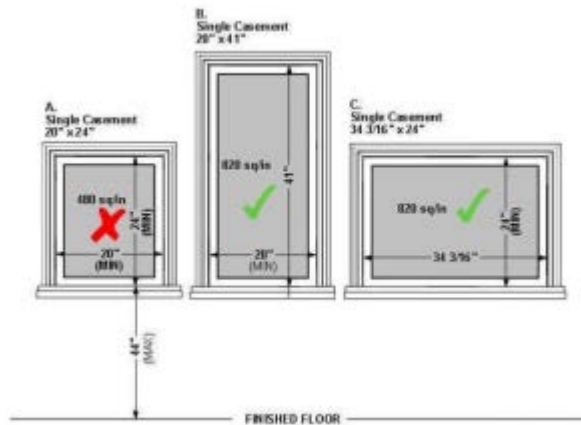


Egress Window Know-How

The International Residential Code (IRC) requires all finished basements and sleeping rooms, in addition to the normal basement steps, have an emergency-egress window or door to permit the occupants to escape and allows a fully outfitted firefighter to enter.

International Residential Code (IRC) Window Requirements



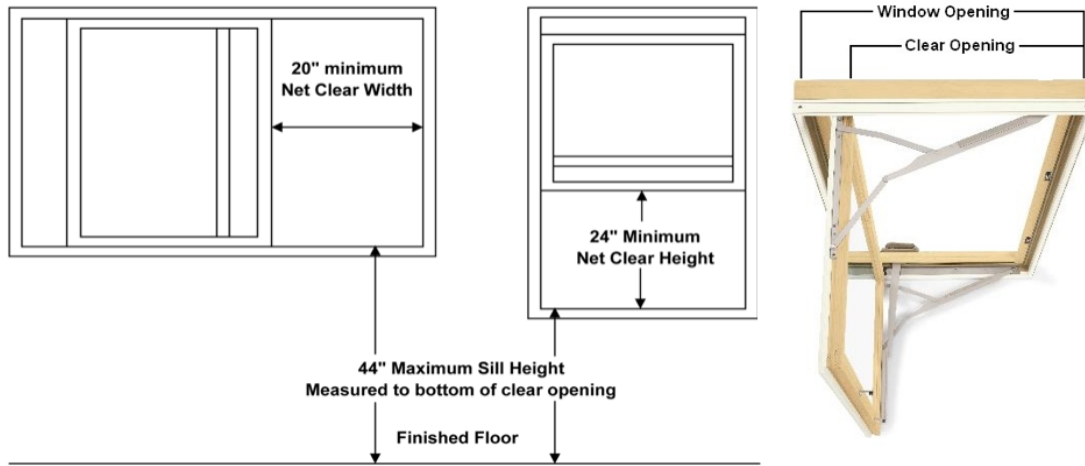
- Minimum width of clear opening: 20 inches
- Minimum height of clear opening: 24 inches
- Minimum net clear opening: 5.7 sq. ft. (5.0 sq. ft. for ground floor Windows)
- Maximum sill height above floor: 44 inches – Target 42 inches

Let's do the math:

- 20 in. x 24 in. clear opening = Only 3.3 sq. ft.
- 20 in. x 42 in. clear opening = 5.8 sq. ft.
- 35 in. x 24 in. clear opening = 5.8 sq. ft

How to measure an egress windows clear opening:

2007 California Building Code, Section 1026



Types of Egress Windows

Pro's (+) & Con's (-)

Standard Double Hung Window:

- (+) Many inexpensive Windows are available
- (-) Windows need to be large to meet IRC code, limited or no warranty

Casement Outswing Window:

- (+) Many inexpensive Windows are available;
- (-) Usually not made with egress hinges, many don't open 90 degrees, requires the use of wider windows and wells, could interfere with well covers if the window is partially above top of the well, limited or no warranty

Standard 48" Sliding Basement Window:

- (+) Many inexpensive 3 1/4" jamb depth Windows are available
- (-) Most 48" wide windows do NOT meet the IRC 20" minimum clear opening requirement, limited or no warranty

Egress 48" Sliding Basement Window:

- (+) 8" to 12" jamb depths, meets IRC 20" clear opening requirement, meets Energy Star requirements, 10 year warranty
- (-) More expensive

Single Hung In-swing Window:

- (+) Uses egress hinges, dual function, takes a much smaller window to meet the 5.7 sq. ft. IRC requirement, 20 year warranty, works in a small compact well, no issues with cover interference
- (-) More expensive

Casement In-swing Window:

- (+) Uses egress hinges, smallest window to meet 5.7 sq. ft. IRC requirement, 20 year warranty, works in a small compact well, no issues with well cover interference;
- (-) More expensive

EGRESS WINDOW WELL KNOW-HOW

Egress Window Wells/Area Wells:

Required where window sill height is below ground elevation.

Horizontal projection: = 36 inches minimum

Vertical width: = 36 inches minimum

Minimum surface area = 9 sq. ft. (width x projection)

Ladders:

Required on window wells deeper than 44" and must be permanently attached. Ladder may encroach into well up to 6".

Maximum step distance between rungs: = 18"

Rungs: 12" wide or greater and must project a minimum of 3" away from wall but no more than a maximum of 6"

Grates / Covers:

Shall be removable **without special tools.**