

“What Should I Do With My Old Window Sash?”

By Alison Hardy, Window Woman of New England, Inc., ©2023

This is a question we get asked a lot. The caller says they “had” to get rid of their original windows and put in replacement windows. But, they love the old windows and don’t just want to junk them. And we wonder why, if you loved them, have you decided to get rid of them?

First, if the sash can be kept with the house, that is by far the best option. Once the replacement windows fail (and they will), putting the original windows back in the original openings is going to restore the beauty and elegance of the house. The key is storing the sash in a dry location, so attics are better than basements for this purpose.

If you don’t have space to store the sash, then making them available to your neighbors is the next best option. Often builders built several houses in the same area and worked with the same dimensions or styles. A neighbor may have a failed replacement window and now in need of an original quality window to put in its place. Or someone may be building an addition and want to have consistent quality windows from old construction to new – and they can make use of your discarded sash! Many local communities now have social media pages for the free exchange of goods. There are also community based house part salvage companies that aim to keep good building materials out of landfill.

If the window sash are extra fancy (stained glass, unusual shapes, etc) you may find an architectural salvage dealer who will buy them for a very nominal price. Keep in mind that a salvage dealer will have to inventory, list, and prepare items for customer purchase so the price they pay will be far less than the retail price for your window.

Window restoration companies may buy window sash, but typically they only have value if the glass is very large (more than 20 x 30”) or bowed or of a distinctive design.

There are people who use window sash for craft projects. Matching up the style and quantity of sash needed may not readily align with the style and quantity needed. You can try listing your window sash for sale on Etsy or Ebay where a crafter might be looking.

Bottom line the original sash are most valuable when left in their original openings and restored. Talk to a window restoration specialist before believing a replacement window sales pitch.