



# Passivhaus FAQs

## What is Passivhaus?

Passivhaus is a rigorous standard for energy efficiency, designed to reduce a building's ecological footprint. It results in ultra-low energy buildings that require little energy for heating or cooling.

## What are the benefits of Passivhaus?

Some of the benefits include:

- A building which is well insulated and air-tight, optimising thermal comfort
- Excellent energy efficiency
- Comfortable temperatures (20-25 degrees)
- No condensation or mould
- No draughts

## What's the difference between Passivhaus and the 'standard' building approach?

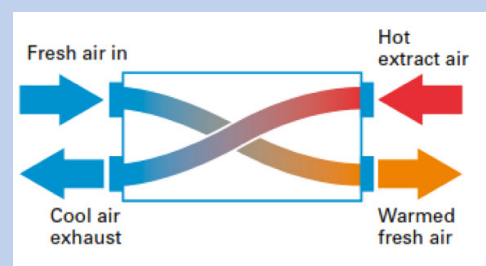
The building may look the same as a standard building, but is better insulated and airtight. This ensures ultra-high performance and means the heating and cooling requirement is 75-90% less than in a standard building.

## Why should the building be airtight?

In a standard building, heat is lost (in winter) and gained (in summer). This accounts for around 30% of heating or cooling loads. Sealing the building and utilising ventilation will help to control air flow and guarantees good indoor air quality, whilst also reclaiming energy.

## Is the ventilation system complicated to operate?

No, it's simpler than most air conditioning systems. There is a unit on the wall known as an energy recovery unit (ERU). The unit is set to auto, and cannot be turned off. However you are able to adjust the fan speed to suit your requirements. Please note, this will not adjust the room temperature, just the speed of the fan and the air ventilation. The idea is that additional heating and cooling units are not required in these rooms, due to their efficient design.



### **Can we open the windows?**

Yes – and you should! However it is important to consider that this will affect the temperature of the room, as it will now slowly adjust to the outside temperature. The ventilation system (ERU) will ensure that the air flow is comfortable and fresh 100% of the time – so there should be no need to open a window just for ventilation purposes. Our windows are set to tilt open, not to open completely. To tilt, simply pull the handle up. If you are in a room with a skylight, you need to use the pole provided to unlock the skylight and tilt accordingly.



### **What if someone leaves the door or window open?**

It is unwise to do this if you are not in your room, as changeable Melbourne weather can mean you return to find your room rather cold or damp! All of the doors in the building should be self-closing, so ensure you have your keys with you.

### **What if someone leaves a window open – all night?**

Passivhaus buildings are quick to return to their optimal temperature, but leaving a window open all night will have the same effect as a normal building, the inside temperature starts to feel like the outside temperature. However if a window in one room is left open, the temperature in that room will effectively be isolated, and will be slow to affect the adjacent spaces.