If your windows are fogging up from the inside of the unit, you are not imagining it. That milky haze, often with beads of moisture you cannot wipe away, points to a failed seal within the glass unit. It is common, it is fixable, and it is where many homeowners get tripped up by quotes that look similar on paper but lead to very different outcomes. I have spent years on both sides of the conversation, surveying windows for repair firms and helping homeowners navigate options. The biggest lesson: comparing quotes for misted double glazing repairs is less about finding the cheapest number and more about decoding what the number actually buys you.

What counts as misted double glazing

Misting happens when the airtight seal on a double glazed unit fails and lets humid air into the insulating gap between panes. That moisture condenses in cool weather and evaporates again in warm weather, so the fog comes and goes. Left alone, the condensation leaves mineral deposits, so even when the unit looks dry, marks remain. You might hear this called a blown unit, a failed IGU, or just “the pane’s gone.”

Can you fix blown double glazing without replacing the whole window? Usually, yes. The glass unit is typically separate from the frame. In most cases the repair is a replacement of the glass unit only, not the frame, not the hardware, and not the surrounding plaster. That is the core distinction that affects price and disruption.

A smaller set of firms offer defogging or drilling services that claim to clear the condensation without replacing the glass. I will cover this later, because it is a key fork in the road when you compare quotes.

Why quotes vary so much for the same window

I once surveyed two identical semis on the same street. Same windows, same orientation, same misting. One homeowner showed me quotes ranging from a few hundred pounds to nearly a grand for three units. The gulf came down to subtle differences that do not fit neatly on a single line item.

- Glass specification. A like-for-like clear double glazed unit with air in the cavity is cheapest. Upgrade to low emissivity coatings, argon fill, warm-edge spacers, laminated panes, or patterned glass, and the cost moves up. Two quotes that both say “replace DG unit” could be quoting very different units.
- Access and labour. Upstairs windows above a conservatory cost more than a ground-floor casement you can reach from a step ladder. Busy roads, parking restrictions, and scaffold needs all add friction.
- Glazing method. Older frames may be internally beaded, externally beaded, or puttied. Some require special glazing packers, tape, or security clips. This is not glamorous, but it is where an experienced fitter saves time and avoids callbacks.
- Warranty and business model. A one-man-band with low overheads can undercut a larger firm that offers longer warranties and runs a staffed office. Neither is inherently better, but the support level is different.

- VAT and insurance. Not all traders list VAT in the big number. You might see “£140 per unit + VAT” in the small print. You also pay for proper liability insurance, which is invisible until something goes wrong.

Understanding these variables helps you stack quotes side by side without getting fooled by a low headline number.

The anatomy of a solid quote

A good quote reads like a professional knows your window, your property, and the work steps. The best ones tell you exactly what you are buying, so you can verify apples to apples.

At a minimum, look for these details in the narrative or line items:

- A clear description of each window location and size. “Lounge, front left, 900 x 1200 mm” beats “large window.”
- The glass specification. Words like 4/16/4, toughened, laminated, Low-E soft coat, argon-filled, warm-edge spacer, and U-value indicate the unit type. If the quote simply says “new DG unit,” ask for the spec in writing.
- Bead position and glazing approach. Internal or external beads affect security and fitting. If a unit requires safety glass due to its location, that should be stated.
- Making good, trims, and sealants. Replacement sometimes requires new glazing packers, security tape, new gasket, or fresh silicone. If that is excluded, you risk a finish that looks patched.
- Waste disposal, access equipment, and whether VAT is included.

Not every firm prints a mini essay, but if the details are missing, get them by email. The idea is to know what the price includes and what it does not. It takes minutes and avoids surprise charges on the day.

Replacement unit or defogging service

You will likely see at least one quote offering to “repair” or “clear” the mist. The process usually involves drilling a tiny hole in the unit, flushing out moisture, and fitting a vent or valve to let the cavity breathe. It can work short term, in the sense that the glass looks clearer. It almost never restores the insulation value of a sealed unit, and the haze often returns within months to a couple of years, especially in wet or coastal climates.

