

The Use of Window Glass in the Roman World

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Archaeological evidence and literary sources attest the earliest use of glass windowpanes in the Early Roman Imperial Period. This should be considered an important contribution not only to glass technology, but also to architecture. The sealing of windows with glass panes provided both the isolation of heat and illumination for the interiors. The possibility of viewing the exterior from the interior or producing a more elaborate impression through architecture were the other advantages coming along with the use of window glass.

The difficulty about tracing the archaeological data regarding window glass is due to the poor recording of the glass pane fragments in many archaeological excavations in the past. Nevertheless, present data still suffice to approve the wide use and spread of window panes both in the Eastern and Western halves of the Roman Empire.

The objective of the paper will be to trace the archaeological and literary evidence for the use and production techniques of glass windowpanes through the ages after its invention in the Roman Imperial Period.

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