

Most people only think about their windows when they fog up, stick, or whistle in a winter gale. Then the quotes start rolling in, and the language gets hazy: blown units, spacer bars, warm-edge, gas loss, desiccant saturation. If you are already staring through a milky view, it helps to know what matters, what is fixable, and where the traps lie. I have surveyed, repaired, and replaced double glazed units for homes ranging from 1930s semis to new-build townhouses, and the problems repeat across postcodes. The good news is that misted double glazing repairs are often straightforward. The bad news is that confusion and urgency create an opening for inflated prices and unnecessary upsells.

This guide aims to tilt the balance back in your favor. It demystifies the common faults, shows when repair beats replacement, and flags the sort of tactics that leave homeowners overpaying. Along the way, I will share realistic price ranges, how long things take, and what a competent installer will never say.

What “misted” actually means

When a sealed double glazed unit is manufactured, two panes of glass are bonded around the edges with a spacer and sealant. The cavity between the panes is filled with air or an inert gas such as argon. Inside the spacer sits a desiccant that mops up traces of moisture left from the manufacturing process. Once installed, the unit relies on its perimeter seals to keep outside moisture out and the internal climate stable.

Misting occurs when those perimeter seals fail and moisture creeps into the cavity. At first, the unit may fog on some mornings and clear as the sun hits it. After a while, mineral deposits and fine dirt settle on the inside faces, and the mist becomes a permanent cloudy stain. No amount of external cleaning will touch it, because the problem sits between the panes.

You might also hear “blown unit.” Trade people use that phrase loosely. In most cases it simply means the seals have failed, not that the glass is broken or unsafe. So when you ask, Can you fix blown double glazing, the honest answer is yes, in the sense that you can restore performance and clarity, but you do that by replacing the sealed unit or, in specific circumstances, by repairing the seal line. You do not need to replace the whole window frame unless there are unrelated issues.

What you can repair, and what you should replace

The frame and the sealed unit inside it are two different things. A lot of overcharging stems from blurring that line. Misted Double Glazing Repairs typically address the sealed unit only, leaving frames, hinges, and handles in place.

When the frame is sound, a competent fitter can remove the beads, pull the old glass unit, measure and order a like-for-like replacement, and fit the new one. That restores clarity and thermal performance. It is quick and cost-effective.

There are edge cases. If the uPVC frame is warped, the timber has rot, or an aluminium frame has thermal break issues, a new sealed unit alone will not solve draughts or leaks. Old, twisty sash windows converted to double glazed sashes may have movement that stresses the seals prematurely. In those cases, you evaluate the frame and hardware as a system, not just the glazing.

What about drilling and drying the unit to “de-mist” it? Some companies advertise a service where they drill small holes, inject a drying agent, and fit vents. This can clear the immediate fogging. It does not restore the factory seal or the gas fill, so thermal performance remains compromised. In my experience, results vary. I have seen a few

units last a couple of years after this treatment, and others mist up again by the next winter. Consider it a short-term, lower-cost patch when budgets are tight, not a permanent restoration.

The numbers that keep you grounded

A single replacement sealed unit for a typical uPVC casement window, say 600 mm by 900 mm, in standard low-e double glazing, often lands in the 70 to 140 pounds range for supply only, depending on region, glass spec, and gas fill. Fitted by a local glazing firm, you might pay 120 to 220 pounds. Larger picture windows or toughened safety glass push the cost up. Add extra for shaped profiles, Georgian bars, or laminated units. Triple glazing and oversized panes live in a different price tier altogether.

Frames are another story. Swapping a sealed unit is a one-visit job once the glass arrives, usually 20 to 45 minutes per window for an experienced fitter. Replacing an entire window frame with a new unit can jump to 450 to 900 pounds for a standard-size uPVC casement, including install and waste removal. Timber and aluminium generally cost more. This is why many homeowners find repair attractive. If your frames are decent, spending a fraction to replace just the glass makes financial sense.

No two markets are identical. Rural areas see fewer fitters and more travel costs. London and the Southeast tend to sit at the top of these ranges. If a quote sits double the high end without a clear reason, press for detail.

How to tell if you are being sold the wrong fix

When a single unit mists, sales reps sometimes pivot to a full-home window replacement. I understand the logic from their side: volume sells, and larger jobs feed their teams. In reality, a scattered pattern of failures is normal. A sunny south-facing façade bakes the seals faster than a shaded one. Bathrooms and kitchens raise humidity and stress seals earlier than bedrooms. You can replace only the blown units without harming the look or performance of the rest.

Be suspicious if a rep claims your windows are “end of life” based solely on two or three misted panes, especially if the frames are straight, the gaskets supple, and the handles and hinges tight. Ask for a condition report that points to measurable issues like frame distortion, water ingress tracks, hinge play, or cracked welds. If the diagnosis leans on vague phrases like “general degradation,” push for specifics or bring in a second opinion.