Where defogging might make sense:

- A property going on the market where you need a decent appearance fast at minimal cost.
- A high, awkward unit where replacement requires heavy access gear and you need time to plan.
- A budget squeeze where short-term improvement is acceptable and energy performance is not critical.

Where replacement wins:

- Any room you heat regularly, where insulation and condensation control matter.
- Safety glass zones. If the existing unit is toughened or laminated due to building regulations, do not accept a drilled vent fix.
- Long-term value. A new, properly specified unit should last 10 to 20 years, depending on exposure and quality.

When I compare quotes that mix these options, I line up not only the initial cost but the expected life and thermal performance. Paying half for something that lasts a tenth as long is not good value.

Material choices that drive price and performance

Two quotes can both read “like-for-like” and still differ substantially because the fitter has quietly chosen a different spec.

Low-E coatings and fill. A modern double glazed unit with a soft-coat low emissivity layer and argon gas can cut heat loss roughly 20 to 30 percent over old air-filled units with no coating, sometimes more. In numbers, you might see a U-value around 1.2 to 1.4 W/m^{2}K versus 2.6 or higher for dated glass. That is not marketing fluff. If a room feels chilly near the windows, the upgrade is noticeable.

Spacer bars. Warm-edge spacers reduce the cold bridge at the perimeter, which helps prevent condensation along the edges and improves comfort. Aluminium spacers are cheaper and more conductive. On wet, windy elevations, warm-edge is worth the small premium.

Safety glass. Toughened glass is common in doors, side panels, and low-level windows. Laminated glass adds security and acoustic benefits. If the original unit is toughened, the replacement must be too. Regulation is one motivator, but so is liability. A quote that “forgets” toughened glass will be cheaper, and dangerously wrong.

Noise control. Thicker panes or acoustic laminates do more for noise than argon ever will. If traffic noise is a problem, ask about 4.2 laminated on one side, or an asymmetric build like 6/16/4. Heavier makes for better sound attenuation, but also more weight for the hinges, which leads to the next point.

Hardware and hinges. Swapping in a heavier unit sometimes needs upgraded friction stays. If the casement is already drooping, good firms will bundle hinge replacement or at least flag the risk. Quotes that price only the glass and ignore failing hardware can lead to callbacks that cost you twice.

How I would actually compare two quotes

Lay the quotes side by side and rewrite them into a simple check sheet so you can see the differences at a glance. If you do this once, you will never go back to skimming totals.

- Window list. Do both quotes reference the same units and sizes? Any missing locations?

- Spec line. For each unit: exact build (for example 4/16/4), Low-E yes or no, argon yes or no, warm-edge spacer yes or no, toughened or laminated where relevant.
- Access and extras. Are there notes about scaffolding, tower, parking, or difficult beads? Who supplies gaskets, trims, packers, and sealant? Is making good included?
- Finish and cleanup. Old unit disposal, glass cleanup, and any painting or filler needed around timber beads.
- Warranty and paperwork. Length of guarantee on glass and labour, who backs it, and what voids it.

Now compare the totals. If one quote is cheaper by more than a small margin, look for a spec gap. Often you will find it in the glass type or the lack of warm-edge spacers. Sometimes it is just that one firm missed a toughened pane or priced it as clear float, which is a red flag.

The role of frame type and condition

The glass is only part of the story. The frame type changes the fitting time and the risk of damage.

uPVC. Modern uPVC with internal beads is straightforward to reglaze. If the beads are old and brittle, they can snap during removal. Good fitters bring spare clips and know the brand profiles. If your quote ignores bead replacement risk, ask how they handle breakages.

Aluminium. Thinner profiles and pressure plates are common. Some systems need specific gaskets or structural glazing tape. That adds cost and lead time, because not every supplier stocks obscure gaskets. Quotes should reflect this, not pretend an aluminium reglaze takes the same time as a simple uPVC.

Timber. Timber can be beautiful, but water ingress swells beads and rots sills. Removing putty or beads without splintering the timber is slow work. Making good often includes filler, primer, and paint. If a timber quote looks suspiciously low, it probably does not include the finishing.

