

Secondary Means of Escape Egress Windows

The purpose of the secondary means of escape is to provide an occupant with an alternate escape route when fire or smoke blocks the primary means of escape from the dwelling unit.

Few of us think of windows as lifesaving equipment, but they are!

During a fire, when you need to escape, identify two ways out of every room in case your primary escape route becomes blocked or when rescue personnel need to enter—the right size egress window can make the difference between life and death.

Make sure all doors and windows that lead outside are operable and are not blocked by furniture.

Requirements of the NFPA 101 Life Safety Code, 2015 edition.

Secondary Means of Escape—EGRESS WINDOWS

NFPA 101: 24.21.2.3.3

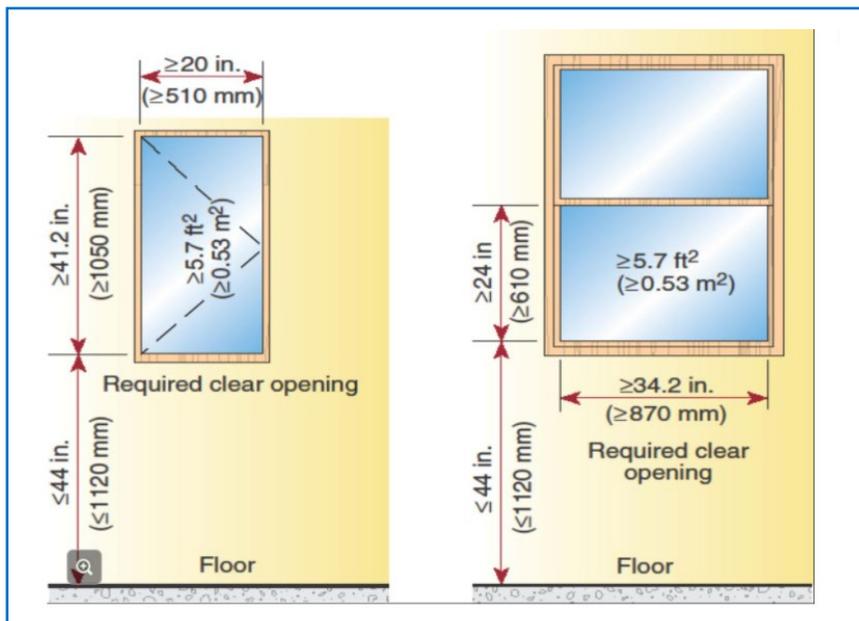
An outside window or door operable from the inside without the use of tools, keys, or special effort, and shall provide a clear opening of not less than 5.7 square feet for new windows.

The width shall be not less than 20 in. and height shall be not less than 24 in. The bottom of the opening shall be not more than 44 in. above the floor.

Such means of escape shall be acceptable where one of the following criteria is met:

- (1) The window shall be within 20 ft. of the finished ground level.
- (2) The window shall be directly accessible to fire department rescue apparatus as approved by the AHJ.
- (3) The window or door shall open onto an exterior balcony.

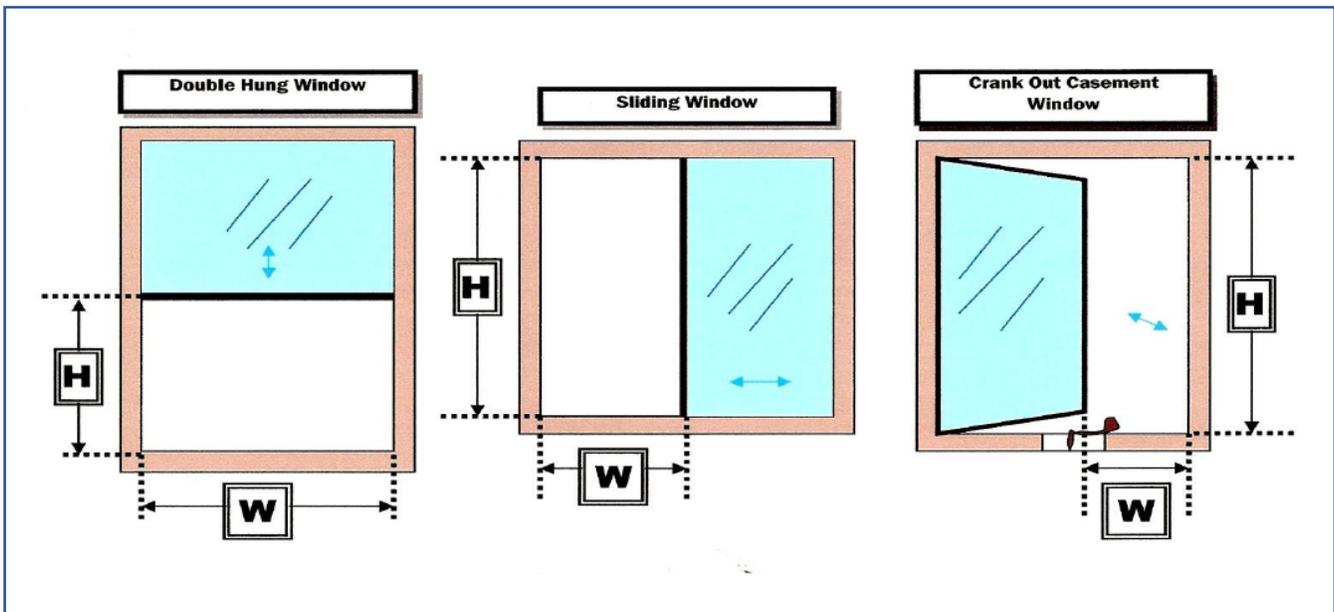
NOTE: Minimum window requirement of 20" x 24" = 3.33 sq. ft.



Use the worksheet on page 2 to determine whether your window meets the requirements for second means of escape.

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The code requires that every sleeping room, living area or school classroom must be provided with a secondary means of escape. That means at least one operable window or exterior door that leads to the outside and is approved for emergency egress or rescue.



1. Measure the openable height [H] _____” Is the clear openable height at least 24 inches? Yes No
2. Measure the openable width [W] _____” Is the clear openable width at least 20 inches with the window fully Open? Yes No
3. Check opening area [H] _____ X [W] _____ = _____ / 144 = _____ sq. ft.
4. Measure from the lower window sill to inside finished floor _____” Is the it 44 inches or less ? Yes No
5. Measure from the outside window sill to ground level _____” Is the it 20 feet or less ? Yes No

Special Notes:

Most off the shelf awning and crank out casement windows are not designed to be used as an egress window, when the window opens the sweep of a casement window may impede on the clear opening. These windows may require adding specialized hardware which allows the window to not only swing open, but also swing away. These windows must be fully open when taking measurements.

If you have bars or covers over the window it is allowable, but they must be operable from the inside without the use of special tools or keys. An air conditioner maybe Located in a window where a single egress window is provided unless air conditioners are permanently installed, securely fastened or older heavy unit is installed.

Location	Height	X	Width	=	Total square in.	Meets requirements Y/N
Bedroom #1						
Bedroom #2						
Bedroom #3						
Bedroom #4						
Living Area						
Family Room						
Other Room 1						
Other Room2						
Basement Room						