

If you wake up to a milky bloom inside your windows, you are looking at more than a cosmetic annoyance. Misted double glazing signals that the sealed unit has failed, moisture has crept in, and the window's thermal performance has slipped. You still have glass, frames, and a view, but the energy savings you paid for have started to leak away, quite literally, as water vapor. I have dealt with hundreds of these callouts over the years, and the first question is always the same: what will it cost to put right, and what are my options?

The honest answer is that costs vary with the frame type, glass specifications, access, and whether there are other issues hiding behind the mist. With a little context, though, you can make sense of quotes and avoid paying for work you do not need.

What “misted” really means

Double glazing relies on a sealed cavity between two panes of glass. That cavity is typically filled with dry air or argon and bounded by spacer bars and perimeter seals. When the seal fails, ambient moisture sneaks into the cavity. You see it as a haze or beads of water that you cannot wipe off because they sit inside the unit. The window's thermal resistance drops as the insulating cavity loses its dryness and, with it, its low conductivity.

People often ask, Can you Fix Blown Double Glazing without replacing the whole window? The term “blown” is shop talk for a failed sealed unit. In most cases, you can replace only the glass unit and retain the frame. That is the key distinction in Double Glazing Repairs: glass-only replacement versus full frame replacement. The vast majority of misted units do not require new frames unless there is rot, warping, or a bad installation to begin with.

What drives the price

Costs cluster around several variables. Window firms will measure each unit, confirm glazing type, and ask about access. From there, a pattern emerges.

Size is the biggest lever. A small bathroom casement can be half the price of a large lounge picture window. As a rough guide from recent jobs in the UK, a small sealed unit (say 600 by 900 mm) can run 80 to 140 pounds fitted, mid-sized units (1,000 by 1,200 mm) often land between 120 and 200 pounds, while big panels or doors can reach 200 to 400 pounds. Large shapes, bay segments, and non-standard dimensions push the upper end. In some urban areas or where access is difficult, add 10 to 20 percent.

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Glass specification matters more than many expect. If your original unit had low-E glass, warm-edge spacers, laminated safety glass, or argon fill, the replacement must match to maintain performance and meet regulations. Low-E coatings (often required on habitable rooms) add a modest premium. Laminated or toughened glass, which is mandatory in critical locations such as doors, side panels, and low-level glazing, costs more than standard annealed glass. If your misted unit is on a stair landing or beside a door, expect safety glass prices, usually another 30 to 70 percent depending on thickness.

Spacer type and cavity width add incremental costs. Warm-edge spacers and a 16 to 20 mm cavity are common in good modern units. Older units might have narrower cavities and aluminum spacers. Matching like-for-like is generally best to keep sightlines and performance consistent.

Frame condition can quietly raise the bill. On uPVC frames, most sealed units can be swapped in under an hour if the beads pop out cleanly. Swollen or brittle beads complicate the job and sometimes need replacing. On timber, a little rot at the glazing rebate can turn a simple swap into a patch and paint exercise. On aluminum, the gaskets and pressure plates dictate labour time. None of this is ruinous, but it can add 20 to 100 pounds to a visit if parts or remedial work are needed.

Access, ladders, and glass handling influence time on site. A ground-floor unit with a driveway is one thing. A third-floor flat with tight stairs, residents parking, and sash horns is another. Scaffolding or a mobile tower, if needed, changes the price entirely. Expect a callout to jump by 100 to 300 pounds if special access is required for safety.

Number of units replaced during the same visit can reduce the per-unit cost. If two or three windows in the same elevation have failed, it is cheaper to do them together. Most firms lower the per-unit fitting charge when you bundle.

Finally, location and lead times matter. In my experience, rural jobs can carry a small travel premium, while high-cost cities push rates up. Lead times for standard sealed units are usually 3 to 7 working days. Laminated or shaped glass can take 10 to 15 days. Emergency boarding or temporary glazing adds another line item.

The repair options, from quick fixes to full replacements

When people ask about Misted Double Glazing Repairs, they sometimes mean defogging services. The defogging approach drills a tiny hole into the unit, vents moisture, and inserts a desiccant or one-way valve. It can clear the visual mist, at least for a while. I can count on one hand the occasions where I recommended it. The reason is simple: the unit's thermal integrity remains compromised, and the mist often returns. It has a place for hard-to-source vintage units or when budget is severely constrained, but it is rarely the best value over a few winters.

The enduring fix is a new sealed unit fitted into the existing frame. If the frame is sound, this restores the thermal rating close to original, sometimes better if you upgrade to a newer low-E spec. You keep your existing frames, trims, and potentially the existing glazing beads. For a typical semi-detached house, replacing a handful of failed units can be a half-day job.

Full window replacement comes into play when frames are past their best or when you have a stack of failed units and poor performance across the board. For timber windows with deep rot, old uPVC with warped sashes, or out-of-square aluminum from the 1980s, it can be smarter to invest in new frames. Full replacements cost several times more than glass-only repairs, but you gain new hardware, weather seals, and warranties. If you plan to stay in the home for many years, the energy savings and comfort can justify the outlay.

