



Building **homes**, building **communities**



A Guide to Managing Condensation, Damp and Mould

Condensation, Damp & Mould

What is Condensation?

Condensation happens when moisture in warmer air comes into contact with a colder surface and turns into water droplets. This often occurs on windows and cold walls.

Main causes

Producing too much moisture: cooking, drying clothes, showering, baths, overcrowding and multiple pets add moisture to the air inside your home.

Not letting the moist air out: by not ventilating the property, it traps moisture in your home.

Not turning the heating on: colder air holds less moisture, so if there's no heating, droplets of water will appear around your home.

Not having enough insulation: makes the air colder and there are more cold surfaces to attract moisture.

Why is it a problem?

When condensation isn't cleaned up, it can turn into patchy, black mould, with a musty odour.

Mould can form on any surface and is often found on walls, window frames, furniture and soft furnishings (such as curtains and sofas).

Over time, condensation can cause damage to your home, rotting wooden window frames, peeling wallpaper and mould stains on clothes and carpets.

Mould spores can pose a danger to health and increase the risk of asthma and other chest problems, particularly to children, older people and those with existing skin and respiratory conditions or a weaker immune system.



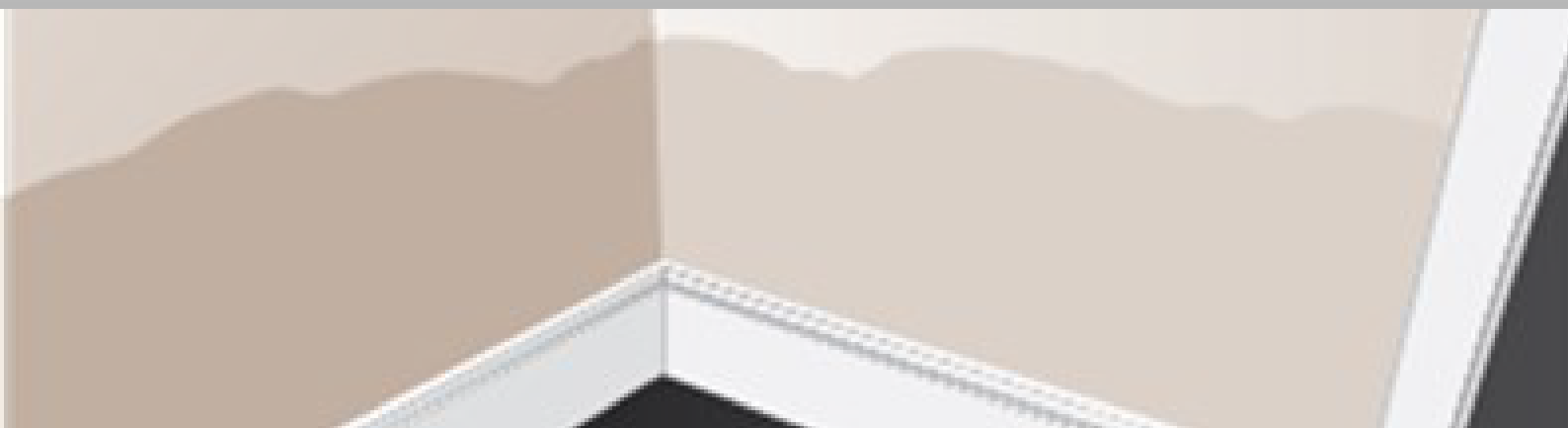
Other causes of damp

Condensation is not the only cause of damp in homes.

If you can see:	It might be caused by:
A clear damp patch which is wet to touch, thick mould may also start to grow.	Water leaking from waste pipes, water pipes, overflow, damage, etc.
A clear damp patch which is likely to be wet to touch and worse when it rains, thick mould may also start to grow.	Water coming in through leaking pipes, gutters, cracked/damaged walls, in masonry, damaged cladding, missing roof tile, etc.
A 'tidemark' on the wall about a metre above the floor (see picture below).	Rising damp caused by a failure in the damp course treatment in your home.

If you think the damp in your home is caused by any of the above problems, contact your Housing Officer.

If you have damp and you cannot find any of the causes listed above, the problem is likely to be condensation. Follow the steps for avoiding condensation in this leaflet.



How you can avoid condensation

You can avoid condensation by creating less moisture, letting moist air out and keeping your home warm. Follow these easy steps:

Kitchen



- Keep a lid on pots and pans when cooking.
- Close the door and open the window when cooking.
- Use an extractor fan if you have one and, if possible, leave on until the steam has cleared.
- Open windows wide for up to 10 minutes a day, when possible, to let moist air out.

- Take shorter showers.
- Keep doors closed.
- Open window wide for up to 10 minutes a day, when possible, to let moist air out.
- Use an extractor fan.
- Wipe down surfaces where condensation has collected (shower screens, tiles, cisterns, windows, mirrors).

Bathroom



How you can avoid condensation

You can avoid condensation by creating less moisture, letting moist air out and keeping your home warm. Follow these easy steps:

Laundry



- Dry clothes outdoors if possible.
- If you must dry clothes indoors, use an airer, open the window or switch on an extractor fan and close the door to that room.
- If using a tumble dryer, ensure it is vented externally or is self-condensing.
- **Avoid** putting clothes on a radiator.

- Open curtains and blinds during the day.
- Ensure trickle vents on window frames are open where existing.
- Ensure any ventilation systems are switched on.
- Wipe down surfaces where condensation has collected (particularly in winter) to prevent mould growth.
- Leave spaces between furniture and walls where possible and reduce clutter to let air move freely around rooms.
- **Avoid** using paraffin or bottle gas heaters.

General



Keep your home warm



- Keep the temperature throughout your home between 18°C and 21°C.
- If you are worried your home isn't warm enough, please contact your Housing Officer in the first instance to find out if you need more insulation, draught-proofing, or energy advice/referrals.
- While portable gas or paraffin heaters can keep you warm, they release high levels of water vapour into your home, increasing the risk of condensation.

Decoration



When decorating bathrooms and kitchens, use specialist emulsion paints specifically designed for bathrooms and kitchens, which are wipeable and help to reduce the growth of mould.

Effective insulation

The Association will ensure that your home is properly insulated and draught-proofed and that it has an effective damp-proof course. Report any cracks or gaps in structures, and report any damage to gutters or roofing, sooner rather than later.

If you think that your home does not have sufficient insulation please let us know so that we can check.





How to Remove

To remove mould, wipe down walls and window frames with a preparatory mouldicide or fungicidal wash which carries a Health and Safety Executive approval number.

Dry clean mildewed clothes and shampoo carpets. Disturbing the mould by brushing or vacuum cleaning can increase the risk of distribution of spores and respiratory problems.

As an alternate home remedy to the purchase of mould remover: combine a teaspoon of bicarbonate of soda with water in a spray bottle and shake until it has dissolved. Spray it directly onto the mould area and leave for a few minutes. Use a scrubbing brush or sponge to remove the mould, then wipe the solution off with water. Spray the solution on the area again and let it dry.

Note: If using a purchased mould remover, always follow the manufacturer's instructions and consider wearing a face mask when spraying. Be sure to always stand on a secure platform, for example a step ladder, when working at height, understand your own limitations and seek assistance if needed.





Our Primary Advice



**Ensure
Property
Ventilation**



**Reduce
Moisture
Levels**



**Maintain a
Constant Heat
(18° - 21°)**

If you need further assistance or have any questions or issues with condensation, damp or mould - please get in touch:

Phone: 01856 875253 and speak to your Housing Officer

Email: repairs@ohal.org.uk

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