

## Everything you need to know about Pocket doors for sliding doors



Pocket doors aren't installed on automatic sliding doors; rather, they are an alternative system that enhances safety by eliminating entrapment hazards associated with conventional automatic sliding doors. By sliding into a "pocket" within the wall, pocket doors remove the closing edges and collision points where pedestrians can get trapped or injured, providing a safer and more accessible entryway, particularly for those with mobility needs.

### Why would you specify or retrospectively recommend the installation of Pocket Doors?

- There are vulnerable people, you could get a situation where the use of the building has changed or on the day there are people around and on others days are not.
- Persons can pass close to the door, thus making it slow to open, such as the design of the building means people do this every time
- Persons can congregate in the area thus making the door open slowly
- Persons can congregate in the area thus putting them at risk of impact or crushing
- There are items in the area attracting persons to where they could be at risk of impact or crushing even if the door opens slowly
- There are devices to activate the door in this area such as access control readers, push pads, press to exit buttons, signing in or out tablets, car park registration tablets, so operationally the door always opens slowly and putting people at risk in the area
- Building owners / workers are placing items in the area making the door open slowly, such as baskets in a shop, flower displays, etc, making the door open slowly
- If the door opens slowly, what about a person approaching who has no idea it will open slowly and impacts the door or who has to hesitate

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### **B H Doors & Engineering Ltd**

**Tel:** 0808 120 0911 **Email:** [info@bhdoors.co.uk](mailto:info@bhdoors.co.uk) **Web:** [www.bhdoors.co.uk](http://www.bhdoors.co.uk)

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Note - Telescopic sliders can only have side screen safety as pocket doors would create and worse risk due to design

### How Pocket Doors Enhance Safety

- **Eliminates Collision Points:**

Unlike traditional automatic sliding doors, which have a door leaf that can create danger zones, a pocket door creates a cavity in which the doors slide inside. This design eliminates the potential for people to be caught between the door and the frame as it opens.

- **Reduces Entrapment, Crushing or Impact Risks:**

Generally sliding doors are fitted with safety sensors which cover the opening direction area which will only slow down the door if detected. The installation of pocket doors will eliminate the risk of pedestrians becoming trapped or colliding with the door, which is a common hazard with standard automatic doors, especially in high-traffic areas.

- **Improved Compliance:**

Pocket door systems are often designed to comply with safety standards, such as [BS EN 16005](#), which sets out safety requirements for automatic sliding, revolving, and swinging doors

### Extracts from EN16005 2023 –

#### 4 List of significant hazards

##### 4.1 General

This clause contains all the hazards, hazardous situations and events identified by risk assessment as significant for this type of machinery and which require action to eliminate or reduce the risk.

Unless otherwise specified, a hazardous point is considered to exist up to a height of 2,5 m above the floor or any other permanent access level.

#### 5 Safety requirements and/or protective/risk reduction measures

##### 5.1 General

Power operated pedestrian doorsets shall comply with the safety requirements and/or protective/risk reduction measures of this clause. The **on-site risk analysis** takes into account the prevention of contact between the moving door leaf and the user, if a significant proportion of the users are elderly, infirm, disabled persons and/or young children.

##### 5.8.2 Guards

Guards such as enclosures, covers, enclosing guards, fixed protective door leaves (pocket screens), may be installed to meet the safety distances to prevent hazard zones being reached by upper and lower limbs.

Guards shall be designed so that:

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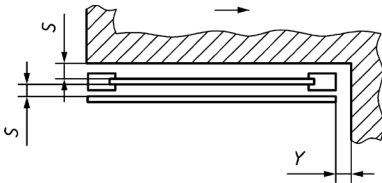
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- a) persons cannot reach any danger point up to a height of 2,5 m above floor level;

### 5.8.4.1 Opening of the doorset

If crushing and impact hazards during the opening cycle exist, they shall be safeguarded by one of the following measures:

- a) there is a safety distance ( $Y$ )  $\geq 200$  mm between the secondary closing edge and adjacent parts of the surroundings with regard to the endangered parts of the human body and the door leaf move along a plain part and the distance ( $X$ ) between the front surface of the door leaf and the fixed side screen is not more than 100 mm (see Figure 2 a)).
- e) the area of the secondary closing edge is covered by barriers in accordance with 5.8.3, positioned in a distance ( $S$ ) of  $\leq 8$ mm or  $\geq 25$  mm in front of the moving part of the doorset



- **Enhanced Accessibility:**

Because they are installed close to the sliding door, pocket doors reduce the safety sensor area for people. This means that anything or persons in the opening area will not be detected causing the door to open slowly providing a more accessible and less challenging entrance for everyone.

### Extracts from BS7036-0

#### 5 Environment and management

5.1.1 At the design specification stage, the specifier should seek specialist advice from, and work in close liaison with, the power operated door manufacturers or their approved distributors. The specifier should also consult other relevant authorities (e.g. fire and building control authorities, and end user organizations) since each has particular, but related, responsibilities.

5.1.2 The specifier should establish predicted user characteristics and precise operational requirements, to enable account to be taken of the volume and type of pedestrian traffic (such as elderly, infirm and disabled people and young children) that is likely to pass through the particular installation at different times of the day.

5.1.3 It is essential that appropriate safety devices and safety measures are chosen. The specifier should, therefore, ensure that a full hazard analysis and risk assessment is undertaken to confirm that the final installation is safe for its predicted use.

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### Conclusion

AT [BH Doors](#), we naturally carry out dynamic risk assessments as part of our schedule of works to form part of our [Service Contract Agreement](#). Although any risk assessment checklist maybe subjective or open to personal interpretation our engineers are [Doorsafe](#) registered and we are members of the [Automatic Door Installation Association](#) (ADIA). This will ensure we are working to the best practice within the industry, applying the relevant standards and regulations to all automatic doors we work upon for our customers.

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### References

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