

Most homeowners only think about their windows when there is [Double Glazing Repairs](#) a draft strong enough to lift a curtain or a puddle creeping across the sill. Double glazing tends to fail quietly first, then all at once. If you catch the early signs, repairs are usually simpler and cheaper, and you avoid side effects like damp plaster, mould, and inflated energy bills. I have surveyed thousands of windows and doors across old terraces, new-build estates, and everything in between. The patterns repeat. Below are the ten warning signs that tell you when to book double glazing repairs, along with practical judgement on what usually fixes the problem, what it costs, and when replacement is the smarter option.

## Why the small changes matter

Double glazing is a system, not just a pair of panes. You have the sealed glass unit with its spacer bar and desiccant. You have the frame, whether uPVC, timber, or aluminium, with drainage channels and thermal breaks. Then there are hinges, handles, gaskets, trickle vents, locking gear, and sealants. When one piece underperforms, the rest starts compensating. That is why small symptoms often point to a deeper issue. Leave it long enough and you end up with a blown unit, swollen plasterboard, or a sash that no longer locks safely. Treat windows like you would your boiler: routine checks, swift fixes.

### 1. Condensation between the panes

If you see mist, fog, or streaks between the two panes, the sealed unit has failed. The perimeter seal that keeps the argon or dry air inside has either perished or been breached. Moisture finds its way into the cavity, the desiccant saturates, and you get persistent haze that waxes and wanes with sun and temperature.

What helps: Replace the glass unit, not the entire window. This is one of the most common Misted Double Glazing Repairs. A competent glazier will measure the rebate precisely, match the spacer thickness, and specify like-for-like coated glass. For a typical casement, expect the swap to take 30 to 60 minutes per unit. Costs vary by size and spec, but for a standard 28 mm argon Low-E unit, homeowners often pay in the low hundreds per window. DIY defogging kits promise miracles, but drilling and venting the unit compromises performance and rarely looks good. If you are asking yourself, can you fix blown double glazing, the honest answer is that you cannot un-blow a unit. You replace it.

Edge cases: In south-facing rooms, the mist can clear mid-afternoon, fooling you into thinking the issue is intermittent. If the haze recurs in the morning or evening, the seal is gone, even if it behaves for a few warm hours.

### 2. Persistent condensation on the room-side pane

Surface condensation on the interior glass tells a different story. If you are seeing droplets most mornings in colder months, especially around the edges, the glazing is colder than it should be or the room's humidity is high, or both. It can be a window problem, a lifestyle problem, or both.

What helps: Start with ventilation and humidity. Check trickle vents are open and not clogged with dust. Use extractor fans consistently in bathrooms and kitchens. Aim for indoor humidity below 60 percent in winter. If the problem persists, inspect perimeter seals and gaskets. Old or shrunken gaskets allow cold air to wash over the interior pane, crowds the dew point, and feeds the droplets. Replacing gaskets is a modest job. On timber frames, faded paint and cracked putty can create similar drafts along the glass edges, so a proper preparation and repaint

is more than cosmetic. I have solved many “condensation” complaints with a gasket swap and a quick clear of the frame drainage routes.

Trade-off: Upgrading **Double Glazing Repairs** to a warm-edge spacer bar when replacing units can reduce cold bridging at the perimeter. It costs a little more, but if the room is humid by nature, it is worth it.

### 3. Draughts around the frame or sash

Stand close to the window on a windy day and feel for movement around the opener. A tea light is a surprisingly good tester: if the flame leans near the seals, you have a leak. Draughts often come from worn compression seals, misaligned hinges, or a sash that has dropped on its keeps.

What helps: Invite a technician who carries a pack of common gaskets. They will test the current seal profile, replace like-for-like, adjust the cams on the locking points for tighter compression, and realign the friction hinges so the sash lands evenly on the body. For uPVC, hinge adjustment usually brings the sash back into square. In aluminium, look at the thermal break and ensure no distortion. On timber casements, check the stays and weather strips. If your window is older than 15 years, the rubber may have hardened. New seals often feel almost springy, which is exactly what you want.

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Watch for: Rooms that feel cool at floor level even with the heating on often have a combination of underperforming glazing and under-insulated floors. Do not blame the window for everything, but do not ignore the leak either. A small draught adds a surprising amount to heating costs over a winter.