Composite or heritage systems. Secondary glazing, steel frames, or listed building restrictions add complexity. Ask for specific references or photos of similar jobs before awarding the work.

The more complex the frame, the more I value a firm that openly itemises potential contingencies.

Energy and comfort payback, not just price

Many homeowners ask if the energy savings justify the cost of new units. For a single misted pane in a warm room, the payback in bills alone may take several years. But that is a narrow lens. Comfort is immediate. On cold nights, a leaky, failed unit can feel like a draught even with the window shut, because the radiant temperature near the glass is low. Upgrading to a modern Low-E, argon-filled unit reduces that cold wash. You feel it when you sit near the window with a book, and you see it when the indoor humidity rises more before you get any surface condensation.

In kitchens and bathrooms where humidity spikes, pairing new units with decent ventilation will keep the glass clearer and extend life. The best quotes mention ventilation in passing, not because they sell fans, but because they understand damp houses eat glazing seals.

Lead times, scheduling, and how to avoid surprises

From survey to installation, a replacement unit typically takes 5 to 15 working days, depending on glass spec and supplier backlog. Laminated, patterned, or oversized units push the lead time. If a firm promises next-day

replacement for an odd size, they are probably measuring wrong or planning to trim a stock unit, which rarely ends well.

Ask two simple scheduling questions:

- When do you measure, and when do you fit? A reliable timeline beats a vague promise.
- What happens if a unit arrives wrong? Mistakes happen. Good firms reorder quickly at their cost and keep you updated.

Payment terms also matter. A modest deposit for custom glass is normal. Full payment before fitting is not, unless the company has a stellar reputation you trust. Balance on completion with an invoice and warranty certificate is standard practice.

Warranty, service, and how to read the small print

Most reputable firms offer 5 to 10 years on the sealed glass unit, with 12 months on workmanship and hardware they replace. Some manufacturers back the unit with their own warranty. The important bit is what voids the warranty. Common clauses include:

- Excessive movement in the frame due to building settlement or rot.
- Use of harsh chemicals on the seals.
- Drilling or modifying the unit after installation.

Also ask who Misted Window Repairs CST Double Glazing Repairs handles the warranty claim. A local firm that picks up the phone and schedules a visit is worth more than a longer warranty you can only access through a manufacturer hotline. If the business you pick closes down, your “10-year warranty” becomes a nice piece of paper. This is another reason bigger outfits cost more: they build the admin and continuity into the price.

The tricky cases that change a fair price

Not every misted unit is routine. A handful of scenarios push costs up for good reasons:

Oversized panes. Heavier units require glass suckers, extra hands, and sometimes temporary props to prevent frame twist. If the pane area jumps past 2 square meters, expect a step in price.

High-level installs. Above a stairwell, over conservatory roofs, or in third-floor flats, the access planning is half the job. A quote that includes a tower or scaffold is simply being honest.

Non-standard glazing bars or Georgian panes. Some units have integrated bars. Matching the pattern and color might mean a special order. Snap-in bars in the air gap are not expensive, but they add a bit of lead time.

Historic or planning constraints. You might be limited in what you can fit. If you need heritage glass or slimline double glazing to mimic single glazing, the price per unit can double or triple, and that is still good value if it keeps the conservation officer happy.

Mullion movement or warped sashes. A misted pane can be a symptom, not a cause. If frames have shifted so much that the unit is under stress, a new unit might fail early. A careful fitter will shim and pack to square, sometimes recommend hinge or handle replacements, and explain why the price covers the extra time.

When you see a higher quote that lists these realities and a lower quote that does not, you have a choice: reward honesty or gamble on a surprise later.

Talking to installers so you get clear answers

A short conversation can tell you if a firm knows their craft. I listen for practical language and specifics rather than fluff.

Useful questions to ask:

- What glass spec do you recommend for this room and why?

- Are any of these locations safety glass zones?
- Do you expect any bead or gasket replacements?
- How will you handle these upstairs panes over the conservatory?
- What warranty do you offer on the units and on your workmanship?

