HOMEOWNER REPAIR GUIDE

WINDOW GLAZING

And glass replacement

When autumn winds start whistling in around your windows, and you get that “rattling bones” sound – it’s time to do some **glazing**. Glazing is the term used for the putty around the outside of your windows where the glass meets the wooden frame, as well as for the act of replacing that putty. Although glazing is pliable when it is installed (to seal the glass,) over the years it has a tendency to dry, crack, and fall out. Replacing loose or missing glazing is a fairly simple chore that almost anyone can do.

REPLACING LOOSE OR MISSING GLAZING

1. First, remove any loose pieces of glazing that are still partly stuck to the glass. A stiff putty knife works well for this. Then, clean the glass, so the putty will stick to it. (You only need to clean a strip as wide as you'll be glazing.)
2. Now, you're ready for the glazing. Take a lump about the size of an average tomato, and knead it in your hand for a couple of minutes to mix it well and make it more pliable. Then, roll this glazing into a long rope about the diameter of your thumb. Gently press it in place where the glass and the wood frame meet.
3. Next, starting from the top down, run a glazing tool or a putty knife held at a 45° angle down the glazing to seat it into the corner. You may need several passes with the tool to get the surface smooth enough. You can wet your finger and lightly rub it up and down the glazing after using the tool, to give the surface an extra-smooth texture. With a little practice, you'll move more quickly, and your results will be neater.

FRESH, WARM GLAZING WORKS BEST

Glazing compound has a relatively short shelf life – so, if you have a can that’s more than a year old, get some fresh glazing, no more than you'll need this season. Glazing is easier to use if it's warm, so on cold days leave the can inside to keep the glazing flexible. A heat gun can be used to warm up a can, as well.

REPLACING THE GLASS

If you need to replace the glass in a window, the procedure is a bit different. Remember that glazing compound does not hold the glass in place – it only seals out water and air. The glass is really secured by **glazing points**, small pieces of metal inserted into the wood frame along the edge of the glass *(see illustration.)*



Glazing Point
Actual Size

REMOVING THE OLD GLASS

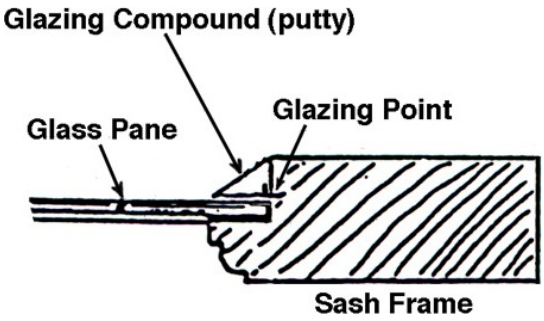
To remove broken glass from the sash, you must first remove the old glazing material. With a heat gun or propane torch, soften the old glazing compound and scrape it out, using an old sharp wood chisel or putty knife. Remove the glazing points, using a putty knife or screwdriver to force them out of the wood. Once you have removed the old glass, continue to scrape the frame until the wood is completely cleaned. This will help the new glazing compound bond to the wood.

ORDERING GLASS

When ordering replacement glass, measure the inside of the sash to get the glass width and length. Deduct 1/8 inch from each measurement.

INSTALLING THE NEW GLASS

1. When you're ready to install the new glass, take a small amount of glazing compound from the can, knead it into a ball as described above, and roll it between your palms to form a narrow snake. Push it with your fingers into the wood to form a bed for the glass (see illustration).
2. Lay the piece of glass on the bed of glazing compound and **secure it by using a putty knife to push the glazing points into the wood**. Place the points about 2 inches from each corner, and about 12 inches apart along the sides, top, and bottom of the frame.
3. Once the glass is secure, form another snake of glazing compound as before. Push this snake into the area where the glass meets the frame on the outside. Run a glazing tool or putty knife held at a 45° angle along the edge, as described above, so that you end up with a smooth wedge of glazing compound that is not visible from inside the window.



Glass, glazing point and compound in the sash

ANNUAL MAINTENANCE

Many people make window glazing part of each house painting project. (You can paint glazing right away, although it will take a week or two before it sets up completely.) It's best, however, not to wait until your house needs painting, but instead to check your house annually; once you have caught up – unless you get a baseball through a window – it should take you only about half an hour once a year to maintain your window glazing and end those rattling windows once and for all.

Home Repair Resource center

Home Repair Resource Center empowers homeowners to maintain their homes for sustainable and diverse communities.

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