



Mould and condensation

Advice and guidance on how to deal with
condensation related mould in your home

Mould and condensation

Mould can be caused by condensation and not only does it look unpleasant, it can also cause damage to your health, your home and your belongings.

What is condensation?

Condensation is created when warm air comes into contact with cold surfaces, or when there's too much moisture in your home.

It's a more common problem during the colder months and it can be found on or near windows, in the corner of rooms and even in wardrobes or cupboards or behind large items of furniture where air flow is restricted.

The dampness caused by a large amount of condensation can lead to the growth of mould on walls, furniture and other belongings, mildew on fabrics and can even cause wood to rot – including window frames.

What causes condensation?

There are three main factors that can cause condensation:

There's too much moisture in the air

There are lots of everyday activities that can create additional moisture, such as cooking, showering, using a tumble drier or drying washing indoors.

There's not enough ventilation

The risk of condensation is increased if the air in your home isn't allowed to circulate freely. Move

By following this guidance you can limit the amount of condensation – and reduce the effects of mould in your home, all year round.

wardrobes or sofas slightly away from the walls to allow the air to flow.

It's too cold

The colder your home is, the more likely you are to get condensation in your home. If you heat one room and leave others cold, it will make the condensation worse in the unheated rooms. It's much better to have an even temperature throughout your home.

How do I reduce condensation?

It's your responsibility to ensure that your home is free from condensation and mould. There are a number of steps you can take to try and prevent the issue becoming a problem.

Drying clothes

Where possible, please dry any washing outside. If you have to dry clothes inside, please use a clothes horse – NOT a radiator – and dry next to an open window or in a bathroom with an extractor fan.

Ventilate your home

After you've used your kitchen or bathroom, ventilate the room for 15-20 minutes by opening a window or using an extractor fan (if you have one). Always keep the door to the room shut while you do this to prevent the moisture-heavy air from spreading to the rest of your home.

If it's safe to do so, ventilate your bedroom at night by leaving a window slightly ajar or open a window in the morning for half an

hour when you get up. If you have trickle vents fitted to your windows, please use them. These are small vents on the windows that allow air movement inside the property. They are more common in new properties.

Keep a consistent, warm temperature

Even when taking the steps above to ventilate your home, you should also make sure that the temperature is kept consistent and warm. Ideally, the temperature would be between 16–18°C and never below 15°C.

If you're worried about the cost of heating your home, why not speak to one of our Money Advisors? To find out more about the team and how they could help you, visit www.longhurst-group.org.uk/money-advice

Other simple steps you can take:

- ▶ Wipe down condensation from windows with a dry cloth and open a window for a while. Wring the cloth into the sink rather than drying it on a radiator.
- ▶ Keep a small gap between large items of furniture and the walls to help air circulate
- ▶ Keep your curtains open during the day to let plenty of natural light in as mould thrives in the dark
- ▶ If you use a tumble drier, make sure that it ventilates to outside your home
- ▶ Always cook with pan lids on and reduce the heat once the water has boiled
- ▶ Always leave a small window open while cooking to allow excess moisture to escape



- ▶ If you have an extractor fan, run it for 10 minutes after you've finished
- ▶ Filling your bath with cold water before adding hot will significantly reduce the amount of steam.

Removing mould

You should remove mould as soon as it appears. The good news is that, while it's unpleasant, mould can be treated very easily.

To remove mould, follow these simple steps:

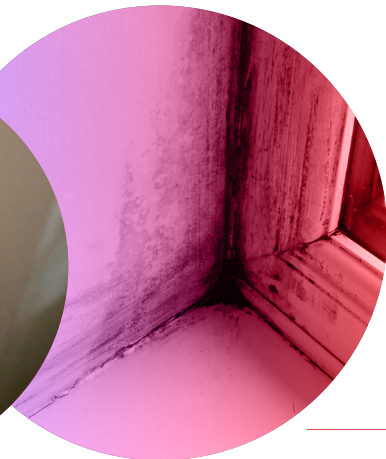
1. Always wear rubber gloves, safety goggles, and a dust mask before cleaning
2. Wipe down the affected area with a fungicidal wash or spray that has been approved by the Health and Safety Executive (HSE). Always follow the instructions on the bottle very carefully. Please note, chlorine bleach can only kill surface mould and won't destroy its roots.
3. After treatment, use fungicidal-resistant paint to help prevent re-growth
4. DO NOT try to remove mould using a brush or vacuum cleaner.

Damp

Condensation will not leave a watermark on surfaces – this is more likely to be damp, which might have been caused by another issue, such as:

- ▶ Leaks from windows, roofs or guttering
- ▶ Penetrating moisture through walls.

If you're concerned that moisture on your walls might be caused by something other than condensation, please contact Wates.





longhurst-group.org.uk