

Comparing Bi-Fold/Accordion Doors & Sliding Doors

The following things should be considered before deciding on which product type is best for your project:

1. **Folding doors have less floor tracks:** *Sliding door systems require more tracks but folding doors (such as Nanawall) share only one track.*
2. **Folding doors bring dirt and water into the room:** *Interior folding configurations will drop debris into the room as the panels unfold.*
3. **Folding doors have less glass than sliding doors:** *Folding door panels are limited to about 30 square feet. Sliding door panels commonly exceed 60 square feet.*
4. **Folding doors are fun to operate:** *Some enjoy opening and closing folding doors more than sliding doors.*
5. **Folding doors restrict the view:** *Sliding and folding doors are usually pictured open. It is estimated that they actually **remain closed more than 75% of the time**. Imagine a 20' opening: While closed the sliding door has three 2" verticals whereas a typical folding door has six 6" verticals.*
6. **Folding doors typically cost more money:** *Folding doors cost about 25% more than multi-slide/pocket doors.*
7. **Folding doors require extensive engineering:** *Folding doors hang so the house must be engineered to handle the dead load. Sliding door systems require no additional engineering.*
8. **Folding doors open more space:** *When there is no room for a pocket, folding doors are ideal because they allow a larger clear opening.*
9. **Folding doors are more dangerous:** *Any moving wall can be dangerous if not operated with care. However, folding doors present a greater risk to children. The approximate 3' wide panels are instinctive grasping points for children. As these panels are moved to a closed position fingers are subject to pinching.*
10. **Folding doors are difficult to screen:** *Folding door screen systems are usually aftermarket products that do not match the frame finish exactly.*
11. **Folding doors encroach on furnishings:** *Because folding doors extend to the interior or exterior of the room (depending on style) furnishings must be positioned beyond the arc of those panels.*
12. **Folding doors are tighter against air infiltration:** *When closed and locked, folding doors compress tightly against the perimeter frame.*
13. **Folding doors do not stay open:** *The smooth operation of folding doors prevents customers from simply "cracking them" for ventilation. Further, folding doors will not stay tight against the wall unless an optional latch is installed.*
14. **Folding doors require more adjusting:** *Despite additional engineering, houses move and settle as temperatures change. Unlike sliding doors, folding doors require more exacting operation tolerances and therefore must be adjusted throughout the year.*
15. **Folding doors ideal for kitchen counter and bar tops:** *Small panels make folding doors an ideal product for extending counter tops to the exterior.*
16. **Folding doors typically do not offer an exterior keyed lock:** *Folding doors that do not offer an integrated hinged door cannot be equipped with an exterior keyed lock. Many folding doors on the market do not even offer a keyed lock option for the hinged door.*
17. **Folding doors offer sight-line symmetry:** *Folding doors provide a more consistent symmetry as opposed to sliding doors.*
18. **Folding doors do not offer ADA friendly options:** *Sliding doors can be operated more easily by the handicapped.*
19. **Folding doors do not offer a practical draining system:** *Most folding doors offer a smaller track footprint than sliding products. However, water evacuation is not as effective as products such as Fleetwood's [Sub Sillpan](#).*
20. **Folding doors do not perform as well on the coast:** *Because the carrier hardware is more exposed to salt air the moving parts gum up more easily than typical multi-slide/pocket systems.*