



**All about
preventing
condensation**



All homes can be affected by condensation and it can cause mould, damage to clothes, furnishings and decoration, and leave a musty smell.

Condensation and the problems it causes can sometimes be mistaken for damp. Damp usually leaves a tidemark and dependent on the cause would need treatment to the structure of the building to eliminate it.

This guide gives helpful advice on how you can treat condensation and mould in your home.

■ What is condensation?

There is always moisture in the air, even if you cannot see it. When the air gets colder, it cannot hold all the moisture and tiny drops of water appear – this is called condensation.

You may notice condensation when you see your breath on a cold day or when the mirror mists over when you have a bath.

Condensation happens more in rooms where there is a lot of moisture, such as in bathrooms and kitchens and in rooms occupied by a lot of people.

Condensation mainly forms in cold rooms when there is little movement of air and often leads to black mould growth forming on walls, furniture, curtains and clothes.

■ Why does it happen?

There are three main causes of condensation:

- excess moisture produced by everyday activities
- inadequate ventilation
- insufficient heating.

Cooking, drying clothes, showering and even breathing all add to moisture in the air. You might be surprised to learn how much moisture everyday activities can produce.

- Cooking and boiling a kettle = **6 pints**
- Having a bath or shower = **2 pints**
- Washing clothes = **1 pint**
- Drying clothes = **9 pints**
- Using a paraffin or bottled gas heater = **3 pints**

Total moisture produced in your home in one day
= up to 21 pints!

Preventing condensation is about getting the right balance between insulation, heating, moisture and ventilation.

“Condensation and the problems it causes can be mistaken for damp.”

■ Ways you can tackle the problem

There are some easy steps that you can take to reduce or prevent condensation in your home.

Reduce moisture

- When cooking or bathing, close kitchen and bathroom doors to prevent steam spreading into colder rooms.
- Cover boiling pans when cooking.
- Dry clothes outside where possible, rather than on radiators.
- Make sure your tumble dryer is correctly vented to the outside (unless it is a condensing dryer) – there are DIY kits available to do this.
- Avoid using bottled gas or paraffin heaters as they produce a lot of moisture.
- When filling your bath, run the cold water first and then add hot water as this will reduce the steam produced by 90%.
- Every morning wipe off moisture that has formed overnight on your windows and window sills.
- Cover fish tanks to stop water evaporating into the air.

Ventilate your home

- Open windows to allow excess moisture to escape when you are cooking or washing.
- Use an extractor fan if you have one; they are cheap to run and quickly remove moisture from a room.
- If you have to dry clothes inside, do so in a small room with the windows open.
- Do not block wall vents, especially where there are gas and heating appliances as they need a supply of oxygen to work effectively and allow potentially dangerous gases, such as carbon monoxide, to escape.
- Allow air to circulate around furniture and in cupboards by making sure they are not over-filled and there is space between furniture and the wall.
- Leave a small window downstairs and a small window upstairs slightly open for about 30 minutes each day. They should be on opposite sides of the house or diagonally opposite if you live in a flat. At the same time, open all the inside doors to allow drier air to circulate.

“Dry clothes
outside where possible
rather than on radiators.”

Keep your home warm

- Maintain a low heat when the weather is cold or wet – this is more effective than short bursts of high heat. Warm air holds more moisture than cooler air, so cool air is more likely to cause condensation.

- Keep a constant level of heat throughout your home, ideally between 17°C and 21°C. Heating one room to a high temperature and leaving other rooms cold makes condensation worse in the un-heated rooms and works out cheaper than constantly heating a cold home to the temperature you want.

“Keep a constant level of heat throughout your home.”

What you should do if you find mould in your house?

- Do not disturb mould by brushing or vacuuming it as this will release spores into the atmosphere.
- Mould is a living organism that has to be killed to get rid of it. To do this, wipe down affected areas with a fungicidal wash – this can be bought from DIY or hardware stores. Choose one which carries a Health and Safety Executive approved number and make sure you follow the manufacturer's instructions. Do not use bleach or washing up liquid to remove mould.
- After the fungicidal wash treatment, re-decorate using a good quality fungicidal paint to help prevent mould recurring. Please note that fungicidal paint will not be effective if you later wallpaper over it with ordinary wallpaper or paints.
- After removing the mould, do what you can to reduce excess moisture in your home as this will prevent new mould forming.
- Clothes affected by mould should be dry cleaned and affected carpets should be shampooed.

Other types of damp you might come across

Rising damp

This is usually prevented by a damp proof course in the walls. When a damp proof course fails, damp wall plaster can usually be seen as a distinct tide mark above the skirting board.

Penetrating damp

This is caused by a problem with the structure of the building which allows rainwater to get through the walls, roof, windows or doors.

Plumbing faults, such as leaking pipes

These usually appear as spreading brown stains or droplets of water dripping from a ceiling. They can cause significant damage, so any suspected leaking pipework should be reported to the customer services team on **0300 555 6666** as soon as possible.

Getting Help

If you experience a problem with mould growth in your home, you must follow the advice in this guide to ensure condensation is not forming as a result of your lifestyle. If you have followed this advice for several weeks and have

seen no obvious improvement in the situation or you suspect another cause of damp, please contact us on **0300 555 6666** and ask for a damp survey to be arranged.

Contact us

Find us online

Find out more about our services, report a repair or access your account online 24 hours a day, seven days a week.

🌐 whg.uk.com

Email us

✉ enquiries@whgrp.co.uk

Call us

☎ **0300 555 6666**

Our Customer Contact Centre is open 8am to 8pm Monday to Friday and 8am to 1pm on Saturdays.

Emergency repairs can be reported 24 hours a day, seven days a week.

Calls are charged at local rates, including from mobiles.

Visit us

Our offices are open from 9am to 5pm, Monday to Friday. Our office locations are shown below.

100 Hatherton Street
Walsall WS1 1AB

Beechwood House
New Road
Willenhall WV13 2BG



Please contact us if you would like this information in another language, in Braille, large print or audio.

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Prosimy się z nami skontaktować, w celu uzyskania niniejszych informacji w innym języku, napisanych brajlem, dużym drukiem lub nagranych na nośniku audio.

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مات دیگر زبان، بریل، بڑے حروف یا آڈیو کی شکل میں چاہتے ہیں تو براہ کرم ہم سے رابطہ کریں۔ اگر آپ کو یہ معلو



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