



Department of
Building and Safety
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Emergency Escape & Rescue Window Requirements

Legally constructed buildings are allowed to remain as they were originally built. However, any additions, alterations or repairs to any structure must meet the current code requirements.

Required Escape and Rescue Opening Locations:

In one or two family dwellings Code requires basements, habitable attics and every sleeping room must have at least one operable emergency escape and rescue opening.

Emergency escape/rescue openings shall open directly into a public way, or to a yard or court that opens to a public way.

Type of Required Escape and Rescue Openings:

Emergency escape/rescue openings may be provided by a window or a door.

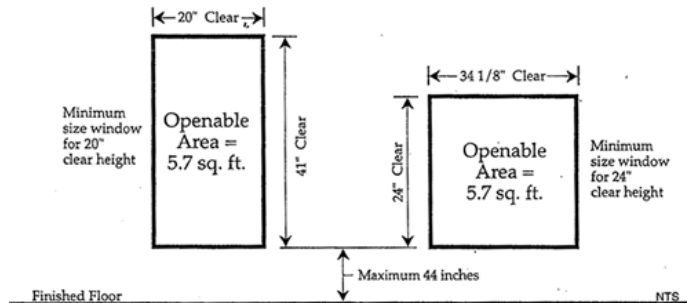
Required Escape and Rescue Opening Size:

All emergency escape/rescue openings shall have a minimum full opening of 5.7 square feet. However, grade floor openings shall have a minimum net clear opening of 5 square feet.

The minimum full opening height shall be at least 24 inches tall and the minimum full opening width shall be at least 20 inches wide.

The minimum full openings must be obtained by the normal operation of the emergency escape and rescue opening from the inside without the use of keys, tools or special knowledge.

The height of the window sill cannot be more than 44" from the floor.



Width	20	20.5	21	21.5	22	22.5	23	23.5	24	24.5	25	25.5	26	26.5	27
Height	41.0	40.0	39.1	28.2	37.3	36.5	35.7	34.9	34.2	33.5	32.8	32.2	31.6	31.0	30.4
Width	27.5	28	28.5	29	29.5	30	30.5	31	31.5	32	32.5	32	32.5	33	33.5
Height	29.8	29.3	28.8	28.3	27.8	27.4	26.9	26.5	26.5	26.1	25.7	26.1	25.7	25.3	24.9

These are the general code requirements of residential escape and rescue openings based on the 2016 CA building code.

This handout is intended to provide general information only.

For further information, please refer to the 2016 Residential Building Code.