Typical price ranges you can use to gauge quotes

I keep notes after jobs so I can sanity-check numbers for clients. Here are ballpark fitted prices I have seen repeatedly for glass-only replacements in standard uPVC frames using low-E, argon-filled double glazing with warm-edge spacers:

- Small casement unit, roughly 600x900 mm: 100 to 160 pounds, including surveying and fitting.
- Medium living-room unit, roughly 1,000x1,200 mm: 140 to 220 pounds.

- Full-height side panel by a door, toughened: 180 to 320 pounds.
- French door leaf or large slider panel, toughened: 220 to 400 pounds.

These are guide figures, not a price list. Timber frames take longer to strip and re-bed, so add 15 to 30 percent for careful carpentry and painting prep. Aluminum can be similar to uPVC if beads and gaskets are in good order, but unusual systems take more time.

If you receive a quote that is dramatically lower, ask what glass spec is included. I have seen quotes that omit low-E or argon to shave costs. You will notice that on winter mornings when the room feels cooler and the inside pane runs colder. On the flip side, if a price seems high, check whether it includes a site survey, disposal of the old unit, and a written warranty for the sealed unit, commonly 5 years on the glass.

A quick reality check on warranties and guarantees

Homeowners sometimes assume the installer's warranty lasts as long as the house. It does not. Sealed units typically carry a manufacturer's guarantee between 5 and 10 years. Installers often mirror that with their own workmanship warranty. If your windows are within that window, dig out the paperwork. The company name might have changed, but the manufacturer's code etched on the spacer bar can help trace the unit. If you inherited the windows with the house, the warranty might not transfer unless it was registered, but it is worth the phone call.

If the original installer is gone and you cannot claim, do not panic. Replacing a few units is manageable, and you are not locked into the brand or installer who did the original job.

The hidden costs no one mentions until they appear

Most quotes reflect what you can see. The curveballs come from what you cannot. Here are the usual suspects, and how they show up during Double Glazing Repairs.

Timber glazing rebates sometimes hide soft patches. When the old unit comes out, the putty line or trim reveals damp wood. A competent fitter will dry, harden, and splice minor areas. If a section needs a proper repair, it adds time and materials. It is not a reason to replace the whole window, but budget a contingency of 50 to 150 pounds per window for possible timber work if your frames are older than 20 years.

Beading and gaskets age. On uPVC, old beads can snap during removal, especially on south-facing elevations that have been baked. Replacement beads are often available, but not always in the perfect shade. A careful installer will warn you if the beads are brittle and may quote for a full set. On aluminum, shrunken gaskets can be the reason the seals failed in the first place. Replacing them improves longevity but bumps the invoice slightly.

Out-of-square frames complicate glazing. If your wall has settled or the frame was never plumb, the new unit might need minor packing adjustments to sit true and seal evenly. This is part of the job, yet it takes time and skill. Expect the fitter to spend a few extra minutes with glazing packers to distribute the weight correctly and avoid stressing the unit.

Access constraints raise safety considerations. On upper floors without safe internal access, a second fitter might be required, or a **Double Glazing Repairs** small access platform may be used. Any reputable firm will price that in rather than gamble with ladders and heavy glass.

When a cheap fix costs more long term

I have been to houses where someone tried to live with misted units for years. You can, but the penalties show up elsewhere. The room feels colder, the thermostat runs longer, and condensation settles on the interior surfaces

more often. Furniture by the window ages faster, and you end up wiping sills all winter. One client in a 1930s semi left a misted bay for two winters. By the time we swapped the units, the timber sash beads had absorbed enough moisture to swell and split. The glass was not the expensive part of that visit.

Defogging can work as a stopgap on non-critical rooms, but factor in the shortened thermal performance and the likelihood of a repeat visit in a few seasons. If you need to ask, Can you Fix Blown Double Glazing in a way that lasts, the answer that involves new sealed units is the one that holds up.

Making sense of quotes: what to ask and what to check

Clarity on the specification is your friend. If two quotes are far apart, they usually differ on glass spec, labour assumptions, or what is covered if something goes wrong. Ask for the glass type (low-E yes or no), cavity width, spacer type, and whether the unit is argon-filled. Confirm if safety glass is included where required. Check that old units will be removed and recycled, and that you will receive a written warranty on the new glass.

It helps to have measurements on hand before you call, even if the company will still survey. A quick tape across the visible glass width and height lets you describe the unit size. Tell them the frame material, floor level, and any tricky access. If beads look brittle or there is obvious timber rot, mention it. You will get a truer number on the first pass rather than a low teaser that grows after inspection.

What the fitting process looks like

A straightforward glass-only replacement is less disruptive than people expect. On uPVC and many aluminum systems, the fitter will gently pop the beads, cut the old seal, and remove the failed unit. Glazing packers are set to carry the [Double Glazing Repairs](#) unit's weight without stressing corners. The new sealed unit goes in, the beads are tapped back, and perimeter seals are checked or renewed. The old unit goes on the van for recycling. A tidy fitter wipes frames and glass before leaving.

