



National Federation of Glaziers

Excellence and Integrity in Glazing

A BRIEF GUIDE TO BUYING A CONSERVATORY

Please read carefully - this guide may save you much time and expense!

When purchasing a conservatory there are 5 areas to consider to achieve **the best value for money**:

- 1. Quality of product**
- 2. Installation criteria**
- 3. Guarantee**
- 4. Design**
- 5. Price**

1. There are a confusing number of British Standards covering all, or part of a product (Our "Guide to British Standards" is available from one of our Members, or directly from us).

B.S. 7412, which covers the entire window is the most important, and should be asked for, **with a certificate number**, otherwise you have no idea what quality you are being offered.

Fully re-inforced frames are used to prevent possible distortion during the lifetime of the window/door, and should be used.

If security is a major consideration, ask about high-security locking systems; windows may be internally or externally glazed, there is no difference in the security level in this respect, provided security tape is used on externally glazed frames, and the opening sashes may be slimmer, which you may prefer.

There is currently no British Standard for the roof structure, but there is a well-established **British Board of Agreement (BBA)** standard which should be insisted upon (ask for Certificate number)

2. Installers are engaged either on a sub-contract (piece rate) basis or a may work exclusively for the company quoting you. **There are considerable advantages in buying from a company who uses their own (not sub-contracted) workforce.**

3. It is important that you obtain a detailed quotation and are offered a **guarantee, which has insurance underwriting in the event of the company ceasing to trade.**

(We are frequently contacted by consumers regarding worthless guarantee we don't want to hear from you in that situation - any size company for a variety of reasons can cease to trade)

4. Designing a conservatory requires specialist advice; buying a conservatory "off the shelf" is very risky. There are great number of criteria and a great deal of expertise is need to produce a conservatory which will successfully meet all requirements.

There is a large variety of materials which will achieve different effects, as well as additional accessories which mayor may not be useful or cost effective.

We advise that you only use well-established companies that can demonstrate a good track record for this kind of project. **A well designed and built conservatory can offer an extremely valuable addition to a home, but designing needs considerable care and expertise.**

5. You can pay too much or too little for anything, of course, but **our advice is that you should never buy from companies who initially offer a high price, and then offer discounts on the first visit.**

"High pressure" tactics are not permitted from any member of the Federation. Check all details before entering into a contract, do not rely upon verbal assurances from representatives.

Finally, if you are contracting someone to carry out the basework you use a member of the Federation of Master Builders: Many of our members are able to offer you this assurance.

If you have an questions and need impartial advice, please contact us