

Installing acrylic secondary glazing with magnetic tape

1. The materials

3mm clear cast acrylic sheets are attached to the window frame with magnetic strips. The sheets are flexible, durable, resist discolouring and can be easily removed they are very lightweight (e.g. in the summer).

The most convenient approach is to buy the acrylic sheets already cut to size and with the magnetic strips attached. Several companies offer these products online. You can also find very useful information online about how to [measure](#) up windows correctly. A 1m² panel costs approximately £100 including delivery.



Perspex sheet with protective backing

You can also buy acrylic sheets (cut to size) and the magnetic tape separately, which works out cheaper. Acrylic sheets are available from most DIY stores but you can also buy them on the internet where there are plenty of suppliers to choose from. Buying materials online from a sheet plastic supplier works out at around £25 per 1m². Buying the tape separately costs approximately £80 for 30 metres. The tape is supplied in two packets (steel and magnetic) both have an adhesive backing.



Two packs of tape

Some suppliers offer smaller 5m tape packs. It is recommended that you use 12.5 mm wide tape for windows up to 1m², and 20 mm wide tape for windows larger than this (due to the additional weight). Delivery costs are normally extra.

2. Tools and skill needed

Tools

- Tape measure
- Scissors or tin snips to cut the magnetic tape
- Screwdriver or pliers if you need to remove any hooks etc.
- Step ladder if windows are high up.
- Methylated spirits and cloth.

Skill required: The main skill is being able to measure accurately.

3. Measuring the windows

These instructions assume that you are fitting a window less than 1m². See these [videos](#) for details, especially if you are dealing with larger windows or sash windows. There are three key things to remember:

- The acrylic needs to be fitted flush to a flat surface all round.

- The gap between the window and the perspex needs to allow enough space for any window catches etc.
- Measure all windows to be fitted. Do not assume they are the same size even if they look the same. Note the measurements for each window to make it quicker when installing.

For casement windows, you can just measure the window pane itself, then add 12.5 mm on each side to allow for the tape (i.e. 25 mm extra on the height and 25 mm extra on the width). If there is room you might like to allow a little extra space, but avoid fitting the acrylic to close to the window recess, as this makes it harder to install and remove once fitted.

For sash windows, you need to attach the acrylic on the flat frame just beyond the staff bead and box frame (i.e. beyond the uneven bits). See the [sash window](#) video for details about how to identify these.

4. Installation

This shouldn't take longer than half an hour per window. See the useful 3 minute [video](#) provided by Lambeth Council.

Step 1: Make sure the frame round the window is clean, flat and smooth. Remove any hooks or screws, and clean with methylated spirits to remove grease or dirt.

Step 2: Check the acrylic sheet fits the window. It is flexible so you can bend it slightly.

Step 3: With the acrylic laid out on a flat surface, measure the steel tape (white) round the edge on all 4 sides, and cut to size. This can be done by bending the tape back on itself so it snaps off. Remove the protective cover from the edges of the acrylic (a 100mm strip will do). Remove the red backing from the steel tape and stick it carefully round the very edge of the acrylic.



Step 4: Cut the magnetic tape (black) to the same length as the steel tape. This can be done with tin snips, scissors or secateurs. The magnetic tape will be visible once installed, so make it as neat as possible. Place the non-adhesive side of the magnetic tape on all 4 steel strips so it sticks. Peel away the rest of the protective cover on the taped side of the acrylic.



Step 5: Peel away the red backing on the magnetic tape.
Carefully place the acrylic in the right position in front of the

window, then push the edges hard against the window frame, so that the magnetic tape sticks to it. Peel off the protective cover on the room side of the acrylic whilst holding it in place so the tape is not dislodged whilst it is sticking. Press firmly and check around the edge of the acrylic to make sure the tape is securely fixed.

You should now be able to easily remove and replace the sheet as needed.

