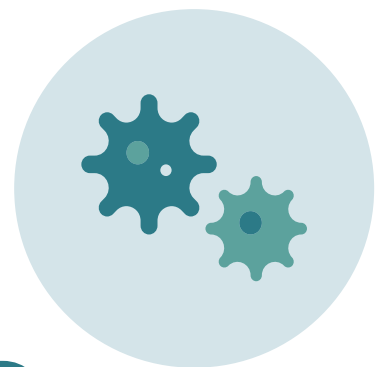


How to prevent

Condensation, Damp & Mould

Advice for home owners and tenants

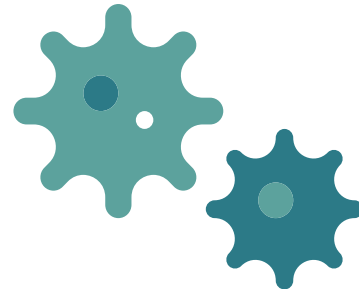


Mould, damp and condensation

What is mould?

Mould is a fungus that grows when mould spores settle on damp surfaces. It is black, grey or green and grows in spots.

Mould can cause allergic reactions. Symptoms include sneezing, runny nose, eye infections, irritation, eczema, coughs, and wheezing.



Is mould dangerous?

If you live in a home with damp, mould and dust mites you might develop asthma or other serious health conditions. In some cases, it can be fatal. Elderly people, young children and people with chronic illness are more at risk.



Living in a damp home can impact your mental health and well-being. It can worsen heart and respiratory problems and cause infections.

How does mould affect the home?

Not only does damp and mould impact your health, it can damage the structure and stability of your home.

Moisture in the air and condensation can cause wallpaper and paint to peel, wood to rot, floorboards to warp and swell, and metal to rust.

It can also cost more to heat a damp home.



Mould, damp and condensation

What causes dampness?

Dampness is usually caused by a problem with the property structure, and/or condensation. **Examples include:**

- ▶ slipped tiles
- ▶ blocked drains
- ▶ broken rainwater pipes
- ▶ faulty damp proof course

What causes condensation?

Water vapour is created in your home every day by breathing, drying clothes, cooking and bathing.

Condensation develops when water vapour collects on a cold surface. It can happen at any time of the year and is often seen on windows, walls, tiled areas, concrete floors and toilet cisterns.

- ▶ To encourage air to circulate, you should open windows and trickle vents regularly



Dew Point

The dew point is the temperature at which the air inside your home becomes saturated with water vapour. The extra vapour condenses into liquid water or dew and frost can form.

Understanding the dew point can help you manage condensation by controlling:

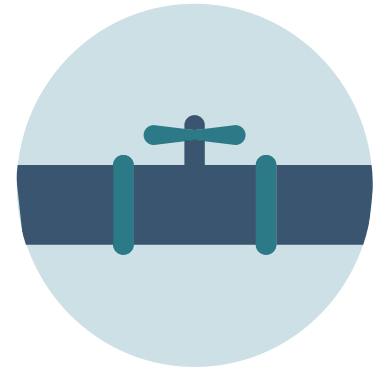
- ▶ Moisture levels
- ▶ Air flow through ventilation
- ▶ Room temperature, heating and insulation.

If you are the homeowner

Check out the guidance below. It suggests improvements you can make to help prevent damp and mould in the home.

Make the home watertight

- ▶ Make sure the home has an effective damp proof course
- ▶ Make sure gutters and downpipes are working
- ▶ Fix any broken or loose roof tiles
- ▶ Protect any outside pipes from frost



Ventilate the home properly

- ▶ Fit extractor fans to shower rooms, bathrooms, and kitchens
- ▶ Put an extractor fan above the hob
- ▶ Fit trickle vents in double glazed windows
- ▶ Make sure tumble dryers vent to the outside



Make sure the home can be heated well and in a cost-effective way

- ▶ The heating should be warm enough to keep the building above dew-point. Make sure there is working heating in each habitable room to reach a minimum of 21°C
- ▶ Insulate loft spaces and walls



If damp and condensation persist you should review the home's Energy Performance Certificate (EPC) for more recommendations.

If you live in the home

Make sure you keep your home heated and well ventilated. Can you make small changes to your daily routines to create a healthier home? Read our tips below.

IMPORTANT

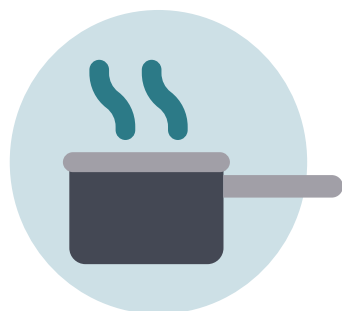
Tell your landlord about any leaks or early signs of dampness.

How to manage condensation



Drying clothes

Try to dry your clothes outside. If drying clothing indoors, place on a drying rack in a sunny or heated room where a window can be opened slightly and keep the door closed.



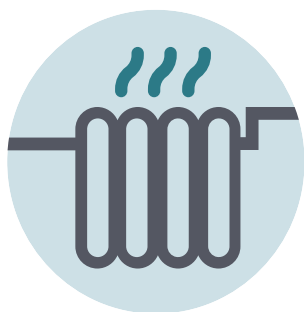
Cooking

To reduce moisture you should keep lids on pans when cooking and use an extractor fan. Keep the kitchen door closed to stop moisture spreading to other rooms.



Ventilating

Open your windows regularly but always after producing moisture e.g. running a bath. Open trickle vents in double glazed windows and leave your windows ajar if safe to do so. You may also consider installing a dehumidifier.



Heating

Try to keep a constant temperature of 19°C in all rooms. This will reduce the likelihood of water vapour condensing on cold surfaces.

Avoid heating your home for short bursts of time. Learn to use your heating system and thermostatic controls to heat your home efficiently.

If you live in the home

Other ways to manage condensation

When creating moisture, e.g. boiling water or running a bath, ventilate the room and close the door to stop wet air spreading to colder rooms.



Mop up any water that sits on the window glass and sills.

Avoid using appliances that create lots of moisture such as liquid paraffin or bottled gas room heaters.



Preventing and dealing with mould growth

Deal with any mould you spot quickly. Tell your landlord who may be able to paint the area with a mould inhibiting paint after it is treated and take other actions.

To remove the mould safely and stop it coming back, follow these steps:

1. Ventilate the area before you start
2. Spray the area of mould with a bleach solution, following the instructions on the bottle
3. Use a scrubbing brush to remove all traces of mould and loose debris
4. Repeat if needed
5. Rinse and dry the area with a cloth



What if damp and condensation persist?

Tenants

- ▶ Contact your local council's environmental health team or Rent Smart Wales for advice. See further resources below.

Property owners

- ▶ You may be breaking the law if the property is not fit for human habitation. You could be asked to improve the structure, heating, or ventilation to the building and face other consequences such as legal action and fines.



Further resources

Take the Rent Smart Wales 'Safe and Healthy Homes' training course. It has been created for property owners and managing agents.

Visit: www.rentsmart.gov.wales/en/courses/

The Welsh Government scheme 'Nest' offers free, impartial advice. You could be eligible for a package of free home energy efficiency improvements such as a new boiler, central heating, insulation, solar panels or a heat pump.

Visit: www.gov.wales/get-help-energy-efficiency-your-home-nest

UK Government has guidance on understanding and addressing the health risks of damp and mould in the home (parts relate to England only).

Visit: www.gov.uk/search/all and search 'Understanding and addressing the health risks of damp and mould in the home'