

When summer bears down on London, sticky and relentless, a working air conditioner changes how a home feels hour to hour. As a technician and estimator who has crawled through enough attics and basements in Old North, Byron, and the newer builds in Fox Field, I see the same fork in the road every season. A unit struggles, the house drifts up to 27 degrees, and you are staring at two choices: pay for air conditioning repair to get through another summer, or invest in a full ac installation. Making that decision with confidence takes more than a quick quote. It hinges on age, repair history, how your home moves air, and what comfort is worth to you on a humid July night.

## What really drives the decision in London

Our summers make this a local judgment, not a generic one. London's hot spells push into the 28 to 32 degree range, but it is the humidity that wears you down. A system that cannot pull moisture out will leave your home feeling clammy at 24 degrees, and that is when people start calling contractors. Many houses here, especially in Wortley Village and Old East, have older ductwork and sometimes minimal returns on second floors. Newer subdivisions do better, but I still see undersized returns and long runs that choke airflow. Those details determine whether an older unit can be nursed back to health or is simply outmatched by the house.

Another London factor is the mix of furnaces tied to the AC coil. If you are running a classic single stage furnace from the mid 2000s, swapping in a high efficiency variable speed air conditioner might not deliver what you expect because the blower may not coordinate well. That mismatch can be managed, but it should be priced in. Repairs on the outdoor unit do not change any of that, which is why the same AC can behave like two different machines depending on the blower and duct situation.

## How long central ACs really last, and what fails first

Most central air conditioners in southwestern Ontario run 400 to 800 hours a season. Installed well and maintained yearly, a quality unit generally lasts 12 to 17 years. I have seen 20, and I have also seen compressors die at 9. The pattern of failures is predictable.

Capacitors and contactors fail early and cheaply. A capacitor is a pop can sized part that helps the compressor and fan motor start. When it bulges or burns out, the unit hums but will not kick on. Contactors pit and stick, and you lose cooling. These are routine fixes. Next in line are fan motors, pressure switches, and control boards. After ten seasons, coils start to corrode, particularly if the outdoor unit sits near a sprinkler path or flower bed with fertilizer. Refrigerant leaks show up either as a slow performance decline over a couple of summers or an abrupt loss after winter.



The expensive failure is the compressor. Once that goes, you are deciding whether to put serious money into an old platform that likely has other worn parts, or to treat that money as a down payment on a new system.

## A cost reality check, in Canadian dollars

No one should weigh this choice without a rough map of the money involved. In London Ontario over the last few years, these have been consistent ranges for air conditioning repair and replacement:

- A service call with a simple fix like a capacitor or contactor: about 150 to 400.
- Outdoor fan motor replacement: 400 to 900 depending on the motor type and availability.
- Refrigerant leak diagnosis and repair: 500 to 1,500 for accessible leaks. If the evaporator coil is shot, that can run 1,200 to 2,200 for the coil alone.
- Compressor replacement: often 1,500 to 3,000, parts and labour, and sometimes more if refrigerant and dryer changes are needed.
- Standard central ac installation, including new outdoor unit, matching indoor coil, line set flush or replacement, and commissioning: commonly 6,500 to 11,000 for a quality brand and proper sizing. Smaller condos can be less. Larger, high efficiency variable systems or tricky installs go higher.

Those numbers flex with equipment brand, availability during heat waves, and the complexity of the home. If the electrical panel needs an upgrade or a dedicated breaker, factor in an ESA electrical permit and electrician time. Pricing for air conditioning installation also changes with rebates and manufacturer promotions, which come and

go. If someone quotes with a number that looks far outside these ranges, ask them to walk you through every component in the scope of work. It should read like a recipe, not a mystery.

## When repair makes sense

Repair is a strong move when the unit is newer, the fault is isolated, and the rest of the system is in good shape. I am thinking about a 7 year old 2.5 ton unit in Summerside with a failed capacitor, fixed in 30 minutes, back to cooling like new. I am also thinking of a 10 year old system in Hyde Park with a noisy condenser fan motor. We replaced the motor and added a hard start kit for an extra measure of protection. That customer got three more summers before selling the house. In both cases, the ducts were decent, the coils were clean, and there were no refrigerant leaks.