### 4. Stiff, grinding, or sagging openers

If you need two hands to close a window, or you hear grinding along the top edge, the hinge pack is likely worn or contaminated. Casement windows use friction hinges (stays) that keep the sash in position. Over time they collect grit, corrode slightly, and lose consistent friction. A sagging sash can also drag on the cill, which eventually scuffs the frame and damages seals.

What helps: Clean the hinge tracks, lubricate with a silicone-compatible spray, and check fixing screws. If the hinge rivets have visible play or the arms bow, replace the pair. Always change hinges in pairs on one sash to keep geometry correct. When doing this, technicians often adjust the keeps and cams, which improves the seal and the security bite. With timber, you might find the screws have stripped out; hardwood plugs or a slightly longer screw with pilot holes will restore purchase. With aluminium, verify that the hinge spec matches the sash weight.

Rule of thumb: If you see daylight sliver at the hinge side when the sash is closed, alignment is off. Do not force the handle harder; that only over-stresses the gearbox.

### 5. Handles that wobble or do not lock cleanly

A loose handle might be nothing more than two screws that have walked back over years of use. At worst, it points to a failing lock gearbox. If the handle turns past its usual stop, or you need to juggle the sash to get the key to turn, you are one stormy night away from a stuck window.

What helps: First, remove the small screw covers, nip up the handle screws, and see if the action sharpens. If not, the espagnolette or shootbolt gearbox may be worn. Gearboxes are replaceable. You match the backset and spindle size, then swap the unit without replacing the entire sash. It is a clean, relatively quick repair. Do not ignore poor locking, especially on a ground floor. Insurance policies often specify that accessible windows must have key-locking handles; if they are broken, you can be out of compliance.

Note on brands: Older systems sometimes use gearbox patterns no longer manufactured. A good fitter can still source equivalents or adapt with packers. This is where experience matters.

## 6. Black mould or peeling paint around the reveals

When paint bubbles or black specks spread along the window reveal, there is usually a cold corner compounded by trapped moisture. It might be a ventilation issue, but failing perimeter sealant can let rainwater track behind the frame. On timber, hidden moisture behind paint can lift the grain and cause microscopic gaps where draughts sneak in.

What helps: Inspect the external sealant lines. A hairline split in old silicone or polysulphide is enough for capillary action. Remove and re-seal with a good exterior-grade product, tool it properly, and pay attention to the cill ends and head drip. Inside, cut out failing caulk and re-apply. If the unit is generally sound, these Double Glazing Repairs are straightforward. Where mould has already taken hold, wash with a fungicidal cleaner, then repaint with a breathable finish. Avoid trapping moisture with impermeable paints on cold masonry; you will only push the damp elsewhere.

Caution: If the wall is consistently wet, look up. I have traced several “window leaks” to failed pointing, a cracked lintel drip, or a blocked cavity tray. Fix the cause, then tidy the symptoms.



## 7. Water on the cill after rain

If you come down after a storm to find a little lake on the internal cill, do not assume the glass is leaking. Modern uPVC and aluminium frames are designed with drainage channels and weep holes. When these block with insect

debris or dirt, water overflows to the wrong side.

What helps: Check the bottom of the outer frame for small slots or circular caps. Those are weep paths. Clear them with a plastic strip or a pipe cleaner, not a screwdriver, which can damage liners. Run water along the external sill and confirm that it exits from the intended points. While you are there, inspect the gasket corners. A shrunk corner on a glazing gasket can let wind-driven rain migrate inside the bead. Replacing a gasket is cheaper than swapping the glass.

Note on patio doors: Sliders collect detritus in the tracks, then the water has nowhere to go. Unclip the track covers, vacuum, flush, and reinstall. I have fixed half a dozen “leaking doors” each year with nothing more than a good clean and a fresh bead.

## **8. Outside noise seems louder than it used to**

Double glazing will never turn a busy A-road into silence, but when outside noise suddenly feels sharper, the window might not be sealing. Airborne sound finds the same gaps that draughts do. It can also point to a unit that has lost its gas fill or failed, reducing damping.

What helps: Do the simplest test first. Close the window and press lightly along the perimeter. If the noise shifts, you likely have a poor seal. Replacing gaskets, adjusting hinges and cams, and ensuring full compression usually recovers performance. If the glass unit was originally specification for acoustic control and now the sound profile has changed, the unit could be blown. A replacement with laminated glass on one side can make a clear difference. If you are already planning Misted Double Glazing Repairs, consider an acoustic laminate while you are at it. It costs more but gives real-world benefits on busy streets.

