# **The Complete Guide to Choosing an Awning for Scotland's Unpredictable Weather**

Scotland has some of the most stunning natural beauty. Step outside, and you can experience incredible sights literally on your doorstep—it’s no surprise that homeowners love enjoying their outdoor spaces despite the often unpredictable weather.

Ah yes, the weather… There's always a downside, and our world-class, inspirational environment comes with the threat of sudden rain showers one day and oppressive sun the next. Ever had a BBQ where an unexpected downpour had you all scrambling inside or stepping out into the glorious sunshine only to find the heat just a bit *too* much?

Thankfully, there’s a solution to the changeable weather so that you can enjoy your garden no matter the weather—awnings. They’re perfect for providing just the right amount of shade and shelter without detracting from the outsideness of the outside.

What should you look for when choosing an awning? Let us at the Scottish Shutter Company tell you (we don’t just do shutters!).

## **Scotland's Temperamental Weather: Why You Need an Awning**

Scottish weather has some unique characteristics—we’ve got frequent rain showers, bursts of incredibly strong winds, and periods of intense sunlight. It’s a constant barrage of hot and cold, wet and dry, that not only causes havoc with your outdoor enjoyment but also means significant wear and tear on anything left outside. It’s amazing your patio furniture even lasts a year!

Awnings are designed to protect against these constant changes; they’re not just a good-looking way to get some shade. Awnings offer:

* Highly-rated sun protection
* A shelter from the rain
* Wind resistance
* Adaptability

…and most of all - a way to extend the outdoor season to get the most out of the best parts of the year.

## **Awning Basics: Types, Features, and Considerations**

Many people are unfamiliar with awnings, especially the specifics of different types and their features, so let us give you a quick rundown.

**Freestanding Awnings**

Primarily for open spaces, a freestanding awning doesn’t need to be affixed to a wall, providing shade and shelter in the areas of your garden that are farthest from the house.

For rigidity and the ability to weather the worst of the weather, most freestanding awnings are permanently set into the ground, providing you with safe and secure cover whenever you need it. While there are some freestanding awnings that are temporary structures, these are best used only for camping purposes, and we suggest staying away from them when it comes to a longer-term weather solution in your garden.

**Fixed Awnings**

A fixed awning remains in place throughout the year. It requires very little maintenance and is designed to provide a permanent shade to the side of your home.

The downside of fixed awnings, however, is that they also block sunlight when you want it most, cutting the view to your house as they cannot be retracted to let light into windows. While fixed awnings are very popular in sunnier climes, we don’t recommend them for the changeable Scottish weather.

**Retractable Awnings**

The range of retractable awnings covers the most common awning types. They are further divided into those with an awning cassette and those without, as well as manual and automatic awnings.

Cassettes provide your awning with a protective enclosure that houses the awning fabric when it’s not in use. They are recommended as they significantly improve the awning's longevity as well as make cleaning and maintenance slightly less onerous.

Choosing between motorised and not is a matter of comfort. While motorised awnings can involve a little more maintenance in the long term, they are also a lot more convenient and relaxing on your upper arm. We do find people are more likely to use their awning if they just have to press a button rather than doing all the winding!

We recommend motorised cassetted awnings when looking for an awning for the Scottish climate. Look for the following features:

* Wind resistance - A major factor here in Scotland!
* Waterproof fabric—All modern awnings are waterproof, but it’s still worth checking that the material has been properly treated to withstand rain.
* UV protection—Contrary to easy misconception, UV protection is less about the people sitting underneath it (though it is important) and more about the lifespan of your awning. The sun's beating can take its toll on the awning material, so UV protection is essential.
* Mechanism—As mentioned, we prefer motorised awnings for convenience. Check that the awning you are considering has the mechanism you require.
* Integrated lighting - Some awnings come with integrated lighting, others can have it added as an additional feature. If you’re planning to relax outdoors once the sun has set, integrated lighting can make all the difference.
* Heating - Not as part of the awning itself, but do consider how you might like to heat your patio area as the evening draws in.

## **Things To Avoid When Choosing An Awning**

There are plenty to watch out for…

**Sacrificing Quality for Price**

It’s true with most things in the world - you get what you pay for. Don’t scrimp on your awning quality to save a few pounds; in the long run, it’s going to be a mistake you wish you never made. Cheap awnings use flimsy materials and construction. They tend to tear in strong winds, fade in the sun, and even fail to provide protection from the rain.

Choose durable, high-quality materials from a trusted supplier.

**Wind Ratings**

We’re in Scotland, so don’t ignore the wind ratings! It is vital that you check your awning’s wind rating - look for those with Class 2 or better Beaufort wind scale ratings. These are specially designed to withstand gusts.

Watching your awning rip apart or come loose in the wind is something to avoid.

**Drainage**

An awning that’s not properly fitted with the right drainage can trap rainwater, causing it to sag, leak, and eventually need replacement. Make sure it’s properly fitted and drainage is well-considered.

**The Look**

Appearance matters, but it’s important that it’s a secondary consideration to functionality. A beautiful awning that can’t perform its main function is useless and will spend its short life in the cassette. Prioritise materials, rain protection, and wind rating before you start selecting based on aesthetics.

## **The Scottish Awning Experts**

At the Scottish Shutter Company, we provide high-quality awnings across Scotland. We only use top-of-the-line materials, following our own advice above, and make sure all our awnings are perfect for the Scottish climate.

**The Benefits of Choosing SSC**

* Expertise - We’ve been doing this a long time and have seen the majority of possible problems. Let us help you with your installation specifics, such as spreader plates and drainage.
* Location Advice - We know where your awning would be best placed to get the most out of it, so if you’re not set on the location, just ask.
* Reliable Service—We’re proud of our reviews and testimonials, believing that good customer service is the core of any professional business. Please take the time to read a few and leave us one once we’ve fitted your top-quality awning!
* Guarantee - Our awnings all come with a 5-year guarantee on parts and workmanship.
* Friendliness - We’re here for you! Our administration team and expert installers are friendly and will accommodate any needs you might have.

Download a brochure today to learn more about your choices and to improve your home with an awning that will transform your outdoor spaces.

**Meta title**

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**Meta desc**

An awning in your garden allows you to enjoy Scotland’s beauty while warding off the weather. Find out more with SSC.

**Social Snippet**

Scotland has some incredible views, many of which you can see from your own gardens. Indeed - many incredible views *are* your gardens! However, the changeable weather can mean going outside to enjoy the space can be problematic. An awning solves these problems, offering shade in the sunshine and rain protection when it drizzles. Read our article to find out more about how an awning can improve your Scottish home.