Age is the first lens. Under 10 years, most issues merit repair unless we find a coil leak or a compressor failure. Between 10 and 14, we look harder at performance, repair history, and refrigerant type. Past 15, you need a compelling reason to keep putting money in, like a very minor fix or the plan to move soon.

Context matters, too. If your home is consistently sticky upstairs and the AC never reaches the setpoint during humid spells, a repair will not solve that. It will run better for a while, but if the blower, ducts, or sizing are off, you will still be uncomfortable. Bring that up during the visit. A good tech will measure static pressure, check temperature split across the coil, look for kinked flex runs, and give you a practical path to better comfort, whether that is a damper tweak or a proper redesign.

## Clear signs that point to replacement instead of another repair

Here is the short list I use in the field when advising homeowners who ask for a straight answer:

- The system is 14 to 20 years old, and the current repair is more than a few hundred dollars.
- The compressor is failing, or the indoor coil is leaking, and parts are out of warranty.
- Refrigerant has been topped up more than once. Slow leaks rarely heal, they drain the wallet and performance.
- Humidity control is poor even after a thorough cleaning and airflow check. This points to an underperforming or mismatched system.
- Electrical or safety issues are mounting, for example tripping breakers, burnt wiring, or corroded terminals that keep coming back.

There are edge cases. I recently met a couple in Old South with a meticulously maintained 13 year old unit and a minor contactor failure. Their ducts were textbook, the coil spotless. The right move was a modest repair. On the flip side, a 9 year old system in Masonville with a butchered line set and chronic leaks finally needed an evaporator coil. The estimate landed close to 2,000. Given their summer travel and low run hours, they wanted to repair. We pulled out the coil, found deeper corrosion, and they ended up replacing the full system a year later. If we had run the math harder against their comfort frustration, the replacement would have made sense earlier.

## What you gain from a modern ac installation

New systems do more than lower the utility bill. They are quieter, they manage humidity better, and many can modulate to match the load instead of blasting at full tilt every cycle. If your current unit is a single stage model from 2008, a properly sized two stage or variable system can smooth out temperature swings and take a wet 24 degree room down to a crisp 22 that actually feels dry.

Efficiency ratings can be confusing. Think of SEER as a seasonal efficiency indicator and EER as a snapshot at hot conditions. Manufacturers now also publish updated test ratings, and you will see both on spec sheets. The important part is not chasing the highest number on paper. In London's climate, jumping from an old 10 SEER equivalent system to a solid 14 to 17 SEER class unit often nets the best value. Expect cooling cost reductions in the 15 to 35 percent range if the ducts are right. Going higher brings diminishing returns unless you prioritize low noise, superior humidity control, or you plan to stay for many years.

Comfort is not all in the box outside. A good ac installation includes sizing with an actual load calculation, a look at return air on upper floors, and a discussion about the blower in your furnace. A variable speed furnace paired with a modern AC lets the system run longer, slower cycles that wring out moisture without overshooting temperature. If you never have a conversation about airflow and ductwork, you are not getting the whole picture.

## Sizing and airflow, where most discomfort hides

Oversizing is common in London because contractors want to make sure a house will cool on the hottest day. The downside is short cycles, poor dehumidification, and rooms that never quite feel right. The right size comes from a Manual J style heat gain calculation, not a guess. Old brick homes with new windows can surprise you as their loads drop. Conversely, a large open plan with west facing glass in Talbot Village can demand more cooling than the square footage suggests.

Once size is set, air has to move. I take static pressure readings at the furnace. If we are above about 0.8 inches of water column on both sides of the blower combined, the duct system is choking the equipment. That is when I talk about adding a return on the second floor, opening up a transition, or swapping restrictive **energy efficient heating and cooling** filters for deeper media. None of that is as glamorous as a shiny condenser, but it defines your comfort more than any spec sheet.

