



**Keeping your home free  
from condensation, damp  
and mould**



## What is condensation?

Condensation is caused by moisture in the air. There's always some moisture in the air, and warm air holds more moisture than cold air.

Condensation happens when the warm, moist air comes into contact with a cold surface, such as windows, mirrors or tiles. It also forms in cold rooms where the air doesn't move much, such as behind furniture, in corners and in wardrobes.



Although it's not a problem where it can be wiped away easily, it can cause a problem when it builds up in areas that are not easily accessible. This can lead to excessive dampness, which can cause mould to grow.

## What causes condensation?

There are three main causes of condensation:

- too much moisture production in your home
- insufficient ventilation for air to move around
- difference in temperature i.e. too hot / too cold

Everyday activities such as breathing, cooking, washing, drying clothes indoors, using portable gas and paraffin heaters, topping up fish tanks etc add moisture to the existing moisture already present in the air.

## How much moisture can be produced in your home in a day?

Two people active for one day - 3 pints



Cooking and using a kettle - 6 pints



Having a bath or shower - 2 pints



Washing clothes - 1 pint



Drying clothes - 9 pints



## What can condensation do to your home?

Condensation can cause black mould on walls and furniture, mildew on clothes, curtains and other fabrics, and can even damage plasterwork and rot wooden window frames. Damp, humid conditions can also increase the number of house mites. This could affect the health of people who have breathing conditions such as asthma or bronchitis.



## What can you do to control condensation in your home?

The most important thing to do is to reduce moisture levels in your home. There are a number of steps you can take to do this, including:

- Cover boiling pans when you're cooking and use your extractor fan if you have one.



- Don't use your gas /portable heater to heat a room because this produces more moisture.
- Dry clothes outside, or if you have a tumble dryer vent correctly to the outside.
- If you're running a bath, put the cold water in first to reduce the amount of steam.
- Close the kitchen and bathroom doors to stop water vapour moving to other parts of your house.
- If you have condensation on your windows in the morning, dry them with a cloth.

Another step to take is to increase ventilation in your home to allow moisture to escape.

- Open windows, especially when cooking or washing. And open them after you've had a shower or bath.

- Use extractor fans if you have them.
- Move furniture away from the walls to allow air to circulate and move behind them.
- Don't block air vents in walls or floors.

Maintaining a constant heat throughout your house will also help reduce condensation in your home. The best way to heat your home is through having steady background heating on throughout the day.

Heating one room to a high temperature and leaving other rooms cold makes condensation worse in the unheated rooms. It will also cause issues if the temperature in a room or the whole house changes from warm to cold throughout the day. This will increase excess moisture which could lead to mould appearing and growing.



This is because each time the room cools down, the moisture in the air settles onto the cold surfaces, such as walls, ceiling, furniture etc. Keeping your heating on all day on a low heat, will increase the temperature of your walls and reduce the likelihood of condensation forming. However, this can be costly so make sure you keep an eye on your gas and electricity meters.

You need to keep an even temperature so sometimes over ventilating your home can also cause condensation.

And remember to make sure you let us check your gas appliances every year.

## What can you do to treat mould which has been caused by condensation?

- Use a fungicidal wash to clean any mould affected walls, ceilings and paintwork. Use a mould and mildew remover which you can usually find in DIY stores. It's important that you follow the instructions carefully for health and safety reasons. Use a product that carries a Health and Safety Executive (HSE) approved number.
- Dry-clean mildewed clothes and shampoo carpets. Don't try to remove mould by using a brush or vacuum cleaner, as this can release spores and increase the risk of breathing problems.
- After treatment, redecorate using a good-quality fungicidal paint and fungicidal wallpaper paste to help prevent the mould returning. The effect of fungicidal or anti-condensation paint and paste is destroyed if covered with ordinary paint or wallpaper.

But remember – the only lasting cure for severe mould is to get rid of the damp in your home by reducing condensation.

## Is my damp being caused by condensation?

Although condensation is a major cause of damp, sometimes dampness can be as a result of other issues. It could be because of leaking internal or external pipes or a roof leak due to broken or missing tiles or gutters, due to a damaged damp proof course.

If you think your home is suffering from one of these, then please contact us on 0300 123 2222.





 0300 123 222

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**Merlin Housing Society**

Building 1, Riverside Court  
Bowling Hill, Chipping Sodbury  
Bristol, BS37 6JX

[www.merlinhs.co.uk](http://www.merlinhs.co.uk)

