

Tutorials - Leading a Panel

Lead Came is made by extruding or milling lead into an 'H' section of different widths. When using lead came it is important that the lead is fully stretched before use: lead from Pearsons Glass is supplied ready to use, but some other leads may be supplied twisted and crumpled. The heart of the lead should be opened to accept the glass using an All Nova tool.

The "cutline" is placed on the workbench (preferably made from chipboard or plywood) and two wooden lath strips are nailed over it at a right angle, one at the bottom and one side of the panel. The outside leads are then placed inside these laths, and the pieces of glass and surrounding leads are built up from this corner.



Each piece of lead is cut to the correct length using a lead knife, the length being slightly short to allow for the overlap of the adjoining lead. Depending upon the angle of the adjacent lead, a mitre cut may be necessary. The project should be kept tight by gently tapping the pieces together and holding them there by tacking a horseshoe nail into place. Small sections of lead should be used here to prevent damage to the glass. It is important to ensure that all the lead joints are cut accurately and meet correctly, with no gaps showing between the lead and the glass.



When the panel has been completed the next stage is soldering. Every joint is soldered on both sides of the panel. The leads must be clean and then a flux (tallow) is used to help the solder run and adhere to the lead. The joints are now soldered. Care must be taken not to allow the iron to become too hot and melt the lead as well. The solder should flow into a gently rounded bend. If your joint has peaks, the iron needs to be a bit hotter or should be held in place longer.

The final stage is to cement the panel to make it weather proof. Using a scrubbing brush, the cement is forced into the gap between the leaf of the lead and the glass.

The leaf of the lead may have to be opened a little to assist this. When the cementing is completed, whiting is spread over the panel to absorb excess oil and help clean up the panel. Finally, brush the panel clean on both sides and stand back to admire your work!