## Refrigerants, parts, and the future

Refrigerants have changed. If your unit uses the older R22, refilling after a leak is either impossible or priced so high that repair becomes hard to justify. Many systems from the last decade use R410A. Parts remain readily available, but the industry is transitioning again to newer blends with lower environmental impact. That does not make your current system obsolete, but it does mean putting serious money into an aging R410A unit should be weighed against a new system built for the next chapter. When we install new equipment, we use components and line sets rated for current refrigerants and compatible with the next wave, and we recover and handle existing refrigerant with proper certification as Ontario requires.

## Permits, code, and what a good contractor does in London

Air conditioning installation in Ontario is more than sliding a new unit on a pad. If we run a new electrical circuit or change the breaker, that work requires an ESA permit and inspection. If the system ties into a gas furnace, the fuel appliance remains under TSSA oversight, and any work on refrigerant lines requires a certified technician under Ontario's ODP program. Homeowners do not need to memorize acronyms, but they should expect the contractor to pull the right permits, label the disconnect, pressure test the lines, evacuate to a deep vacuum, and document readings at startup.

I encourage people to ask for three things on every job in London Ontario. First, a load calculation summary or at least the inputs and result. Second, a scope that spells out the indoor coil model, the line set plan, the drain plan, and the electrical work. Third, commissioning numbers on the day of startup: suction and discharge pressures, superheat, subcooling, temperature split, and indoor static pressure. These are not trade secrets. They are the proof your system was set up to run as designed.

## Timing and logistics, so you are not stuck in a heat wave

Shoulder seasons are the calm windows. April and May, or September into early October, often bring better scheduling and sometimes better pricing. During a July hot spell, everyone's condenser decides to surrender at once. Parts can take days, and crews are booked solid. If your system is shaky in June, do not wait for the failure. A preemptive decision, whether that is a targeted repair or a planned replacement, prevents two or three sticky nights with box fans in the bedroom and a dog panting on the floor.

Plan the details. If your unit sits in a weed bed on a tilted pad, include a new pad and a gravel base. If your downspout dumps water on the condenser corner, extend it. If the line set runs through a cluttered basement ceiling, budget the time to open a clean path and patch neatly. Those small site choices affect serviceability and lifespan.

## The repair vs. Replacement math, tested on two real scenarios

A family in Riverbend called with a 15 year old 3 ton system that tripped the breaker each start. Diagnosis showed a locked compressor. The quote to replace the compressor was around 2,200. A new matched system, including coil, with a mid tier two stage condenser came to 8,900. Their hydro bills in summer averaged 220 per month, with AC responsible for perhaps 60 to 90 of that. The new system projected a 20 to 30 percent cooling cost drop, or 12 to 27 per month during peak months, maybe 60 to 100 over the season. The math alone did not pay back quickly. But they planned to stay long term, upstairs felt damp at night, and the furnace had a variable speed blower ready to pair with a smarter condenser. They installed new. The following summer the second floor felt like a new house, and they ran a degree or two warmer at the thermostat, which saved some energy as well.

Another case, a 9 year old 2 ton unit in an Old North bungalow with a slow refrigerant leak. The house was well shaded, ductwork upgraded, and summer bills were low. The evaporator coil replacement quoted at 1,600 made sense, even though the owner knew there was a chance of another leak later. The repair bought them three more summers, and when they eventually renovated the kitchen, they opted for a full system upgrade, moving the return and installing a quieter outdoor unit away from the patio. The staggered approach worked because the house had low cooling load and the owners did not mind some risk.

## A quick decision checklist you can use on the phone before anyone visits

- Age of your system and major repairs in the last 3 to 5 years.
- Current symptom, for example a simple no start or a chronic performance decline.
- Comfort concerns beyond temperature, like humidity or noisy short cycles.
- Refrigerant type and any history of top ups.
- Your horizon in the home and your appetite for another repair season.

If you can answer those five, a seasoned contractor can give you a high confidence direction even before stepping inside. The visit will confirm it with numbers.



## What about heat pumps, is that a different decision

This comes up more often every year. A heat pump is an air conditioner that can run in reverse for heating. In London Ontario, a modern cold climate heat pump can carry much of the spring and fall and still cool in summer. If your furnace is fairly new and gas is inexpensive, a straight AC can remain the sensible option. If you are thinking about reducing gas use or you need to replace both the furnace and AC within a few years, a heat pump is worth a serious look. Installed costs run higher, often 8,000 to 16,000 depending on size and configuration, but some households save on annual energy and get quieter, more even cooling. Incentives change frequently, so ask for current programs and avoid making decisions based on last year's news.

