



# Art Window Installation

Over the years, I've been asked many questions about art windows. One question that's always asked is "What about installation?" It's actually a great question, and I certainly understand why it's so popular. Your windows can be beautiful and you're excited about getting started, but what should you be aware of regarding installation?

Who arranges to install it, what does it cost and how does it actually get installed?

Depending on the size of the project and how it will be installed, the glass artist, a local glass contractor, a handyman or the homeowner are the likely options. Optionally, dressing up the frame opening with a vinyl retrofit system from a local glass contractor is a nice way to upgrade your window framing at the time the art window is installed.

The cost for installation varies depending on time and materials, the type of install and the complexity. Some folks initially think it's a big project that might be quite expensive, but the reality is that in most cases, it's fairly basic and reasonable.

There are several ways to have the windows installed, and all have their advantages and disadvantages.

## Option 1 – Install over your existing clear glass

The first and most common of all installations is to install the leaded glass from the inside of your home right up against the existing clear glass window. It is then held in with moulding or another secure system depending on whether you have a wood or vinyl framing. Either works fine when installed correctly.

**Advantages:** You retain the insulation benefits of your current glass for both weather and for sound. Cleaning is much easier because the part of the window normally exposed to the exterior dirt and dust is protected by the outer glass (this is an important feature for most clients). In an area where tempered glass may be recommended, the original tempered glass would remain in place retaining the safety benefits of tempered glass (in most applications, stained glass and beveled glass windows are exempt from safety tempering although it varies and should be discussed at the time of purchase). Installation over existing clear glass is generally the easiest and least expensive type of installation.

**Disadvantages:** During daylight hours, the window will have a slight reflection off of the front piece of glass, although at night the art window appears as if there were no glass in front of it at all. If you have grid dividers in your current windows, they may need to be removed or replaced with clear glass (although there are other solutions as well).

## Option 2: Installing in place of your existing glass

Most people think the standard way to install a leaded glass window is to remove the current glass and replace it with the new art window. In Southern California, this type of installation is still somewhat common since we don't have extreme weather.



Authentic leaded windows, when built and sealed correctly with top quality materials, should be water resistant from rain and general moisture for many years.

**Advantages:** The main advantage of this type of installation is that beveled art windows will look better from the outside of your home in the daytime if installed with no other exterior glass. This is often the best option if you want the windows to look as good as possible from the exterior of your home.

**Disadvantages:** There's no extra insulation from outdoor noise. With leaded panels exposed to weather, restoration is generally required more often unless a special putty is used to seal leaded panels.

## Option 3: Triple glazing

This is when the art window is sandwiched between two pieces of glass and sealed together.

**Advantages:** The glass can be safety tempered which is good for certain applications.

**Disadvantages:** The window doesn't look the best it can from either side due to reflections. It adds more cost to the window. It can limit you from choosing upgraded thicker glass for beveling. Seals can breakdown after several years which creates a problem between the glass.

Choosing art windows will add elegance and beauty to your home, but be sure you know the options for installation. Remember, beauty is the goal, but practicality and safety are just as important!

*Glass artist Rick Streitfeld has owned and operated Art Windows in Huntington Beach since 1996. His creations can be found not only in Southern California, but in more than 25 states across the nation. Rick can be reached at (714) 842-8979 or visit [www.ArtWindows.com](http://www.ArtWindows.com) to view more than 1100 photos of his past commissions.*