There is also the warranty gambit. Some companies suggest that replacing single units voids the warranty on the frames. Read the small print. Unit warranties typically stand on their own. If your frames are out of warranty anyway, it is a moot point. On newer homes, check whether your developer’s aftercare or the original installer’s guarantee still applies.

Can you fix blown double glazing without replacing the glass?

Straight talk: sometimes yes, often no, and it depends what “fix” means to you.

If you want the appearance and thermal performance restored to near-new, replacing the sealed unit is the proven route. The manufacturing process that delivers a dry, insulated cavity cannot be recreated on-site. The replacement is a like-for-like unit, often an upgrade if you choose a more efficient spacer or glass.

If you just want the fog gone for a while and accept lower insulation, drilling and drying can be a stopgap. It might be worth it for rental properties where you plan to replace the windows in a couple of years, or for a garage or utility room where heat loss matters less. Understand that you **Conservatory Repairs** are choosing a temporary route.

If the blown look comes from a damaged secondary seal at the edge, and the unit is otherwise clean inside, you can sometimes reseal the perimeter to slow further moisture uptake. This is a niche fix, more common in commercial settings with large, expensive panes. On domestic units, the labor cost often exceeds that of a new unit.

Common tactics that create overcharges

The glazing trade has many excellent installers, and then a handful who give everyone else a headache. The pattern of overcharges usually follows one of a few scripts.

The urgency provocation. You are told the mist is a sign the glass could shatter, or that water will pour into your frame if you wait. A misted unit does not, by itself, pose a safety risk. If the glass is cracked or the frame leaks during rain, that is different. But misting alone buys you time to compare quotes.

The package deal upsell. A rep offers to “do the whole house” for a discount. They anchor your expectation at a high per-window price, then shave it down. If you do not need a whole-house replacement, the discount is meaningless. Compare the price for the specific units that need attention.

The lifetime guarantee mirage. Guarantees are only as good as the company’s lifespan and the terms that qualify claims. I have seen “lifetime” cover restricted to workmanship, not the unit itself, with plenty of exclusion clauses. A sensible guarantee on a sealed unit runs 5 to 10 years. If that is what the paperwork says behind the glossy promise, treat it like a normal warranty, not a special perk.

The technical fog. Buzzwords like “A-rated,” “krypton fill,” or “warm-edge” get tossed around to justify prices. Some of these features truly add value. Low-e coatings and argon fill reduce heat loss. Warm-edge spacers cut condensation at the perimeter. But the jump from a good, standard low-e argon unit to a bells-and-whistles package is not usually worth a minor premium multiplied across every window if you only need two or three units replaced. Ask for the u-value and the exact glass spec in writing, and compare like for like.

Practical inspection tips before you call anyone

Walk around your home on a [Double Glazing Repairs](#) dry day and make notes. Misting that appears and disappears with weather suggests early-stage failure. Persistent cloudy patches suggest long-term saturation and mineral residue. Check frames at the corners for cracks or signs of movement. Operate the handles and see if the window closes snugly without forcing the handle against resistance.

Look for water staining on the sill or frame after rain. That points to a different problem from seal failure between the panes. If water pools in the uPVC frame’s drainage channel, check the weepholes are clear. A blocked weephole looks like a glazing failure to the untrained eye, but it is a simple clean-out job.



In timber frames, press a fingernail into suspect areas. Softness indicates rot. If the frame is compromised, replacing just the glass is throwing good money after bad. For aluminium, look for condensation tracking around the thermal breaks, which usually appears as dark streaks at mullions.

These notes give you context when you phone around. A contractor who listens to that detail and asks follow-ups is more likely to give a fair, tailored quote.

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What a normal Misted Double Glazing Repairs visit looks like

A proper visit starts with measuring. The fitter removes one internal bead to confirm the exact thickness of the unit, including spacer width and glass thickness. Guessing usually leads to a unit that does not fit right or rattles. They will note whether the unit must be toughened. Any glass lower than roughly 800 mm from floor level, doors and side panels near doors, and bathrooms typically need safety glass.

Lead times for new units range from 3 to 10 working days for common sizes and specs. Shaped, oversized, or laminated units take longer. Many firms collect a small deposit, then schedule a fitting visit once the glass arrives. On fitting day, expect dust sheets, careful bead removal, and a gentle wiggle to loosen the old unit. The fitter will clean the rebate, lay new glazing blocks where needed, ensure squareness, and refit beads in the correct order. Finally, they run a silicone bead if required and clean the glass.

Watch for shortcuts. Beads hammered back without checking packers, or silicone used to hide poor seating, are signs of rushed work. A well-seated unit, properly packed, reduces stress on the seals and helps the window close without twisting.

Can you do it yourself?

If you are handy, swapping a like-for-like sealed unit in a standard externally glazed uPVC frame is within reach. Internally beaded frames are more secure and safer from a break-in perspective, but they also require the correct deglazing tools and a steady touch not to mark the beads. You need to measure precisely. The difference between a 20 mm and 22 mm spacer matters. Ordering the wrong overall thickness, even by a few millimeters, causes headaches.