## Maintenance that stretches equipment life, and what not to skip

Two small habits make a big difference. Change or wash filters on a schedule, not when you remember. For one inch filters, that can be monthly in peak season. For deeper media filters, every three to six months. Second, keep the outdoor unit clear. Trim shrubs, scoop out leaves, and keep the coil fins straight. I like a gentle rinse with a hose from the inside out in spring if access allows. An annual service that verifies refrigerant levels, cleans the indoor coil when needed, and measures static pressure pays for itself by catching early problems. It is not a magic shield, but it reduces surprise failures on the hottest days.

## How we handle edge cases people rarely discuss

Some homes in London have electrical panels close to full. A new AC might need a different breaker size and wire gauge. Plan that early to avoid delays. Older homes with asbestos pipe wrap or taped duct seams need safe handling when modifying ducts. That can add cost and time, but it is manageable when addressed head on. If your condenser sits under a bedroom window, ask about low sound models and rubber isolation pads. Noise is not just decibels, it is tone. Variable units produce a softer sound that blends into the yard, and that matters when you dine on the patio near the unit.

Another edge case is a recent roof replacement. If the attic access is tight and the evaporator coil is in a difficult closet, timing the installation when you can move furniture and clear space makes a world of difference. Good crews can work miracles in tight spaces, but clear access keeps the coil clean and the line set straight, which improves performance.

## If you are comparing quotes for ac installation in London Ontario

Make sure you are comparing the same system types and scopes. One quote may include line set replacement, another may plan to flush and reuse it. One may include a new pad and proper condenser clearances, another may assume the old tilted pad survives another decade. Ask for the indoor coil model, not just the outdoor unit. Mismatched coils can kneecap efficiency and dehumidification. Confirm the electrical work and permits are included. Finally, timeline matters. During peak season, a crew promising next day installation might be cutting corners or might have genuine capacity. Either way, call a reference and ask how the final product performs after the first heat wave.

## Where air conditioning repair in London Ontario shines

Speed and targeted value. If this is a capacitor, a fan motor, or a loose low voltage connection, a competent tech will have your system running the same day with little fuss. If you own a rental or plan to sell within a year, low cost repairs keep the property comfortable without tying up capital. Be honest about your horizon and your risk tolerance. Repeated refrigerant top ups are not a plan, they are a leak management fee. Smart repair is precise, not habitual.

## A grounded way to decide

There is no universal rule, but there is a practical path. Start with age and the specific failure. Layer in comfort performance, duct reality, and your time horizon in the home. Put the quotes in a simple spreadsheet, include power use estimates, and score the soft benefits like noise and humidity control. If the repair is modest and the system has life left, fix it and schedule a maintenance check after the next heat wave. If the repair is large or the

system is old and failing at the core, price out ac installation with a contractor willing to run numbers and talk airflow.

If you need a shortcut during a muggy London afternoon, keep this in mind: repair pays when it solves a defined fault on a younger system in a house that already feels decent. Replacement pays when it cures a pattern of discomfort, chronic leaks, or age related failures, and when you plan to enjoy that comfort for years. Either way, insist on clear scopes, measured data, and crews that treat your home like a system rather than a single metal box outside. That is how you get results that hold up when the forecast reads 31 degrees with a humidex to match.

## Hometown Heating and Cooling — Business Info (NAP)

**Name:** Hometown Heating and Cooling

**Website:** <https://www.hometownhc.ca/>

**Email:** [sales@hometownhc.ca](mailto:sales@hometownhc.ca)

**Phone:** (519) 425-0555

**Service Area:** London, Woodstock, and Ingersoll (Southwestern Ontario)

### Ingersoll Location

**Address:** 113 Mutual St N, Ingersoll, ON N5C 1Z8

**Map/listing URL:**

<https://www.google.com/maps/place/Hometown+Heating+and+Cooling/@43.042608,-80.8860254,17z/data=!3m1!4b1!4m6!3m5!1s0x882e9bfee0d53bf380.8834505!16s%2Fg%2F1tdgqgkq>