Timber work takes longer. The old putty or bead is removed, the rebate is cleaned, and any soft spots are hardened or repaired. The new unit is bedded on modern glazing tape or compound, then the beads or putty are reinstated. A decorator's touch-up may be needed to finish the line.

From arrival to sweep-up, a single medium-sized unit on the ground floor can be done in under an hour. A bay window with four or five facets can take most of the morning. If you are planning around work calls or school runs, that gives you a feel for timing.

Energy performance and whether to upgrade while you are at it

Replacing a misted unit is a chance to lift the whole window's performance without changing frames. Modern low-E coatings with argon fill outperform many older units. In lived terms, the inner pane feels warmer on a cold day, drafts are reduced, and the room is more even in temperature. If your original units were basic, upgrading to a higher spec can add 10 to 30 pounds per glass panel, money that tends to repay itself over a few winters.

For properties near busy roads, consider acoustic laminated glass in rooms where noise matters. It adds cost, but it can cut traffic rumble noticeably. In upper-floor bedrooms with early sun, consider a solar-control coating, though be mindful of reflectivity and daylight levels.

When full replacement is the better spend

There is a tipping point where piecemeal Misted Double Glazing Repairs make less sense. If more than a third of your units have failed and your frames are first-generation uPVC with poor seals, you will likely gain more from full replacement. The cost is higher upfront, but you solve multiple issues at once: poor locks and hinges, warped sashes, tired weather seals, and underperforming glass. New frames also come with a full-system warranty and improved security hardware.

On timber, if you have significant rot in structural sections and repeated moisture problems, it may be time for new sashes or complete windows. Good timber windows last decades when maintained, but if maintenance has slipped, the economics change. A frank chat with a reputable installer who works with both repair and replacement will save you from throwing good money after bad.

A short checklist to keep your costs sane

- Confirm the glass spec in writing: low-E, argon, cavity, and safety glass where needed.
- Check the warranty term for sealed units and workmanship, and who stands behind it.
- Ask about access and whether any special equipment is included.
- Note frame condition during the survey, including beads and gaskets.
- Bundle multiple failed units in one visit to lower the per-unit cost.

Preventing future misting: small habits, big payoff

No sealed unit lasts forever, but you can stretch its life. Moisture is the enemy, and heat swings stress seals. Keep trickle vents open to reduce interior humidity. Use extractor fans when cooking and showering. If you have blinds fitted tight against the glass, leave a small gap for air movement. Avoid aftermarket films that can trap heat against the pane unless they are designed for double glazing. On timber, keep paint lines sound around the glazing to stop water creeping into the rebate. Periodically check uPVC gaskets and weep holes so water drains as it should.



Pay attention to the first telltales. A faint crescent of mist in a lower corner on a cold morning can be the earliest signal. If a window only mists after a week of rain, the perimeter seal might be compromised. Early replacements can be cheaper, because the surrounding materials have not yet suffered.

A practical example from recent work

A couple in a 1970s detached house called about a cloudy lounge window. The frame was decent uPVC from the early 2000s. The affected unit measured about 1,200 by 1,200 mm. They also mentioned a smaller misted pane in the upstairs landing. I surveyed both, confirmed low-E with 20 mm warm-edge spacers, and noted easy ground-floor access for the lounge. The landing needed a tall step ladder but nothing special.

I quoted 180 pounds for the lounge unit and 130 for the landing, including argon fill, disposal, and a 5-year sealed-unit warranty. They approved. On fitting day, the lounge beads came out clean. The landing beads were a bit brittle, but we managed without breakage. Start to finish, both units were replaced in two hours. The next week, the client emailed to say the lounge felt warmer and that the glass stayed clear on frosty mornings. That job sits squarely in the middle of the ranges I outlined earlier and shows how ordinary these repairs can be when the frames are sound.

When a misted unit stings the wallet

The outliers stand out in memory. A third-floor flat in a city center had two large, toughened units in aluminum frames, each roughly 1,800 by 900 mm. Street parking was limited, and the sash arrangement meant internal access only. The building required fitting during off-peak hours. The glass itself was not cheap, and we needed two fitters for safe handling. The invoice landed just under 800 pounds for both panels. It is still a repair in relative terms, nowhere near the cost of new frames, but it shows how access and safety glass can stack up.

What to do next if your windows are misting

Start with a quick look at the frame material and the size of the affected panes. Take rough glass measurements, note the floor level, and check if the glass sits near doors or on a stairway where safety glass is likely. Call two local firms with solid reviews and ask for a site survey. Share what you have noted and ask them to specify the glass in the quote. If the numbers differ, compare the spec line by line. Pick the installer who explains the trade-offs plainly and will be around if you need them.

Double Glazing Repairs need not be a headache. If the question on your mind is Can you Fix Blown Double Glazing without buying new windows, the practical answer is yes in most cases. Misted Double Glazing Repairs that replace only the failed sealed units bring the clarity back, restore thermal performance, and keep your frames in service. With a clear view of the costs and the variables, you will spend wisely and get the comfort you were missing whenever the glass went milky.