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## Glass provides a transparency without creating a sense of enclosure

*As a façade or skylight element, its transparency can bring in daylight into the building, lending a semblance of lightness to the interiors says Rahul Kadri, Partner & Principal Architect, IMK Architects.*

**How does glass as a medium aid the creation of beautiful interiors?**

Glass can enhance the perception of interior space. As a façade or skylight element, its transparency can bring in daylight into the building, lending a semblance of lightness to the interiors and making spaces feel sleek and airy, while simultaneously opening up views to the outside and enabling connections to nature. Its use as interior partitions allows daylight to penetrate deeper into the building plan, facilitating zonal divisions without creating a sense of enclosure.

When employed in the form of mirrors, glass becomes a very interesting design element – it can be used to deliberately alter the perception of space, create optical illusions, or trick the users of the space.

**What makes glass an important component for green buildings?**

In the recent past, especially in tropical climates like ours, glass has received a lot of flak from building professionals as an inherently unsustainable material – a material that leads to excessive heat gain, which in turn increases the need for mechanical cooling and eventually results in increased energy consumption. This couldn't be further from the truth. Glass is as good a material as the designer using it. It is, in fact, certified as a green building material according to the Indian Green Building Council (IGBC).



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### Passive Design

To ensure we get optimal daylight into the building while reducing solar heat gain, orientation and massing studies become important. In most of the northern hemisphere, north façades can easily solve this problem -- they provide access to ample indirect and glare-free daylight without the risk of excessive heat gain. On the other hand, south and west faces require careful consideration of Window to Wall (WWR) ratio, daylighting and glare studies, and some form of shading device: blinds, vertical or horizontal fins, overhangs or chajjas, boxed or recessed windows, double façades, or screens like the traditional jaali. Hence, when used responsibly, glass can actually reduce the need for artificial lighting during the day and create more energy-efficient buildings.

### Health & Wellness

There is also an urgent need to broaden our understanding of green

or sustainable buildings beyond their traditional mandate of environmental response or energy efficiency to how they interact with their eventual inhabitants. A 'green' building should aid user wellbeing, and as several studies of biophilia have pointed out, natural light and connections to nature have a significant positive impact on the health and productivity of humans. This is where the use of glass and its transparency come into play.

**Can you cite an example of a project where glass was used to good effect for interiors or exteriors?**

Yes, at the recently completed and IGBC Gold-rated Auric Hall in Aurangabad, which is a landmark for Aurangabad Industrial City (AURIC), India's first greenfield, smart industrial city. The 16,660-square-metre building, planned as the face of the upcoming development, houses administration and commercial functions, offering spaces

that strive to achieve innovation and transcend expectations.

### Use of Glass

We designed a large, central, north-facing atrium with a ceramic frit glass surface to allow maximum glare-free light into the building's office spaces to create a conducive work environment, while simultaneously minimizing heat gain. The atrium is designed as a modern interpretation of the garden; overlooking a lake, it provides a host of public exhibition and educational functions. It is enclosed by offices and indoor terraces on three sides, which serve as social spaces for employees, encouraging cross-engagement and collaboration and becoming a vibrant centre of activity. 🌟

