

Visible Transmittance (VT)

What Window Buyers Should Know - Milestone Windows and Doors

VT stands for Visible Transmittance.

It tells you how much visible daylight passes through a window.

The rating generally runs from **0 to 1**:

- **Higher VT = more visible light comes through**
- **Lower VT = less visible light comes through**

For example, a window with a **VT of .55** allows substantially more visible daylight through than a window rated **VT .35**.

Is a Higher VT Better?

Not necessarily.

A higher VT makes a room brighter and can make the glass appear clearer and less tinted.

But in a hot, sunny climate like Texas, we're also trying to control **solar heat gain and glare**. High-performance Low-E coatings that reduce solar heat gain can also reduce the amount of visible light passing through the glass.

So the goal isn't simply: **Get the highest VT possible.**

The goal is to find the **right balance between natural light, appearance, glare control, and energy performance.**

What Different VT Numbers Feel Like

These are general examples - the exact appearance depends on the glass package, coatings, number of panes, screens, and window construction.

VT .60 and above - Very High Light Transmission

- Very bright appearance
- Lots of natural daylight
- Glass generally appears very clear
- May not provide the solar-control performance desired in a hot climate, depending on the glass package

VT .50-.59 - High Light Transmission

- Bright rooms
- Very good natural daylight

- A relatively clear appearance
- Can offer a good combination of daylight and efficiency with the right Low-E coating

VT .40-.49 - Moderate Light Transmission

- Still allows plenty of usable daylight
- Some reduction in brightness and glare
- Common territory for many energy-efficient glass packages

VT .30-.39 - Lower Light Transmission

- Noticeably less daylight
- Glass may appear darker or more reflective depending on the coating
- Can be associated with stronger solar-control glass packages

Below .30 - Very Low Light Transmission

- Considerably darker appearance
- Significant reduction in visible daylight
- Usually chosen when there is a specific reason for limiting visible light or glare

VT vs. SHGC - Don't Confuse Them

VT measures visible LIGHT.

SHGC measures solar HEAT entering through the window.

Those are two different things.

For a Texas homeowner, ideally we want a glass package that can provide **good visible light while keeping the SHGC low enough to significantly reduce unwanted solar heat gain.**

That's one of the major advantages of modern Low-E technology.

Simple Homeowner Explanation

Think about VT as the **brightness rating of the window.**

The higher the number, the more visible daylight you're allowing into the house.

But higher isn't automatically better.

Here in Texas, we want enough visible light to keep the home feeling bright and natural, while using the proper Low-E glass package to control the tremendous amount of solar heat hitting those windows.

So when you're comparing replacement windows, don't look at VT by itself.

Look at **VT, SHGC, U-Factor, and the entire glass package together.**

That's how you determine whether you're actually getting the right window for your home and your climate.

Milestone Windows and Doors

Don't overpay. Don't delay. Call Milestone today!