

# Install Window Shutters<sup>1</sup>

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Unprotected windows are one of the most common locations where storm damage takes place. As covered in our document, *How Safe is Your House?*, broken windows can allow wind and rain inside the house and even lead to roof failure.

## What Makes a Safe Window?

People often tape their windows to protect them. Taping windows does **NOT** increase the strength of the glass and it will **NOT** protect your home from flying debris.

Even shatter resistant windows can fail when the entire window frame is under enough pressure from wind and debris. Similarly, window films alone, are not a complete protective measure. The best way to protect your windows is to install shutters.

## How Do I Choose the Right Shutter?

Each homeowner should install shutters that best meet their individual needs. Factors such as cost, ease of installation, and degree of protection are important considerations.

Shutters provide protection from flying (wind-borne) debris impacts and/or wind pressure for windows, French doors, sliding glass doors, and other openings. No matter what type of shutter you choose, proper installation is important to ensure best performance.

## Additional Issues to Consider

If maximum protection is your goal, be sure to select products approved by the very thorough Miami-Dade County standards (see product search link below). But simply installing shutters is not enough. It is important to use proper construction techniques to maintain your shutter strength and reduce the potential for missile debris. These issues include:

- Securing loose outdoor items including patio furniture, garbage cans/recycling bins, plant pots, etc.
- Attaching shutters to your home's structural framing, **NOT** window or door frames.
- Using corrosion resistant materials for all exposed parts of the shutter system, including shutter panels, fasteners, etc.

## Other Resources







Miami-Dade County | Building Code Compliance Product Search  
[http://www.miamidade.gov/buildingcode/online\\_product\\_search.asp](http://www.miamidade.gov/buildingcode/online_product_search.asp)

NOAA & AOML | Hurricane Shutters FAQ  
<http://www.aoml.noaa.gov/hrd/shutters/index1.html>

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## What Shutter Options are Available?

Shutter Image	Shutter Type & Details	Price
 <p>Source: St. Lucie County Extension</p>	<p><b>Automatic Rolldown</b></p> <p>These shutters roll down tracks from a box above each protected opening. They are generally made of metal and lock at the bottom.</p> <p><u>Pros:</u> preinstalled, easy to use, can be motorized.</p> <p><u>Cons:</u> very expensive.</p>	<p>\$\$\$\$\$</p>
 <p>Source: www.hurricanes shuttercompany.com</p>	<p><b>Accordion</b></p> <p>These shutters are pulled together from the side of each protected opening. They are generally made of metal and lock together or to a middle divider.</p> <p><u>Pros:</u> preinstalled, easy to use.</p> <p><u>Cons:</u> somewhat expensive, architecturally less appealing.</p>	<p>\$\$\$</p>
 <p>Source: Florida Coastal Monitoring Program</p>	<p><b>Awning</b></p> <p>These shutters are dropped down and locked in place. They are made of metal or fiberglass and provide full window shade when not in use.</p> <p><u>Pros:</u> preinstalled, easy to use.</p> <p><u>Cons:</u> somewhat expensive, architecturally less appealing.</p>	<p>\$\$\$</p>
 <p>Source: www.stormshutters.com</p>	<p><b>Bahama Awning and Colonial Shutter</b></p> <p>These louvered panel shutters are either Awning (which provide partial shade when not in use) or Colonial style.</p> <p><u>Pros:</u> preinstalled, easy to use, architecturally appealing.</p> <p><u>Cons:</u> somewhat expensive, strength varies greatly by design.</p>	<p>\$\$\$</p>
 <p>Source: www.stormshutters.com</p>	<p><b>Hurricane Screen</b></p> <p>These shutters are made from a partially porous reinforced fabric that reduces wind pressures and debris impact damage.</p> <p><u>Pros:</u> fairly inexpensive, allow light through, easy to store.</p> <p><u>Cons:</u> somewhat new technology, debris impacts can break windows in contact with screen, best for non-glazed openings.</p>	<p>\$\$ - \$\$\$</p>
 <p>Source: Florida Coastal Monitoring Program</p>	<p><b>Storm Panel</b></p> <p>These shutters must be stored and installed temporarily for a storm. They are made of steel or aluminum panels that are locked into a preinstalled steel channel above/below the protected opening, or they can be anchored or bolted directly to the house.</p> <p><u>Pros:</u> inexpensive, strong.</p> <p><u>Cons:</u> often heavy, difficult to install and store.</p>	<p>\$\$</p>
<p>N/A</p>	<p><b>Plywood</b></p> <p>See our “Protect with Plywood” document for more information.</p>	<p>\$</p>