

TECHNICAL INFORMATION SHEET NUMBER 6

April 2016

GLASS WALLS AND SAFETY RECOMMENDATIONS

1. GENERAL

This paper is intended as a short guide to the advantages and initial choice of glass back walls and their care and maintenance in use.

The introduction of glass back walls is one of the major reasons for the increasing popularity of the game as it provides the opportunity for many more spectators to view the play compared with the traditional gallery.

A glass back wall is a great asset to any size of club or group involved in match play and is a worthwhile investment.

2. TYPES AVAILABLE

a. Freestanding

Fixed to floor and side walls only with stabilising fins full height each side of door and part or full height central in each side panel, 2130mm high with open space above which allows spectators to hear as well as watch the play. If the spectator area ceiling height is the same as the court it will allow up to about 120 people to view the court from raked seating. This is accepted as the best type of glass wall for uninterrupted viewing.

Where access into existing buildings is difficult due to restricted door opening (in width or height), a four panel version is available which has four full height fins.

b. Four Panel

A similar four panel plus door type known as a Club Wall is also available which has vertical metal framing between the panels and a similar frame at the top of the glass panels. This type of wall is sometimes used to replace a solid back wall of a court where the balcony is already supported on a structural beam. The main disadvantage of this type is that the low headroom restricts tiered seating to about 30 spectators.

c. Moveable Wall

This is a free-standing glass back wall with aluminium sections forming a frame with glass panels. It can be installed in a court without any structural alterations. The wall system can be unlocked, tilted and rolled across the floor of the court to the front wall, so enabling the court to be used either for tiered seating to view a court on the opposite side of a central corridor.

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3. CONSTRUCTION – PERFORMANCE REQUIREMENTS

- a. Glass must be toughened, 12mm thick and comply with the relevant British Standards or the equivalent if manufactured outside of the UK.
- b. Doors, the full height of the back wall with a width of 914mm, should be supplied with a rim latch with a knob on the outside and a flush ring handle on the inside face. Door hinges should be positioned so that there is no undue deflection under impact of a player which would create a finger trap between the side of the door and the side panels.

The rim latch must close easily and remain latched and not bounce open when slammed or under player impact.

- c. The lower 630mm of the glass back wall must be etched with vertical lines 3mm wide and 25mm apart on the inner face of the glass panels.
- d. The floor area behind the back wall should be the same colour as the court floor for a distance of 900mm.
- e. If the glass back wall is direct to the spectator or social area it must have a white painted dwarf wall 700mm high and 900mm away from the outer face of the wall. At each end of the glass wall the side walls should be extended either as part of the structure or have a flushed face panel 900mm wide the full height of the glass wall and should be painted white.
- f. The area behind the glass back wall should be lit to the same standard as the court. Any walls parallel to the glass back wall should be painted a light colour to avoid the glass back wall acting as a mirror when viewed from inside the court.
- g. Glass walls should be cleaned using a spirit based cleaner suitable for glass.

4. SUPPLIER

Please refer to ES Technical Information Sheet No.1, which includes details of Contractors who supply

- glass front walls, side walls, back walls and all glass courts.

5. GLASS WALLS - SAFETY RECOMMENDATIONS

Glass Walls, comprising door, panels and supporting fins, are manufactured of 12mm Safety Glass to meet the performance requirement of the British Standards Institution BS6206-1981 or to an equivalent European or American Standard. The World Squash Federation Court Specification for a standard height glass wall (2130mm) must also be met.

Glass panels do not deflect from ball impact but deflect slightly under impact from the player. The door will also flex on impact by a player similar to the panels, but should not form a finger trap between door and panel.

The gaps between panels and door – glass/glass or glass/metal should be 2mm maximum. There is no direct contact between glass and metal and a clear silicone glazing compound is used in all gaps, except around the door.

Please note that safety glass is not indestructible and does shatter occasionally, this may occur even following installation or after many years of usage. The key factor is that if it does shatter, it does so safely, i.e. similar to a car windscreen, to prevent injury to the player(s).

England Squash recommends that glass walls should be inspected at least once a year by a qualified person, and all fixings checked and tightened up if required.

If glass walls are not maintained over a number of years by a qualified person, the fittings could become loose and panels or door could shatter due to over flexing. Also, if the flex of the door is allowed to increase, it could result in a finger trap.

All glass courts, with 4 walls and either fixed or sliding walls, forming a doubles court, are available, see Tech Info Sheet No1.

Please note that the information for the maintenance and provision of squash courts contained in the England Squash Technical Information Sheets apply to courts built in the United Kingdom only.

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