

Hurricane Shutters

There are a large variation of materials, designs, manufacturers, and contractors for hurricane shutters. **This list is not an endorsement or recommendation of any company or design over another. It is up to you to decide which option best suits you and your needs, the contact the vendor for pricing and your suitability.**

Hurricane Panels: plywood

The simplest and least expensive option is to create hurricane panels out of 5/8 in or 3/4 in plywood. Measure each window opening and cut the plywood 8 in to 12 in larger overall to provide a 4 in to 6 in overlap beyond the window opening. Fasten to the structural members at the margins of the window with 3/16 inch diameter (minimum) screws, lagbolts with shields, Tapcon fasteners, or Expanding Sleeve bolts (referred to as redheads or DynaBolts) depending upon whether your home is wood frame or block. They should be fastened at least every 12 inches around the entire perimeter of the plywood.

Pros: Relatively inexpensive and fairly easy for the Do-It-Your-Selfers.

Cons: Difficult to store, unwieldy to install/remove by yourself

NOTE: DO NOT USE Wafer wood, OSB, and particleboard as alternatives to plywood!! They will FAIL readily and rapidly when wet!!

Hurricane Panels: corrugated metal

The next least expensive and more complicated method would be to purchase corrugated Steel or Aluminum removable panels. These require the installation of a mounting track either above and below or on either side of the window opening.. These tracks are permanently mounted to the structural frame outside of the window opening and the metal panels are pre-cut to fit the opening with mounting holes pre-drilled at the ends of the panels. When a storm threatens, the panels are slid into place in the track and fastened in place. Note: for Steel, use minimum 22 ga steel thickness (gauge thicknesses run backward! 24 ga is THINNER than 22 ga)

For Aluminum, use at least 0.050 in thick aluminum.

Pros: still affordable, easier to store, easier to install/remove alone.

Cons: steel: heavy, awkward to maneuver large panels.

Aluminum, about twice as expensive as steel, about 1/2 the weight.

Both of these can be do-it-yourself for intermediate level of competency, but both can be purchased with installation by licensed Contractor.

Hurricane Panels: Corrugated Polycarbonate

Although these are installed the same as the steel or aluminum, they are significantly more expensive, with less weight than steel. These have the advantage of being very lightweight, very strong, and clear, allowing light into the home. They are about 4 times the cost of steel and twice that of aluminum.

Pros: easy to install/remove alone, ease of storage the same as steel & aluminum

Cons: getting pricey, sunlight will weaken them over time.

These can be do-it-yourself for intermediate level of competency, or can be purchased with installation by licensed Contractor.

Bahama Shutters: Steel or aluminum

These are framed screens or louvers that are permanently mounted over the entire exterior window opening. They are decorative, can be painted in any variety of colors, and some can be hinged up or to the side allowing them to be opened for emergency escape in the case of a fire or other emergency.

They are very strong and subject to the same aging effects of their paint as the rest of your house.

Pros: permanently in place, protect the windows at all times, no storage issues.

Cons: significantly more expensive than panels.

These can typically only be purchased installed by licensed contractor.

Accordion Fold Shutters: Steel or Aluminum

These are mounted at either side of the exterior window opening. There is a track over the top and under the bottom of the window opening. They are stored in place, at either side of the window and when they are pulled closed, they extend from side-to-side and latch in the middle of the window...like a bifold closet door.

Pros: permanently installed, but store relatively well hidden when not in use.

Cons: even more expensive than Bahama Shutters.

These can only be purchased installed by a licensed contractor.

Roll-up Shutters: Steel, Aluminum, or reinforced PVC

These are the most expensive typically available hurricane shutter, and also the only one that can be deployed from inside the home.

They work much like an industrial overhead garage door and can be either manually operated with a hand crank, or electrically operated by electric motors. When deployed, they silently roll down over the window in permanently mounted tracks located on either side of the exterior window opening.

Pros: the easiest of all methods to deploy window shuttering. Can be used on windows over 3 stories above ground. MAY be the only method acceptable for Condominium window protection.

Con's: the most expensive method, and require more periodic maintenance than other methods.

These can only be purchased installed by a licensed contractor.