DIY can save on labor, which is often 50 to 100 pounds per unit. The risk of cracking a bead or marking the frame falls on you, and you will need to source a reputable glass supplier willing to sell single units to the public. If you choose to DIY, do one small, accessible window first. Doors and large panes are trickier and deserve respect. Two pairs of hands are not optional on big units.



When replacement frames are the right call

There comes a point where throwing new glass into a failing frame is a poor investment. Signs include warped sashes that do not align with the frame, repeated hardware failures, and draughts you can feel even with fresh weather seals. Old single-chamber uPVC from the 1990s may also underperform to the extent that new frames reduce energy bills more meaningfully than swapping units.

Timber is a judgment call. High-quality timber windows can be repaired, spliced, and redecorated to outlast newer cheap frames. Low-grade, waterlogged softwood that has been painted over rot belongs on the skip. Aluminium frames with broken thermal breaks can be uneconomical to repair.

If you go for new frames, collect detailed quotes that spell out glass spec, spacer type, u-values, hardware brand, trickle vents, and finishing. You want to compare actual components, not marketing labels.

Red flags in quotes and conversations

Use this simple filter when you talk to suppliers. If you hear any of the following, slow down and ask for clarity:

- Pressure on same-day signing: limited-time “manager’s discount” that vanishes tomorrow, or a quote that jumps if you want to think it over.
- Vagueness about glass spec: no mention of low-e coating, spacer width, or whether the unit is gas-filled.
- Refusal to break down costs: a single line item for “window repairs,” with no unit sizes, counts, or safety glass notes.
- Dodging safety regulations: agreeing to fit non-toughened glass in critical locations to “save money.”
- Warranty without paperwork: verbal guarantees with no registered certificate or contact details beyond a mobile number.

Keep this list handy and you will avoid the majority of traps without needing to be a glazing expert.

Sensible ways to reduce cost without reducing quality

If you want to bring quotes down without compromising the outcome, consider swapping only the worst units first, and scheduling the rest later. Fitters can often group your job with others nearby to cut travel time, which they may reflect in the price. Standardize on a common glass spec across all the units you replace to benefit from supplier pricing. If privacy is not a concern, avoid obscure patterns that carry a premium. On south-facing elevations, spend the money on a good low-e coating and warm-edge spacer where it pays back in comfort.

Cleaning and maintenance help too. Keep trickle vents and frame drainage holes clear. Lubricate hinges with a light oil once or twice a year. Replace perished gaskets early. Simple habits prolong the life of both frames and seals, delaying the day you need to call anyone.

What reputable companies look like

Reputation in glazing travels fast, for better or worse. Good firms operate from a physical address, answer the phone during business hours, and offer references you can verify. They carry public liability insurance. Their quotes name the glass manufacturer, not just “A-rated.” They will tell you straight when replacement is overkill and gladly price just the misted panes.

I have met fitters who take pride in leaving a window they did not supply working better than when they arrived, even if it means tweaking the keeps, re-packing the sash, or replacing a tired handle at cost. That mindset is what you want. A neat van and tidy workspace are not a guarantee of quality, but they correlate more often than not.

A brief word on energy performance

If your goal is to increase efficiency, sealed unit replacement can move the needle, especially if you upgrade from early double glazing to modern low-e argon units. Expect incremental gains, not miracles. The biggest energy leaks

often sit elsewhere: uninsulated lofts, leaky doors, gaps around pipe penetrations. That said, warm-edge spacers and good low-e coatings reduce condensation at the glass edges and make rooms feel less cold in winter. You feel comfort improvements even when the numbers are modest.

If you plan to stay in the house more than five years, choose a solid mid-range spec. If you plan to sell soon, focus on restoring clear views and neat operation. Buyers notice misted panes and sticky handles immediately.

Putting it all together

Misted units are frustrating, but they are not a crisis. The core idea is simple: treat the sealed unit as a component you can replace, not a reason to rip out the entire window. Keep the frame, if it is sound, and spend your money where it makes a visible and thermal difference. Ask direct questions, demand clear specs, and take your time. Most Double Glazing Repairs are routine jobs when handled by a steady hand with the right parts.

If you remember nothing else, remember this: clarity in the quote leads to clarity in the glass. If a company can explain exactly what they are fitting, why they are fitting it, and how much each piece costs, you are probably on the right track. And if you ever find yourself peering through a fog and wondering, Can you fix blown double glazing, the pragmatic answer is yes, by replacing the failed unit and respecting the frame it sits in. That is the repair that lasts, and the one that does not require a second mortgage.

A compact homeowner's checklist for fair, effective repairs

- Identify the problem accurately: mist between panes means a failed seal, not dirty glass.
- Separate frame from unit: if frames are sound, replace only the sealed units.
- Get written specs: glass type, spacer width, gas fill, safety glass where required, and u-value if available.
- Compare at least two quotes on the same spec, and avoid pressure to commit on the spot.
- Expect realistic pricing and timelines: most standard units take a week to arrive and under an hour to fit.