fix it.

Call us if you see, after the film has cured:

- bubbles larger than 1/8" or clusters of bubbles that are noticeable
- edges peeling or lifting off the glass
- creases, wrinkles or folds you can see from 6 feet
- clusters of dust, or distortion that gets in the way of seeing through the glass
- light gaps wider than the ranges on page 1

Source: IWFA Architectural Visual Inspection Guideline for Applied Window Film. More IWFA guidelines: iwfa.com/guidelines.

CARE AND CLEANING

- **Wait 30 days before cleaning** the filmed side of the glass. Thicker security film takes longer to cure (see page 1), so go easy on it longer.
- **Use a mild, ammonia-free cleaner,** or a little mild dish soap in water.
- **Use a soft microfiber cloth** or a soft, non-abrasive sponge, and wipe gently.
- **Exterior film:** soft cloths only. Bristle brushes and rough pads can damage it.
- **Tell your window washers** the glass has film on it.

Don't:

- use razor blades, scrapers, scrub pads or anything abrasive on the film
- use ammonia or other harsh cleaners
- put tape, stickers or suction cups on the film

Tape got on the film? Peel it slowly. For leftover adhesive, use a soft microfiber cloth with mineral spirits or isopropyl alcohol. (XPEL window film care)

Check the film now and then. If you notice peeling, bubbling or discoloring, call us.

WARRANTY

- **Our workmanship: 1 year.** We stand behind the install. That covers problems caused by how the film was applied, like peeling or bubbling.
- **The film itself: the manufacturer's warranty.** Discoloring, fading, material defects and glass breakage are covered only by the film manufacturer, on their terms. Ask us for the manufacturer's warranty when your film goes in.

REMOVING FILM LATER

Film can come off for a tenant change or rebrand. Removal can damage glass, paint or frames, especially on old film or older buildings, so we'll walk you through the risks first.

> **Not happy with something?** Let us know right away so we can talk through a fix. Call us at 983.900.7785 or reach us at gowithdpi.com/contact.