

Barn Door Style Doors: Are They Right for Your Shower?

You've put a lot of thought into the design of your bathroom and you need a shower door that will match or blend in with that aesthetic theme. Barn doors have been having a moment for a while now, and we are often asked if this is a practical design for shower doors.

We're going to share all the things you need to know about barn door style shower doors and if they're a good fit (and if they're not) for your shower.

What is a "Barn Door Style" Shower Door?

When it comes to shower glass, what is meant by the term "barn door"? Put simply, a barn door style shower door is a sliding door that hangs from a support bar. The rollers are exposed and are larger and higher quality than the rollers used for traditional framed or semi-framed sliding doors. This is a completely frameless shower door.

The 2 Barn Door Options

There are 2 main choices when it comes to frameless sliding doors, and they might go by many different names but the design and function is largely the same:

1. Single sliding barn door/Single Euroglide/Unovero
2. Double sliding barn doors/Double Euroglide/Duovero

As you might imagine, the single slider has one sliding barn door and at least one stationary or fixed panel that is attached to the support bar, whereas the double slider has 2 sliding glass doors. The style you choose will determine the type of hardware that will be used; this includes the type of support bar, handle styles available, hardware colors available, and the bottom guide.

Advantages

The barn door slider works great in bathrooms where space outside the shower is limited. The toilet, vanity, or a towel bar mounted on the wall next to the shower might make a swinging door less than ideal or even impossible. Having a door that doesn't swing into this cramped area, but rather slides along the curb can maximize the space in this bathroom.

If your shower setup dictates that your entry point is opposite of the shower controls, then having the ability to slide both doors can allow you to turn on the shower without getting sprayed with cold water.

Things to Know

Head Clearance

The heavy-duty rollers used for the thicker frameless glass have maximum weight capacities that can affect how wide and tall each door can be made. This becomes a factor where head clearance might be an issue.

Do you have a roll-in or curbless shower? Without the added height of a traditional curb, the effective height of your slider will be lower.

Scenario: a bathtub was converted to a curbless roll-in shower. The width of the shower is around 5 feet so the maximum height of the glass is around 80 inches. The support bar sits about 4 inches from the top of the glass, meaning the head clearance ends up at approximately 75 inches or 6ft 3in. This will accommodate most people, but you also want to consider the placement of the shower head and how this overall height will look in your bathroom.

With a traditional curb in place, your head clearance and overall height could increase by 3-5 inches.

If your shower exceeds 5 feet in width, then the maximum height will be lower, significantly affecting head clearance and aesthetic appeal.

Bathtubs

The low-profile guide mounted at the bottom of the unit keeps the door(s) in line with the support bar. This guide is mounted to the bottom surface with screws. As such, this type of door is not able to be mounted on cast-iron or metal bathtubs. This guide is also approximately 3 inches wide, so the mounting surface must have at least 3 inches of completely flat surface area; this rules out many bathtubs, so be sure to check if your tub is a candidate for this type of slider.

Hardware Type and Finishes

The only handle we recommend for the double slider is the flush pull. Because these doors can slide fully in either direction, a back-to-back handle used on other doors would potentially hit the edge of the other glass door in this case, which would be unsafe.

Available colors for both styles are: chrome, brushed nickel, matte black, brushed gold (satin brass)

Functionality

When you decide to go with a frameless shower door, one of the goals is to minimize the hardware. And with custom cut glass we can accomplish this goal. Many pre-fabricated sliders come with metal tracks, wall jambs, and other pieces that take away from the frameless look.

For any stationary or fixed panels, small clamps and bar mounts secure the glass, and clear silicone seals it water-tight. The moving barn door will have small polycarbonate plastic pieces on the edge of the glass and adhered to the bottom surface near the glass. These pieces help deflect most of the water back into the shower, but they are not designed to withstand a direct water stream from a hand-held wand, jets, or even the shower head.

Is a Barn Door Right for Your Shower?

When reviewing all the elements of a barn door style shower door- the design options, available colors, head clearance considerations, space in your bathroom, location of shower controls, etc.- does the barn door style match the aesthetic you're going for? Remember, with modern finishes and frameless glass, barn door doesn't have to mean 'rustic'. But it can mean adding the perfect finishing touch to your new shower.

Still Undecided?

Call us today to schedule a personalized consultation for your next shower door.