Expectation setting: Do not expect miracles if the wall construction is the weak link. A 9-inch solid brick wall transmits low frequencies; upgraded glazing helps but cannot rewrite physics.

## **9. The room feels colder despite the same thermostat setting**

When you hear “Our bills have gone up and we have not changed anything,” the windows often play a part. Aged Low-E coatings, failed seals, and drafts add up. Sometimes, decades-old units have spacers without thermal breaks, which bridge cold into the glass edge, making the interior surface colder than it should be.

What helps: A thermal camera survey on a cold morning is revealing. You can see sash corners that run cool, hinges that leak, and blown units that read colder across the field. With that evidence, plan targeted Double Glazing Repairs. Replace blown or visibly cool units, fit warm-edge spacers where possible, restore gaskets, and adjust hardware. I have measured interior pane temperature increases of 2 to 4 degrees Celsius after such work. That is the difference between comfort and the urge to nudge the thermostat.

Cost sense: Replacing all windows is a capital project. If frames are structurally sound, glass-only upgrades provide 60 to 80 percent of the thermal improvement for a fraction of the cost. Prioritise north-facing rooms and bedrooms first; occupants feel the benefits most there.

## **10. Visible cracks, cloudy glass, or warped frames**

This is the category where people usually pick up the phone. A cracked pane is obvious, but not all cracks are equal. Thermal stress cracks sometimes start at the edge and snake inward after a cold night followed by sudden sun. Impact cracks radiate from a point. Cloudiness across the entire pane, not just the cavity, can be hard-water

staining from sprinklers or persistent condensation. Warped frames show as uneven gaps, doors that rub at the top, or lock keeps that no longer line up.

What helps: Replace cracked glass promptly. Small cracks spread, and the edge pressure on a compromised unit can shatter when temperatures swing. For cloudy exterior surfaces, specialist polishing can recover some clarity, but it is usually not worth it unless the glass is expensive. Warped uPVC frames are rare in modern products but do happen on large south-facing openings without reinforcing. Check for missing steel reinforcements or screws that have pulled out from heat-expansion cycles. Aluminium rarely warps unless incorrectly installed. Timber can go out of square with moisture; careful re-wedging and adjusting ironmongery often restores fit. Where frames are genuinely deformed, replacement becomes the only sensible route.

A reality check: If more than a third of the windows in a property show serious defects, replacing the worst performers and planning staged upgrades might serve you better than pouring money into piecemeal repairs.

## **Can you Fix Blown Double Glazing?**

The phrase gets thrown around a lot, usually accompanied by adverts for “defogging.” A blown unit means the perimeter seal has failed and the cavity has moisture. Mechanical defogging methods, typically drilling tiny holes to vent the space, can clear the appearance temporarily. They do not restore the insulating value and they leave you with vents that can admit fresh moisture, dust, and even insects. In my experience, clients who choose defogging end up replacing those units within a few years anyway. If budget is tight, start with the rooms you use most and the worst offenders, but specify new sealed units. Ask for Low-E coating, argon fill, and warm-edge spacers for the best price-to-performance ratio.

## **When repair beats replacement, and when it does not**

There is a lot of false economy in window work, but also a lot of unnecessary replacement. These guidelines have served my customers well:

- Repair makes sense when frames are structurally sound, hardware is serviceable, and the issues are localized to the glass units, gaskets, or adjustments. Expect meaningful improvements from glass-only replacements and fresh seals.
- Replace the whole window when the frame is warped, rotten, or cracked, when drainage and chamber design are obsolete or compromised, or when the opener sizes no longer meet safety standards. Do not sink costs into a platform that cannot be brought up to spec.

## **What a good repair visit looks like**

A thorough technician does more than swap a pane. They should arrive with a moisture meter, a seal profile gauge, and a willingness to look at your windows as a system. The best visits follow a rhythm. First, they listen to the symptoms you have noticed. Next, they inspect every opening light for compression, alignment, and lock operation. They test weep holes, examine external sealant lines, and spot any signs of blown units or damp tracking. Then they prioritise fixes that deliver the biggest comfort and energy savings per pound spent.

