

the essential steam shower
buyers guide

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MUST READ

As a specialist in the steam shower industry, Di Vapor understands the importance of making the correct buying decision that will hugely reduce the risk of discolourisation, acrylic cracks or breakdowns. The following is essential advice to read and check before you buy your new steam shower. Steam shower prices vary and here are some of the reasons why.

Predominantly, the build quality of your new steam shower will be determined by the acrylic, aluminium frames and tempered glass. In addition, the electrics and water flow provide the functionality and features.

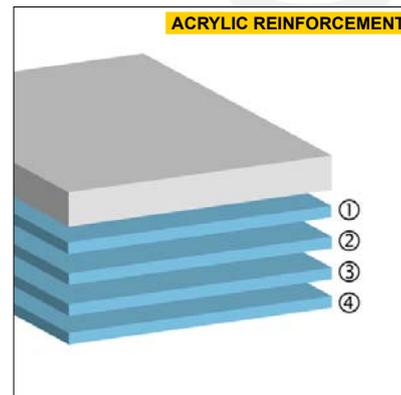
ACRYLIC

Reinforcement - To cut costs many factories use a composite material, combining ABS on the inside with acrylic PMMA sheets on the outside.

Check its Colour - An easy test to tell a good quality acrylic from a bad one by its colour and flame-retardation. Cheap materials mixed in the acrylic can cause the colour to have too bright a white finish and catch fire more easily. In addition, this low quality, high brightness acrylic is likely to clash in your bathroom.

Price - Some factories use acrylic that costs just £777 per tonne, some others use acrylic at £971-£1,035 per tonne. In fact, the acrylic Di Vapor uses costs £1618 per tonne. This higher quality acrylic will last longer and also fade less over time.

Fibreglass and Reinforcement - Be careful of cheap fibreglass that uses a high degree of resin. This discolours easily devaluing and weakening the steam enclosure. All of our bases and most panels are acrylic with 3-4 layers of fibreglass to reinforce the more vulnerable areas (e.g., base, under seat, bathtub). To cut costs a manufacturer may use just 1 or 2 layers of fibreglass reinforcement.



Acrylic sheet reinforced with 4 layers of fibreglass.

ALUMINIUM FRAMES

Are they aluminium? - Check that the profile that holds the glass is not simply plastic with a metal coating. The profiles coating may come off and is definitely not as strong.

What is the profiles thickness? - To save costs some manufacturers have a 0.5mm thick aluminium profile and whilst being weaker is also more prone to dents. Di Vapor use 1.2mm-1.6mm aluminium profiles.

Aluminium Quality - Some companies use recycled aluminium and perhaps a composite of other metals. This affects the aluminium's hardness and likelihood of being dented.

Structural Frame Support - The strength and durability of the support frame is essential as it forms the foundation of your shower or bathtub. Typically, a metal frame that doesn't rust (like stainless steel) will offer the optimum support as opposed to a wooden structure.



Satin finished aluminium profile.

TEMPERED SAFETY GLASS

Thickness - Typically, it is suggested that a tempered safety glass of 5-6mm would provide optimum safety, below which the risk of breakage increase. As standard, Di Vapor uses 5-6mm thick tempered safety glass on all steam showers.

Edge Protection - The risk of tempered glass breakage heightens if knocked at its edge. Therefore, the glass edge should be protected within the aluminium profile.

Break Test - One safety standard states that a 120mm square piece of tempered glass should break into 45 individual pieces. Di Vapor's tempered glass surpasses this and will break into 60 small pieces with no sharp edges. The smaller the pieces the safer.



Tinted, tempered safety glass

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WATER FLOW

Pipe Clips - To minimise the risk of water leakage, stainless steel clips provide stronger and longer lasting protection to water leakage over the plastic clips used by some manufacturers.

Valves - The flow, temperature control and water pressure within the shower will be valve controlled. To ensure the longer life of those valves check they are made from ceramic as opposed to plastic.

Water Testing - Water leakage can be costly and hasslesome. Make sure your shower has been fully water tested before shipping and fully checked for functionality of its steam, plumbing, water tightness and electrics.

Thermostatic Temperature Valve - As a safety consideration and to reduce the risk of scalding a thermostatic valve will offer a non-fluctuating water temperature. Every modern shower should be equipped with this safety valve that will eliminate those huge fluctuations in water temperature while allowing you to select your desired temperature. Some thermostatic valves also provide a temperature restrictor for the safety of younger users.



Stainless steel pipe clips as used on Di Vapor Steam Showers.



PRODUCT TESTING

Corrosion Testing - The last thing you want is to receive your shiny new steam shower and then find that after a couple of months the chrome plating starts to deteriorate and peel off. Look for a company who will test the anti-corrosion level and protective layer of the materials used with salt spray equipment.

