

## Mould Growth

If you have mould growth the chances are that it is a result of condensation. You can get rid of mould by washing down affected surfaces with a bleach-type solution, and you can buy special paints which may help to prevent it for a certain period of time. Dehumidifiers can also reduce and prevent mould growth.

But the only permanent cure is to reduce the amount of condensation.



If you would like information in another language or format, please ask us

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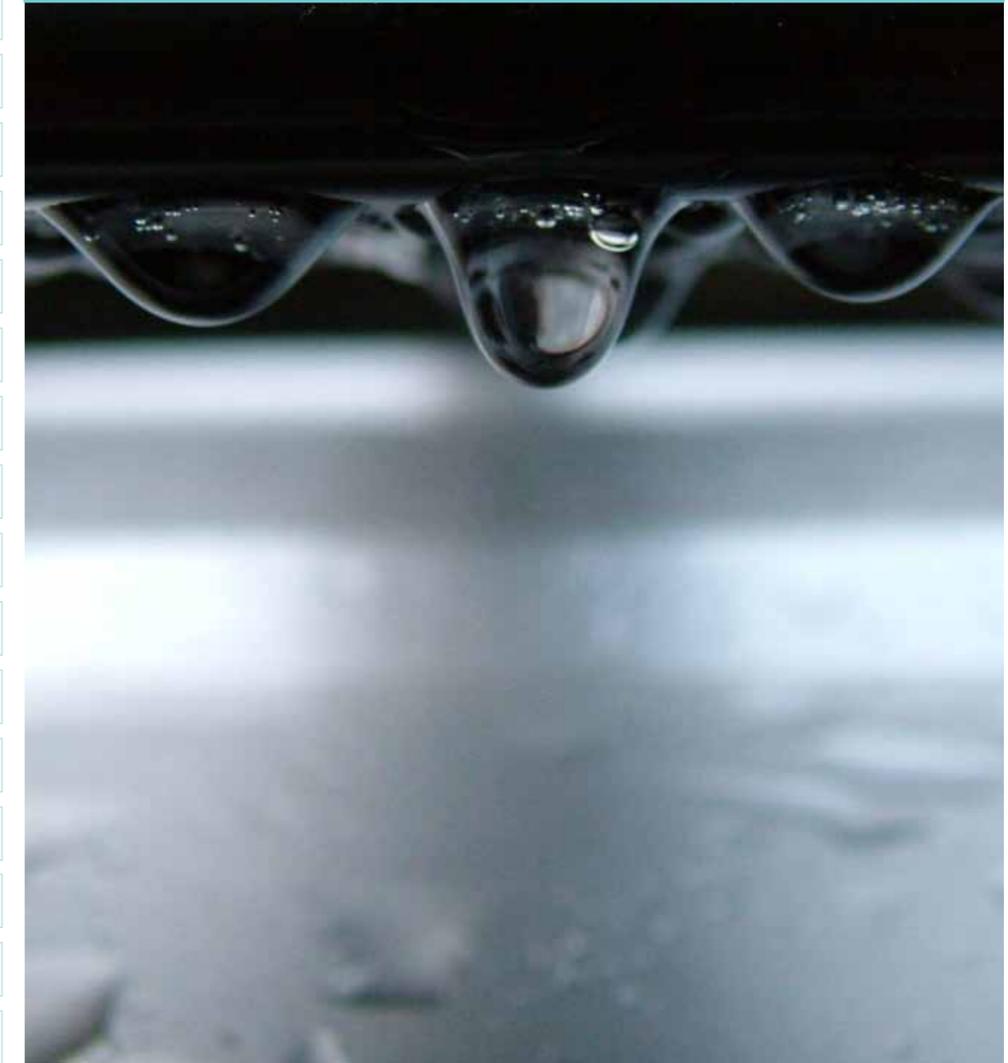
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## A GUIDE TO... Condensation & Mould Growth



TRANSFORMING HOMES, LIVES AND NEIGHBOURHOODS



If your home is damp or you find patches of mould on walls, furnishings or clothes, condensation may be the cause. The tips in this leaflet will help you solve the problem.

### Why you get condensation

Air can only hold a certain amount of water vapour - the warmer it is the more it can hold. If it is cooled by contact with a cold surface such as a mirror, a window or even a wall, the water vapour will turn into droplets of water - condensation. So the warmer you keep your home the less likely you are to get condensation.

### When it is a problem

Every home gets condensation at some time - usually when lots of moisture and steam are being produced, for instance at bath-times, when a main meal is being cooked or when clothes are being washed. It is quite normal to find your bedroom windows misted up in the morning after a cold night. There is nothing much you can do to stop this.

But if your home never seems to be free from condensation, read on...



### How you know if it is condensation

It is not always easy to tell. But other kinds of damp, such as rain or plumbing leaks, usually leave a 'tidemark'. Condensation is usually found on north-facing walls and in corners, in cupboards and under work surfaces - in fact wherever there is little air movement.

If you are not sure what is causing the damp in your home, start by checking pipes and overflows and under sinks to see if there are any obvious leaks.

Have a look outside too - you may be able to see if there are slates missing from the roof or cracked gutters or rainwater pipes. If you live in a new or recently modernised house or flat, don't forget that it may not have dried out from the water remaining after building work. It usually takes 9 to 18 months for this to happen and you may need to use more heat during that time.

## What can you do about it

### Heating

You will get less condensation if you keep your home warm most of the time. Insulation will help you do this. But with fuel the price it is, try remember the following too:

- **It is important that your heating system is checked regularly so that it works efficiently**
- **Try to leave some background heat on through the day in cold weather. Most dwellings take quite a long time to warm up, and it may cost you more if you try to heat it up quickly in the evening**
- **If you can't afford to spend more on fuel because of high quarterly bills, ask your fuel supplier or your local gas or electricity board about their budget schemes, for example fuel saving stamps, which help to spread the cost of fuel**



### Ventilation

The more moisture produced in your home, the greater are the chances of condensation, unless there is adequate ventilation. Nobody likes draughts, but some ventilation is essential.

### Windows

In winter open windows a little, only as long as they are misted up. If you fit draught stripping, leave a space for a small amount of air to get through. If you have vents to your windows please do not cover them as they will help reduce condensation.

### Chimneys

Never block these up completely. If you are blocking up a fireplace, fit an air vent to allow some ventilation.

### Bottled gas and paraffin heaters

You will need to allow extra ventilation if you use one. Flueless heaters of this sort produce more than a pint of water for every pint of fuel they burn.

## Remember

**The way you use your home affects the amount of condensation you get.**

**This does not mean that you should alter your habits drastically, just bear in mind the following tips.**

### Drying clothes

Drying clothes indoors, particularly on radiators, can increase condensation unless you open a window to allow the air to circulate.

If you have a tumble dryer which is not vented to the outside you will need to allow more ventilation when you use it, such as opening the window and positioning the vent hose out of it.



### Cupboards and wardrobes

Don't overfill cupboards and wardrobes. And always make sure that some air can circulate freely by fitting ventilators in doors and leaving a space at the back of the shelves.

### Doors

Keep kitchen and bathroom doors shut, particularly when cooking, washing or bathing - otherwise water vapour will spread right through the house and condensation will probably reach other rooms.

### Extractor fans

If you have an extractor fan, use it when the windows get steamed up.

### Kettles and pans

Don't allow kettles and pans to boil away any longer than is necessary and use the lids on your pans to reduce steam.