The best answers will reference the room’s use, the elevation, the expected humidity, and the frame type. If you hear canned answers, try another firm.

Rough price ranges so you can sanity check the quotes

Prices vary by region, supplier relationships, and the type of glass. But some ranges help.

For a standard uPVC casement with a clear, Low-E, argon-filled unit and warm-edge spacer, many homeowners see:

- Small to medium panes, ground floor: £90 to £150 per unit supply and fit.
- Larger panes or toughened units, ground floor: £140 to £220.
- Upstairs or tricky access: add £20 to £60 per unit.
- Laminated or acoustic upgrades: add £40 to £120 per unit.

Timber frames with putty glazing or aluminium systems can double the labour component, so a medium pane might be £180 to £300. Heritage or slimline units cost more again. If a quote is wildly outside these bands, check the spec and the access assumptions before judging.

These are snapshots, not promises. The goal is to spot outliers and ask better questions.

When replacement of the whole window makes more sense

Sometimes the misted pane is the tip of the iceberg. If hinges are shot, handles wobble, gaskets crumble, and the frame has shrunk or warped, swapping a unit is throwing good money after bad. On older, non-thermally broken aluminium or on uPVC that has yellowed and bowed, a full frame replacement can be more cost-effective over five to ten years.

Another trigger is compliance. If the opening lights do not meet current fire escape sizes in bedrooms, or trickle vents are required in your jurisdiction for substantial replacements, you are in a different regulatory zone than a simple glass swap. A decent installer will point this out instead of quietly fitting new glass and walking away.

A word on DIY versus professional fitting

Measuring and ordering a glass unit is not rocket science, but getting the size wrong by as little as 2 millimeters can make the unit impossible to fit or impossible to pack properly. I have pulled out units where a DIY measurement led to glass that sat under tension, which stresses the seals and cracks the corners months later. If you are set on DIY, at least have a local glazier verify sizes and advise on packers. Saving £50 today is not worth a premature failure.

Professional fitting brings two main advantages: correct shimming and packing to square the sash, and responsibility for the unit until it is in and signed off. If a unit arrives scratched or undersized, the installer reorders it at their cost, not yours. That peace of mind is part of the price.

Putting it all together

You are comparing more than numbers. You are weighing clarity about the scope, quality of materials, realism about access, and the installer’s judgment. Here is a simple way to move from confusion to choice without drowning in detail:

- Decide your objective. Cosmetic fix for a sale, or durable upgrade for comfort and efficiency? That sets your spec.
- Gather two to three written quotes that list the basics: unit sizes and locations, glass build and enhancements, access assumptions, and warranty terms.
- Normalise the specs. If one has Low-E and warm-edge, ask the others to price the same. If a window requires toughened, make sure all quotes include it.
- Challenge the low and the high. Ask the cheapest to confirm they have included safety glass and warm-edge where needed. Ask the priciest to explain the uplift, then decide if the reasons matter in your case.
- Book the survey with the firm you trust, not just the one that is marginally cheaper. A professional who communicates well will save you headaches on site day.

Handled this way, misted double glazing repairs become a small, predictable project rather than a guessing game. The right quote reads plainly, the installer turns up with the correct units, and within an hour or two per window you have a clear view again, tighter insulation, and a warranty you can file away and forget. That is the standard you are entitled to, and it is within reach once you know how to read what is on the page.

Finally, a brief note for anyone still weighing whether to fix now or later. Waiting rarely helps. Moisture inside a unit migrates and stains the glass, and where timber is involved, ongoing damp shortens the life of the frame. If budget is tight, start with the worst rooms or the panes you sit next to most. You do not have to do the whole

house at once. Prioritise, specify intelligently, and keep the focus on what matters: a proper replacement unit, fitted by someone who will still answer your call next year. That is the heart of good Double Glazing Repairs, and the simplest answer to the question many ask first, can you fix blown double glazing? Yes, you can, and you can do it without paying for more than you need.

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