

Stained Glass in Sealed Units

Installing stained glass sandwiched inside sealed units is a very poor practice and should wherever and whenever possible be avoided.

Heat build up

Heat build up inside sealed units can cause small amounts of putty, flux, or patina to drip and discolour the glass. It can also melt the glue on copper foil and cause it to run down looking like an oil slick.

Heat draw

The heat build up inside a sealed unit will soften the lead enough to allow the glass to be drawn towards heat resulting in the stained glass panel being pulled to press against one of the clear glass panels. The metal from the lead or solder can leave a permanent and easily noticeable mark on the clear glass

Condensation

All sealed units eventually lose their seal. Multi-glazed units with stained glass inside lose them so readily, many commercial sealed unit fabricators refuse to provide any warranty on them. Even a pin prick in the seal can allow entry of moisture that will condense inside the sealed unit. Once any moisture gets inside a sealed unit, it never leaves. The only correction is replacement of the entire window.

Appearance

Reflected glare on the clear window pane will seriously detract from the appearance of the stained glass panel. It will look fine when viewed straight on, but when seen from an angle, you're more likely to get a glare reflection from the interior glass.

Not removeable

If you install a stained glass panel separate from a sealed unit instead of inside one, it's a simple job to remove it. Removing a sealed unit with stained glass inside is a significant task.

Repair

Replacing a broken sealed unit is a simple and relatively inexpensive job. It's both pricey and time consuming to extract a stained panel from inside one. Repairing a stained glass panel is a simple job for any reasonably skilled glass artisan.