



Keep your home free from
CONDENSATION



This leaflet explains how condensation forms and how you can keep it to a minimum, so reducing the risk of dampness and mould growth in your home.

Three factors contribute to the condensation:

- **high humidity**
- **low temperature of the walls/surfaces**
- **poor ventilation.**

There is always some moisture in the air, even if you cannot see it. But if the air gets colder it cannot hold all the moisture and tiny drops of water appear. This is condensation. You may notice it when you see your breath on a cold day, or when the mirror mists over when you have a bath. Condensation occurs mainly during cold weather, whether it is raining or dry and it appears in places where there is little movement of air. Look for it in corners of rooms, on or near windows, in or behind wardrobes and cupboards, particularly in rooms which have north-facing walls.



TIPS TO HELP REDUCE CONDENSATION IN YOUR HOME

The following four steps will help you reduce the condensation in your home.

PRODUCE LESS MOISTURE

- Keep doors to kitchen and bathroom closed when cooking or bathing to prevent moisture migrating to other parts of the property
- Open windows during cooking and during/after bathing and make sure extractor fans are switched on and working properly
- Cover pots and pans when cooking and use cooker hoods if fitted
- Close kitchen and bathroom doors when these rooms are in use, even if your kitchen or bathroom has an extractor fan. It will help to draught-proof these doors and will help stop the moisture reaching other rooms, especially bedrooms, which are often colder and where condensation often forms.
- Put washing outdoors to dry if you can. If you have to dry clothes inside, use a separate room, preferably the bathroom and make sure the door is closed and the window is open and extract fan switched on where applicable, so that moisture can escape outside
- If you have a tumble dryer make sure you vent it to the outside (unless it is the self-condensing type).

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REMOVE THE MOISTURE

- You can ventilate your home without causing draughts and some ventilation is needed to get rid of moisture that is being produced all the time, including moisture produced by people's breath.
- Keep a small window ajar or trickle ventilators in windows open all the time if possible, and especially when someone is in the room.



- Ensure that any boxes, bags etc. do not restrict airflow within your home
- Open doors to ventilate cupboards and wardrobes. Leave space between the backs of wardrobes and the wall.
- Where possible, position wardrobes and furniture against internal walls rather than against outside walls.
- Try to avoid drawing curtains and blinds when possible, as this makes the surface of windows cooler and increases condensation.

- Keep covers on fish tanks, so water does not evaporate and contribute to excess moisture in your home
- Don't keep too many house plants, as regular watering will increase the moisture levels in the air. If you do have house plants, try to keep them in the hall or on a balcony where there is good natural ventilation

DRAUGHT-PROOF

- When the whole home is warmer, condensation is less likely.
- When draught-proofing, do not block permanent ventilators.
- Do not completely block chimneys - leave a hole about two bricks in size and fit a louvred grille over it.
- Do not draught-proof rooms where there is a fuel burning heater e.g. gas fire or cooker.
- Do not draught-proof windows in the bathroom or kitchen.



HEAT YOUR HOME A LITTLE MORE



- Keeping a warmer home eases the strain on your heart during cold weather helps to reduce the risk of a heart attack
- When away from home, the temperature in the rooms should not drop under 15 degrees Celsius to avoid condensation and increased humidity levels. Do not heat up cold bedrooms in the evening by opening the door to heated rooms, as the warm and humid air will condensate on the cold walls of the bedroom.
- By reducing condensation, your home will also be more thermally efficient, making it easier and more cost effective for you to heat



How To Treat Evidence Of Condensation

- If you are experiencing condensation on windows, wipe down the windows and sills every morning and wring out the cloth rather than drying it on a radiator.



- Condensation channels and sponge strips can also be bought from DIY shops, which when fitted to windows, collect the condensation and thus help prevent window frames from rotting and avoid damp forming under sills.
- If you have visible mould around windows or on walls or ceilings, firstly treat the mould by wiping down walls and window frames with a fungicidal wash which carries a Health and Safety Executive 'approval number'. Follow the manufacturer's instructions precisely.
- After treatment redecorate using a good quality fungicidal paint to help prevent mould from returning. Note that this paint is not effective if over-painted with ordinary paints or wallpaper. When wallpapering, use a paste containing a fungicide to prevent further mould growth.
- The only lasting way of avoiding severe mould is to eliminate the source of the dampness.

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