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### London Location

**Address:** 45 Pacific Ct Unit #11, London, ON N5V 3N4

**Map/listing URL:**

[https://www.google.com/maps/place/Hometown+Heating+and+Cooling/@43.0088901,-81.1800363,17z/data=!4m6!3m5!1s0x882c1f2183b77adf:0x751181.1752898!16s%2Fg%2F11fsm535\\_n](https://www.google.com/maps/place/Hometown+Heating+and+Cooling/@43.0088901,-81.1800363,17z/data=!4m6!3m5!1s0x882c1f2183b77adf:0x751181.1752898!16s%2Fg%2F11fsm535_n)

**Embed iframe:**

**Hours:**

Monday-Friday: 8:00AM-5:00PM

Saturday & Sunday: Closed

**Open-location code (Plus Code):** 2R6F+3V London, Ontario

**Socials (canonical https URLs):**

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/Hometownhandc>

Instagram: <https://www.instagram.com/hometownhandc/>

LinkedIn: <https://www.linkedin.com/company/hometownhc/>

<https://www.hometownhc.ca/>

Hometown Heating and Cooling provides residential HVAC services across London, Woodstock, and Ingersoll in Southwestern Ontario.

Services include heating and cooling installation and repair, fireplace services, duct cleaning, ductless mini-splits, and gas line work (service scope varies by job).

The Ingersoll location is listed at 113 Mutual St N, Ingersoll, ON N5C 1Z8.

The London location is listed at 45 Pacific Ct Unit #11, London, ON N5V 3N4.

To contact Hometown Heating and Cooling, call (519) 425-0555 or email [sales@hometownhc.ca](mailto:sales@hometownhc.ca).

For directions, use the listings:

<https://www.google.com/maps/place/Hometown+Heating+and+Cooling/@43.042608,-80.8860254,17z/data=!3m1!4m6!3m5!1s0x882e9bfee0d53bf380.8834505!16s%2Fg%2F1tdgqgkq>

and [https://www.google.com/maps/place/Hometown+Heating+and+Cooling/@43.0088901,-81.1800363,17z/data=!4m6!3m5!1s0x882c1f2183b77adf:0x7511c81.1752898!16s%2Fg%2F11fsm535\\_n](https://www.google.com/maps/place/Hometown+Heating+and+Cooling/@43.0088901,-81.1800363,17z/data=!4m6!3m5!1s0x882c1f2183b77adf:0x7511c81.1752898!16s%2Fg%2F11fsm535_n)

## Popular Questions About Hometown Heating and Cooling

**What areas does Hometown Heating and Cooling serve?**

Hometown Heating and Cooling serves Southwestern Ontario, including London, Woodstock, and Ingersoll.

**What services does Hometown Heating and Cooling provide?**

Services listed include heating and air conditioning work, fireplaces, duct cleaning, ductless mini-splits, and gas line services (availability varies).

**Where are Hometown Heating and Cooling locations?**

Ingersoll: 113 Mutual St N, Ingersoll, ON N5C 1Z8.

London: 45 Pacific Ct Unit #11, London, ON N5V 3N4.

**Do they offer emergency service?**

The website indicates 24/7 emergency service for urgent HVAC situations.

**How can I contact Hometown Heating and Cooling?**

Phone: [+1-519-425-0555](tel:+15194250555)

Email: [sales@hometownhc.ca](mailto:sales@hometownhc.ca)

Website: <https://www.hometownhc.ca/>

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/Hometownhandc>

Instagram: <https://www.instagram.com/hometownhandc/>

LinkedIn: <https://www.linkedin.com/company/hometownhc/>

## **Landmarks Near London, Woodstock, and Ingersoll**

- 1) [Victoria Park \(London\)](#)
- 2) [Fanshawe College \(London\)](#)
- 3) [Pittock Conservation Area \(Woodstock\)](#)
- 4) [Woodstock Art Gallery](#)
- 5) [Ingersoll Cheese & Agricultural Museum](#)
- 6) [Harris Park \(London\)](#)