

How To View & Evaluate Glass Samples

Coated glass is normally selected based on reflected color, as this is typically seen in outdoor/natural lighting conditions. To see the reflected color of glass, it is best to view samples with a black background. Position the sample so that someone can look at an image that is reflected from the glass surface. This is the true reflected color of the sample.

Example: Place a piece of black paper, or other low-gloss black material, on a desktop or other flat surface. Position the glass sample on the paper with the exterior side up, so that you can see the image of the overhead lights being reflected from the glass surface. To view the transmitted color, it is best to view samples using a white background. Evaluating glass samples with a white background will not give a true indication of the exterior appearance of the sample. This instead projects the transmitted color and is not what you will see once the glass is installed in the building.

Guardian recommends that samples be viewed in outdoor/natural lighting conditions, preferably in a slightly overcast condition, for the most accurate rendering of transmitted and reflected color. Also, architects are encouraged to consider angle of observation, interior lighting conditions and potential effects of glare when choosing glazing products.

When evaluating samples outdoors, we recommend viewing them during various time of the day and under varying lighting conditions, e.g., cloudy versus sunny conditions. This will provide a truer indication of what the glass will look like, as well as give you the opportunity to see how varying light conditions impact your design intent. After removing the glass from the sample box, place it in a vertical or slightly angled position. Viewing the glass with a black background in the distance is preferred to replicate lighting once installed in the structure. Then look through the glass to provide the best indication of the appearance of installed glass.

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