Windows and doors are extremely important to the appearance of older buildings. Traditional windows and doors in the Virgin Islands consisted of double-plank or solid-panelled exterior storm shutters and louvered blinds called "jalousies" on the inside. Some buildings had glass windows from an early period and some had true-panelled shutters and doors, although both are exceptions.

Selecting New Shutter and Door Patterns
If the existing doors and shutters cannot be repaired or the building lacks any shutters or doors, new replacements will be necessary. Care must be taken, however, to select the correct pattern for shutter or door replacement. Most shutters and doors originally were solid (or "false") paneled, at least for upper stories, and of double-plank construction for groundfloors. (This is not always the case, however, as both double-planked and solid-paneled shutters are sometimes placed in just the opposite way or are uniform throughout a building). Modern chevron-patterned shutters and doors, particularly those using tongue-and-groove, "V-grooved", pine are definitely not recommended. These are modern renditions of traditional doors and shutters and are generally not in keeping with the historic character of buildings in the Virgin Islands.

Preservation
When undertaking window or door repairs, consideration should be given to retaining both external shutters and original jalousies. Both can often be repaired, many times requiring simply replacement of a few louvers or splicing in a piece where wood is damaged. If jalousies or shutters are badly damaged, they should be reproduced when possible. Both can be made by local carpenters and mill shops. Cheap, non-operable jalousies are not recommended. Their life-span is short, and they are usually not worth the expense.
Metal doors, usually sheet metal over wood, were especially common in commercial areas of St. Thomas. Again, if repair is not possible, new metal doors following traditional patterns are recommended. Modern varnished mahogany doors, which have become increasingly popular, are not considered appropriate in the Virgin Islands historic districts -- especially on historic structures.

Replacement Windows

As with doors, owners are encouraged to preserve and repair existing window treatments whenever possible. If the building has no jalousies or other historic windows, compatible treatments may be considered. Custom-made wood jalousies can be fitted with interior screens or glazing; screened or glazed "boxes" over jalousie louver are ideal. In the case of historically glazed windows, interior storms can be installed to improve efficiency.

Recommended replacement windows and storm shutters. Either false-panelled or plank shutters are acceptable. Always attempt first to repair the originals.

Standard door types for replacement.

If security or air-conditioning are a concern, glass windows may in most instances be substituted. Traditional glass windows are of two types:

Modern glass jalousies, or metal jalousies should never be used on historic buildings. These take away significantly from the historic appearance of a building. Their use can, however be considered for new construction (discussed in a separate guideline).

Pay attention to details such as the depth (reveal) of the muntions (dividers). When introducing glass windows be certain that they are in keeping with historic examples.

Avoid modern windows such as these. They should never be used on the fronts or visible sides of historic buildings.

If security or air-conditioning are a concern, glass windows may in most instances be substituted. Traditional glass windows are of two types:

Double-hung, multi-pane sash; or inward-swinging glass casements. Both are readily available from manufacturers or can be special ordered (or manufactured locally) for custom sizes. In some cases, especially when thermo-pane windows are desired, enamelled-metal windows or vinyl-clad windows, with appropriate muntin patterns (window divisions) can be substituted. Muntins (dividers) must have proper depth, however, and must resemble those on traditional wooden windows. Cheaper "snap-in" or "sandwiched" muntins are not acceptable.

Modern glass jalousies, or metal jalousies should never be used on historic buildings. These take away significantly from

None of these doors is appropriate for historic buildings.

Single-paned, glass windows either for commercial fronts or for residential uses are discouraged.

Painting

Doors, shutters, jalousies, and wood and metal windows should be painted to protect the original materials. Typical colors (as described in a separate brief) are white, gray, reddish-brown, and green for exterior shutters; green and sometimes white for jalousies. Hardware can be painted black or, more typically painted the same color as the door or shutter.
Hardware

Existing hardware should in all cases be reused whenever possible. If new hardware is required, it should be of high quality, although it can be simple. Wrought-iron strap hinges and pintles, both available from local suppliers, should be used both for shutters and doors. Modern butt hinges, whether square or triangular, are not appropriate replacements, nor are especially ornate brass or other hardware.

![Traditional hardware, hooks and hinges. Longer, strap hinges are for storm shutters and doors; 'H' and 'L' hinges are commonly used on interior jalousies.]

Storefronts/Display Windows

Few Virgin Islands buildings have traditional, European or North American type storefronts. Most modern businesses are located in older stores and warehouses, most of which lacked display windows or typical storefront entrances.

In all cases, every effort must be made to retain existing warehouse type entrances. The introduction of display windows - even in the place of former entrances - is highly discouraged.

![Be sure to install flashing over window heads (lintels) when making repairs.]

In instances where older (usually early 20th-century) storefronts do exist, they should be retained with the fewest changes possible. This would mean retaining plate glass windows, recessed entries, and other details. Reintroduction of multi-paned glass or the "recreation" of undocumented historic entrances is not encouraged, except in special circumstances.

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![Keep historic, early 20th-century storefronts.]