CNCGLASS
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Laminated Glass and Ordinary Glass: A Comparison from the Interlayer Out

The pane in the wall is a system

Ordinary annealed glass is clear, familiar, and brittle. When it breaks, it forms large, sharp pieces. Tempered glass is stronger in bending and breaks into small dice, which is better for many doors and sides, but those dice can still leave an opening empty. Laminated glass adds an interlayer—EVA is one of the films we use for this—so that when a ply breaks, the fragments remain bonded to the film and, in a well-made unit, in the frame.



Figure 1. A glazed commercial elevation, where the choice between ordinary and laminated glass is a safety decision as well as a visual one.

That is the comparison we start with, before cost or coatings. If the opening is overhead, at height, or in a barrier, the fragment-retention behavior is not a luxury. It is the reason to laminate.

What the interlayer is doing

The film bonds the plies, accommodates some impact, and can also carry UV cut-off, color, or a switchable layer. It is not a surface security film taped to a single pane after the fact, though that product exists and should be named separately. A factory laminate is a new piece of glass, with a thickness, an edge, and a fire, impact, or barrier role defined by the whole make-up.

Energy behavior comes from the make-up as well: coatings, a second cavity in an insulated unit, and sometimes the absorption of a tinted interlayer. The film can help with UV and, modestly, with sound. It should not be sold as a complete climate façade on its own.

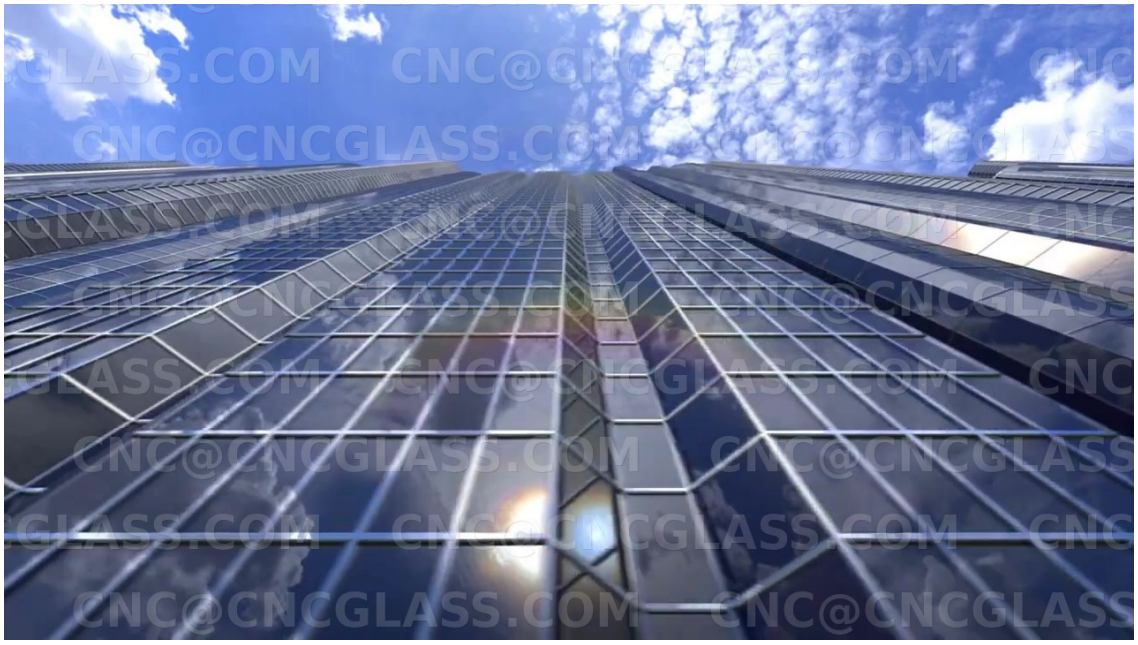


Figure 2. Reflective façade glass: appearance is only half of the specification.

Cost in the life of the opening

A laminated unit costs more than a single annealed pane at purchase. It can cost less over the life of a building if it avoids injury, intrusion, or a repeated replacement after storm or impact. We prefer that argument to be made with the actual opening in mind, not with a universal payback claim.

Durability depends on the interlayer grade, the completeness of the lamination, and the edge. A laminate that is poorly made is not safer than the glass it replaced; it is only more complicated. The comparison is only fair when the laminated unit is built to a professional standard.



Figure 3. Tall glazed buildings rely on laminated make-ups wherever falling glass cannot be accepted.

Choose ordinary glass where a simple pane is enough. Choose laminated glass, with a properly cured interlayer, where the opening must stay closed and safe after the glass is broken. That is the comparison that matters on a building.

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We can help you select an EVA interlayer and a make-up when a project moves from ordinary glass to a laminated unit.