Door Rollers - Door rollers or runners often go unnoticed when they are functioning perfectly. However, if misaligned or damaged they can become a headache. Although, seemingly a simple part - quality should be evident in the detail. For example, Di Vapor door runners are tested to pass over 100,000 consecutive uses.

Operational Testing - The best way to check that both electrics (e.g., lighting, radio, jets) are fully operational and water does not leak is to assemble and fully test a product before it leaves the factory. Why not check whether each individual product has been fully water tested with an electrical supply.



Solid brass fixtures finished in chrome result in a finish that will last.



ELECTRICS

Residual Current Device - This is a device that will shut-off the steam shower as soon as a malfunction or overheating is detected. When using a 3KW steam generator or 220V product this is essential.



RCD (Residual Current Device) for extra safety.

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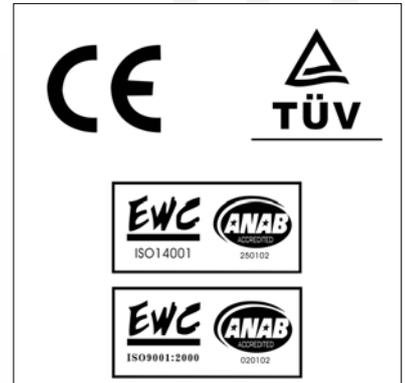
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FINAL CHECKLIST

- ✓ **Certification** - Check for the CE safety mark, conformity to which means that the essential health and safety requirements set out in European Directives are met. In addition ISO14001, an internationally accepted accreditation for an Environmental Management System (EMS) and ISO9001:2000, which identifies factors that a manufacturer must fulfill if it is to achieve customer satisfaction through consistent products and services that meet customer expectations. Other certificates to which Di Vapor products also adhere are the TUV and Intertek ETL.
- ✓ **Interior Height** - A costly or uncomfortable mistake may lead to you or your guests not being able to stand up straight inside your shower! This is an important design requirement and one which some manufacturers may overlook. Please be assured that each Di Vapor steam shower has an interior height of at least 1.92m or higher.
- ✓ **Steam Leakage** - Have a look at the gap between the door and the base. The amount of steam leakage varies greatly between manufacturers and whilst you will usually have a little leakage you want to keep this to a minimum. Like Di Vapor use, please check for good seals that are designed to reduce the escape of steam.
- ✓ **Door Handles and fixings** - Beware of plastic fixtures that have a chrome coating. These are liable to wear away more quickly and needless to say don't give a quality feel.
- ✓ **Delivery and VAT** - These may be hidden extras, not shown to give the impression of a lower selling price. A steam shower is both bulky and heavy and delivery could add as much as £50-£200+ to your final price. Make sure you buy from a company who offers you transparent pricing.
- ✓ **Stock** - To cut costs some companies will hold very limited or no stock and simply start manufacturing a steam shower on receipt of your payment. Typically, this will result in a delay of approximately 6-8 weeks until your steam shower is ready. Make sure you check availability sooner rather than later.
- ✓ **Guarantee** - Buying cheap may result in little or no after-service support. Check that you are supported in the event of a breakdown and for how long your product is guaranteed.
- ✓ **Showroom/Warehouse Viewing** - It may be difficult to fully ascertain a products build quality and sturdiness without being able to feel and touch the unit. Where possible try and view a unit either in the companies showroom or perhaps they can show you in their warehouse. Make sure that dropping a bar of soap won't mean the end for your new steam shower!
- ✓ **Weight Test** - Simply put: the thicker the acrylic/ABS, glass, aluminium and frame (is it a wood or stainless steel frame?) the greater the amount of material required in manufacturing.

In addition, solid metal fixtures are far heavier than their plastic counterparts. Not only will this result in a more sturdy, stronger product but consequently the weight of the combined delivery boxes will be heavier. For peace of mind, why not check the weight of the product in which you are interested?
- ✓ **Features** - Once you are happy with the build quality you will want to double check the shower you have chosen provides the features you require. Most steam showers offer a handheld shower, overhead shower and body jets. A feature such as ozone sterilisation that will purify and kill bacteria after using the unit may be a differentiating factor. Other differentiating factors may be aromatherapy, foot massage or a thermostatic valve.



Di Vapor products surpass all the UK safety standards.



Solid brass fixtures finished in chrome result in a finish that will last.



Thermostatic valves eliminate these sudden bursts of hot or cold water. A safety feature as standard with all Di Vapor products.

thankyou for taking the time to read our buyers guide.
we hope that this guide will assist you in choosing a steam shower that will last.

This buyers guide was brought to you by Di Vapor Ltd, a home spa specialist who supply luxury steam showers. If you have any questions or would like to receive the free Di Vapor product catalogue then call us on 08454 650 800 or visit www.divapor.com