You should get measurements for any replacement units, including cavity thickness and any coatings. The fitter will ask about your preferences for glass types. For example, if you have a street lamp outside the bedroom, a laminated acoustic unit with a slightly different thickness on each pane can improve sleep. If you have a south-facing bay, a solar-control variant can stop that greenhouse effect in July without making winter too dim. Tiny choices add up.

# Common myths that cost homeowners money

Several myths persist, often spread by sales brochures or half-remembered advice from a neighbour. Here are the ones I correct most often.

- “Condensation proves the double glazing is faulty.” Not necessarily. Interior condensation often reflects indoor humidity and ventilation. Faulty glazing can contribute, but it is not the only cause.
- “If one unit has failed, they all need replacing.” Not true. Sealed units from the same era do fail in waves, but many keep going for years. Inspect and prioritise rather than assuming wholesale failure.
- “You cannot repair uPVC, you have to replace it.” You can repair a lot: change gaskets, adjust hinges, replace locks and glass, re-seal, even restore some faded surfaces. Replacement has its place, but repairs stretch value.
- “Triple glazing always reduces noise more than double.” Not always. For noise, asymmetry and laminates matter more than the count of panes. A good acoustic double-glazed unit can outperform poorly specified triple glazing.

## How to stop problems before they start

Most of the early warning signs show up after a stretch of neglect. Once a year, give your windows and doors an hour. It is the cheapest maintenance you can do on a building envelope.

Simple annual routine:

- Wash frames and glass with mild soapy water, not solvent cleaners. Clear weep holes and drainage channels with a soft brush. Confirm water exits correctly.
- Wipe rubber gaskets with a silicone conditioner sparingly, which helps keep them supple. Lubricate hinges and locks with a non-staining lubricant appropriate for the materials.
- Check external sealant for cracks or gaps, especially at cill ends and heads. Cut out and re-seal any suspect sections. Verify trickle vents move freely and are clean.
- Open and close each window to feel for stiffness. If a handle becomes crunchy or notchy, note it and book a repair before it fails.
- Inspect for signs of moisture on reveals after a storm. A fingertip across paint can find damp spots faster than the eye. Early is easy, late is expensive.

These steps extend the life of your hardware and glass, keep energy use down, and catch small issues while they are still quick to fix.

## Choosing a repair company without regret

For Double Glazing Repairs, look for installers or glaziers who are comfortable with both installation and service work. Ask how they diagnose blown units, how they verify cavity sizes and coatings, and what warranty they provide on new glass. A credible firm will have access to multiple glass suppliers, which lets them match existing tints and patterns. Expect clear pricing on unit swaps, gasket replacements, and hardware. Beware of anyone who insists you need full replacements before they have even inspected your frames.

One tip that rarely fails: gauge how they speak about “Can you Fix Blown Double Glazing.” If they claim to reseal units on site without replacing them, be cautious. A straight answer should sound like this: you cannot restore the original factory seal, but you can replace the unit cleanly and preserve the frame.

## **A brief note on heritage and tricky setups**

Timber sash windows and listed properties complicate things. You may be working with slim double-glazed units in narrow glazing bars, or secondary glazing inside. If you have misting in skinny units, be prepared that replacements can take longer to source, and they benefit from high-spec edge seals. For traditional sashes, draught-proofing with brush seals, pulley and cord servicing, and discreet secondary glazing often beat ripping out character windows. A seasoned joiner with glazing experience is worth their fee ten times over on these jobs.

Bay windows deserve a mention too. The angles concentrate load and movement. If you repeatedly see misted units in a bay, ask the fitter to check the head and supports. Deflection there can stress seals and hinges. Solving the structural movement protects the new glass you are about to pay for.

## **Final thought before you call**

Windows are like tyres. You do not notice them when they are doing their job, and you only think about them when something feels off. The difference is that tyres come with wear bars; glazing does not. Use the signs above as your wear bars. If you spot mist between panes, a nagging draught, stiff movement, or damp marks around the reveal, you are already in the repair window. Act now and a modest intervention will usually restore comfort, keep energy use sane, and extend the life of your installation. Leave it, and you are paying twice: once in bills and again in bigger fixes.

If you are still unsure where to start, pick the coldest, noisiest, or dampest room and get that assessed first. One successful fix tends to reveal the rest. And when you book the visit, mention any specific concerns like Misted Double Glazing Repairs or difficulty locking a particular sash. Clear information helps the technician bring the right parts, which means one visit, not two. That alone can save you a week of draughts and a line item on the invoice.