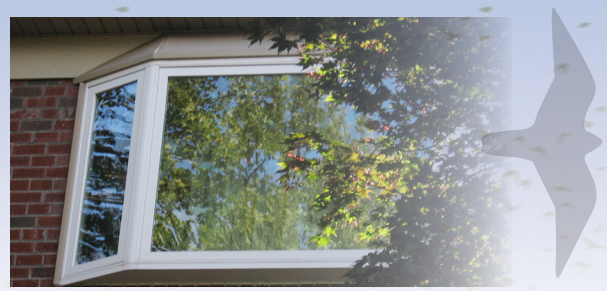
YOU CAN SAVE BIRDS FROM FLYING INTO WINDOWS!



Christine Sheppard, ABC

Millions of birds die every year flying into windows, because they can't tell reflections from trees, plants and sky. *Most of those windows are on houses.*

Never had a bird hit your window? Perhaps you have been lucky—so far. More likely, you haven't been around to see or hear it when it happened, and the bird has either flown off to die elsewhere or been scavenged by a neighborhood cat, raccoon, or crow. But the odds are that sooner or later, your windows will kill a bird.

Wood Thrush killed after colliding with a window.
Photo: Mike Parr

This Barn Swallow dove through the small space shown at top flight speed —over 30 miles per hour! Photo: Keith Ringland

Black horizontal stripes spaced one inch apart are an effective way to keep birds from hitting your windows. Photo: Christine Sheppard, ABC

Not all windows are equally hazardous. Check to see which of your windows are most reflective, and closest to areas where you see birds when they are active. **Collisions happen more frequently during spring and fall migration periods.**

Even small windows can be dangerous, as many birds fly into small spaces such as tree cavities or between branches.

Even small windows can pose a threat to birds.
Photo: Christine Sheppard, ABC

Research has identified solutions to alert birds to windows. The easiest of these involve applying visible markings to the outside of windows in patterns that the birds can see while requiring **minimal glass coverage** to keep your view unobscured. Although we don't yet have all the answers, we know that most birds will avoid windows with one-quarter-inch-wide, white, vertical stripes spaced four inches apart, or one-eighth-inch, black, horizontal stripes spaced one inch apart. More complicated or irregular patterns will also work as long as they follow the general spacing guidelines specified above.

On the other side of this page, we provide information on some of the products you can use to help prevent birds from crashing into your windows and where to find them.

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Here are some quick and affordable ways to protect birds from your windows. These should be applied to the outside of the glass to break up reflections.

Window tape patterns are easy to apply and provide an effective deterrent against bird strikes.

Tempera paint is a washable, long-lasting, and non-toxic solution to preventing bird/window collisions.

Window netting provides a see-through screen that will cut down on bird strikes. Photo: BirdMaster

All photos on this page by Christine Sheppard (unless noted)

1. Apply Tempera paint (available at most art supply and craft stores) freehand with brush or sponge, or use a stencil. Tempera is long-lasting, even in rain, and non-toxic, but comes right off with a damp rag or sponge. Find stencils at **www.michaels.com**, **www.amazon.com,** or download stencils for free at **www.spraypaintstencils.com**.

2. Use tape to create patterns. Duck brand tape comes in a range of colors and tears easily, to make lines of different widths. Chart tape (**www.magnatag.com**) comes in a range of widths (tape may require a utility knife to remove).

3. Most window films designed for external use are not patterned and will not deter birds. However, interior window films come in many colors and styles, and can be applied on the outside of windows to prevent collisions (see **www.thesunshieldpros.us**, **www.fauxdecorandmore.com**). Collid-Escape, designed for external use, is see-through from the inside, opaque from the outside (**www.lfdcollidescape.com**).

4. If you don't want to alter the glass itself, you can stretch lightweight netting, screen, or other material over the window. The netting must be several inches in front of the window, so birds don't hit the glass after hitting the net. Several companies, (**www.birdbgone.com, www.birdscreen.com**) sell screens that can be attached with suction cups or eye hooks (also see **www.nixalite.com, www.birdmaster.com**).

5. What about prefabricated decals? Decals are a well-known alternative to the techniques listed above. However, to be effective, they must be spaced more closely than recommended by manufacturers and so may block more of the glass surface than other options (**www.pines.com, www.windowdressingetc.com**). Or make your own! *Arti Stick Window Color* paints come in 18 colors and are marketed for children. Drawings on sheets of plastic become translucent as they dry, and can be peeled off and applied to windows (visit **www.budgetartkids.com**, **www.dickblick.com**, and **www.artsuppliesforartists.com**).

For more information, contact:

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