

In 2018 a new standard concerning wooden windows has finally been published.

This is an Italian standard (UNI 11717-1 Minimum requirements for resistance to degradation of wood substrates and coating systems for exterior wood and/or wood-based door and window frames), the drafting of which has mainly involved the working groups 5 (Non structural wood) and 7 (Finishes) of the UNI wood committee.

The work started from the consideration that wood windows are today subject to a strong competition from products made with other materials, especially plastic. Moreover, wood is often in a difficult situation, especially when the comparison is based on the economic side.

However, this is not the only point for which the market considers plastic window frames to be advantageous since, unfortunately, there are often negative and striking examples of the poor durability of those made of wood. In these cases, the reasons for rapid deterioration are often linked to incorrect design or construction, but all these bad examples ultimately represents an extremely negative “advertising” for the entire wooden window sector.

Tradition, experience but also studies and research carried out by institutes, associations and paint manufacturers have led over the years to the definition of a clear technical framework on how a wooden window must be produced to avoid rapid degradation and consequent credibility and market losses.

The standard published by Uni therefore represents this set of knowledge that has therefore been considered and opportunely included in the context of the law.

In the drafting, we tried to privilege an almost didactic role of the document that would stimulate specific insights on this subject. Alongside the requirements that have been necessarily included, we have therefore always tried to insert a motivation that explains the reason for their definition.

On this basis, the scheme of the standard, established by the working group mainly formed by both window and coating manufacturers, defines a series of requirements for raw materials and for processing.

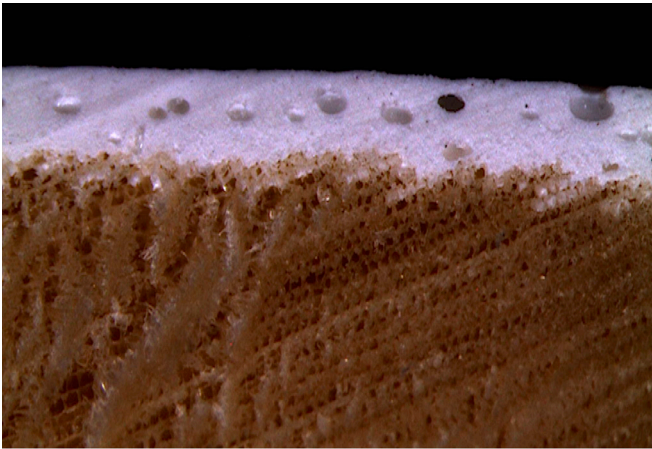
Among the characteristics of wood, for example the biological durability, the presence of defects (resin pockets, knots) and the moisture content, are defined.

Concerning the woodworking (depending on the type of product window, shutters or pedestrian doors) parameters such as junctions, radii, inclinations or end-grain protection are considered.



Wooden windows are now “up to standard”

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A specific paragraph is dedicated to paints whose protective effect is assessed first of all in terms of minimum thickness to be applied. The coating products must also respond to a whole series of minimum performances (water resistance, adhesion), among which the most important is evidently the resistance to aging which has also been parameterized on the basis of specific international standards.

As already mentioned, for all the characteristics identified within the standard, minimum requirements have been defined that must be respected by the materials, the designs and, obviously, by the finished product to be able to declare that the window is made “in conformity with the standard”.

The expected benefits deriving from the publication of the standard and already defined in the initial phase of the document are therefore to provide a tool to the market for the clear and transparent marketing and purchase of goods that are susceptible to degradation, given their final destination. The final hope is that this document can contribute, on one hand, to the knowledge and cultural growth of this sector and, on the other hand, to provide the market with products “well done” with the reassurance of a product made “in compliance with the standard”.



October 2018

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