

QUICK DECISION GUIDE FOR REPLACING YOUR OVERHEAD GARAGE DOOR

By Balanced Garage Doors Customer Support

"Old Reliable" would be a fitting nickname for a garage door. We don't pay it much attention, but it enables our daily activities, provides home safety, impacts our household energy footprint, and enhances our home's curb appeal.

Replacing this much function around the home can be a significant expense, which is why we have created this decision guide. Its purpose is to help homeowners find a suitable and cost-effective garage door when it is time to replace "Old Reliable" with a newer generation garage door.

We recommend that homeowners give thoughtful consideration to the multitude of local garage door brands, options, styles, features, and colors available. Where door construction materials are concerned, steel doors tend to rule the garage door replacement market because they are much less expensive than doors constructed from wood or aluminum and glass.

STEEL GARAGE DOORS



Steel doors have become very popular not only because of their cost advantage but also because of their durability, strength, ease of maintenance, and a large selection of styles, finishes, window configurations, and hardware choices.

The average manufactured stock steel door frame is made of 24 to 25-gauge steel. Some manufacturers use a thinner 27-gauge steel thickness for their standard door. Choose carefully, as thinner steel walls are prone to dent easier. Although thicker gauge steel doors of your favorite style, options, and color can be custom ordered, this may delay installation time depending on the manufacturer's production schedule.

TYPICAL STEEL OVERHEAD GARAGE DOOR STYLE SPECS:



WOOD AND FAUX WOOD GARAGE DOORS

Many homeowners like the undeniable traditional charm that radiates from a wooden garage door displaying tree knots and distinctive wood grain patterns. Natural wood is the most customizable of all garage door materials due to its carve-ability properties offering unlimited artistic design and stain options to complement your home. Another advantage of wooden overhead garage doors is that blemishes incurred from the weather are easier to repair.



Wood overhead garage doors are built in a layered construction with R-Values starting around 6. They are usually a custom-order choice where the frame can be constructed using various materials. The most popular exterior panel choices are oak, cypress, hemlock, and mahogany.

The primary disadvantages of real wood overhead garage doors are cost, and over time, they can be susceptible to insect damage from termites and carpenter bees, in addition to moisture damage that can cause swelling, warping, and rot.

Faux wood overhead doors are steel or fiberglass paneled doors with a faux wood finish. Faux wood finishes provide popular visual appeal and, at the highest levels of quality, can give the appearance of an actual wood door at a close distance. The perfection of simulated wood finishes provides both aesthetic and lower-cost options. When selecting between an overhead garage door constructed from natural wood and a steel door with a selection of anti-fungal faux wood finishes, both offer numerous choices.

Aluminum and glass overhead doors are popular to accent modern and contemporary home designs. If glass is an integral element of your home's aesthetic look, then an aluminum-glass door will be your go-to choice.

ALUMINUM AND GLASS GARAGE DOORS



Every door manufacturer offers a selection of aluminum-glass doors with different designs and tempered insulated glass panel options. Panel sizes can be customized to meet a homeowner's design requirements. Aluminum panels in lieu of glass are also an option. However, keep in mind aluminum is softer than steel, so aluminum panels might be more prone to weather damage.

Aluminum door frames and panels are available in powder coated and anodized finishes. The combination of aluminum and glass makes these doors virtually maintenance-free. Since salt is the corrosion nemesis of aluminum, aluminum doors are not recommended for coastal areas.

In our opinion, the following list of considerations is a good starting point when shopping for a replacement overhead garage door.

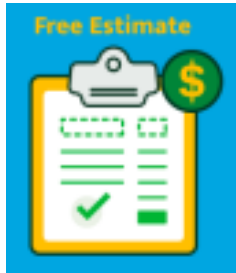
Should you increase the R-Value of your garage door? R-Value measures your garage door's resistance to the flow of heat and insulation effectiveness. Therefore, if you have an interior room above the garage more sensitive to heat and cold than other rooms in your house or use the garage's interior as a workshop or for hobbies, you might want to consider a garage door with a higher R-Value. The additional insulation will also increase the quietness within your home from outside noise.



Manufacturers offer multi-layer door construction options for all doors regardless of the construction materials used that allows a shopper to customize an R-Value appropriate for their climate and needs. For example, garage doors constructed and filled with polyurethane are more energy-efficient than those built and filled with a layer of polystyrene. Depending on door construction materials and the number of layers, R-Values for overhead garage doors can range from 5.7 to as high as 20.4.

When searching garage door designs and features, a homeowner no longer has to guess how the door's particular style and color will look on their house. Most garage door manufacturers have software on their website that allows homeowners to upload a photo of their garage door and add any of the manufacturer's door styles, features, and color options to the uploaded picture. This allows the shopper to choose a door style, incorporate the design features they like, pick windows and a color, and even add hardware. By swapping out the various styles, options, and colors offered by the door manufacturer, the shopper can easily determine which combination is most appealing.

Which manufacturer to buy your replacement garage door from is another consideration. The vast majority of replacement garage doors installed in homes in the Greater Atlanta and North Georgia area by local garage door repair companies are manufactured by the retail trade under brand names such as Amarr, C.H.I., Clopay, Door Link, Wayne Dalton, etc., and come with excellent warranties. Any garage door company can install and repair them.



It is always best to get at least two or three quotes from garage door companies that offer both quality labor and product warranties. Where garage door replacement estimates are concerned, almost every garage door repair company provides a free onsite inspection to discuss your options and door installation requirements. Obtaining quotes over the phone and online will usually not reflect your final installed price since replacing your door often requires other fixes or safety enhancements.

During the onsite inspection, expect recommendations to include replacing a couple of existing parts of your garage system. Depending on the door's age, an installer's new door warranty might be contingent on replacing the door track. Many older extension spring systems do not have safety cables to prevent springs from becoming a dangerous projectile that can cause damage and bodily injury when it breaks. Upgrading an old garage opener will save money in the long run and provide you with the latest smart door technology features. Many homeowners with older door systems opt to convert their extension spring system to a torsion spring system when it is time to replace their garage door to improve performance and reduce garage noise.

Finally, when selecting garage door companies to give you an estimate, it is always best to look at their customer reviews first to see if the company has recently published reviews with high ratings of customer satisfaction. Good sources to check reviews are HomeAdvisor, Angie's List, and Google.

Careful evaluation upfront will pay off in the end. If you invest time reviewing the available options in advance, the final result should be a replacement garage door that you are happy with and will perform to your expectations for several decades.

Balanced Garage Doors technicians are local pros at helping homeowners determine the style, features, and construction quality of a replacement garage door that best satisfies their requirements and budget. Just give us a call at [770-880-0376](tel:770-880-0376) to schedule a free onsite inspection and estimate.