



A guide to managing condensation and mould in your home

There is always some moisture in the air, even if you cannot see it. Condensation is when moisture in the air collects on a cooler surface. Most people have a little bit of condensation in their homes, but condensation can lead to mould if there is too much moisture in the air, or if moisture is left on surfaces for too long.



Causes of condensation:

There are four main factors that cause condensation:

- Too much moisture produced in the home
- Lack of airflow and ventilation
- Insufficient temperature control
- Cold surfaces

How much extra moisture you can be adding to the air in your home every day

Drying clothes indoors
= 9 pints



Cooking and using a kettle
= 6 pints



Two people at home breathing
= 3 pints



Taking a bath or shower
= 2 pints



Washing dishes
= 2 pints



Total
= 22 pints of extra moisture in the air

What to look for

Condensation can appear on or near windows, it can be seen on mirrors when you have a bath or shower, and on cold surfaces such as tiles or cold walls. It can also be found in corners or behind wardrobes and cupboards. Condensation forms on cold surfaces and places where there is little movement of air.

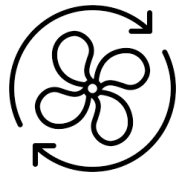
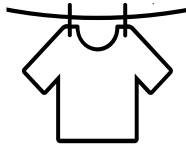
Dampness caused by excessive condensation can lead to mould growth on walls and furniture, mildew on clothes and other fabrics and the rotting of wooden window frames.

How to manage condensation and mould

There are some simple things everyone can do to manage condensation and mould in their homes:

Reduce moisture in the air

1. Hang your washing outside to dry if possible or hang it in a sunny room with the door closed and a window slightly open. Don't be tempted to put it on radiators with the windows closed.
2. Wipe down windows and windowsills with a sponge every morning if there is moisture on them, as well as surfaces in the kitchen or bathroom that have become wet.
3. Always cook with pan lids on, and only boil as much water as you need in a kettle. This won't just prevent steam escaping, but also saves energy.
4. Make sure you always have your extractor fans on when you're in the shower or bath, or when you're cooking. If you don't have extractor fans, keep your windows slightly open whilst bathing or cooking if you can, and close doors to other rooms in the house.
5. When filling your bath, run the cold water first then add the hot, it will reduce the steam by 90% which leads to condensation.
6. Use a dehumidifier if you have one to reduce moisture levels.



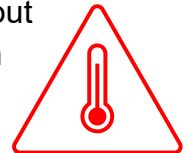
Increase airflow

7. Open windows when you can to let fresh air in and moist air out - especially first thing in the morning even if it's just for 10 minutes.
8. Don't put furniture, including beds, against any outside walls and try to leave a gap between the wall and furniture to allow air flow.



Heat your home efficiently

9. Set your heating to come on for a longer period but at a lower temperature rather than putting it on in short, high bursts. Try to keep all rooms throughout the house at a similar steady temperature (between 18°- 21°).
10. Insulation and draught proofing will also help keep the whole house warmer and will cut your fuel bills. If you can, lay thick carpet with a good thermal underlay and hang thick, heavy lined curtains in rooms.



Key points to help reduce condensation:

- Reduce the amount of moisture you produce in the home
- Improve airflow and ventilation in your home
- Maintain an adequate temperature in your home
- Reduce the number of cold surfaces by adding insulation

Dealing with mould

The best way to prevent mould is to follow the tips above. If you do have mould in your home the first step is to remove it from affected areas by using a special fungicidal wash or mould spray.

Special paints can also delay the return of the mould, but unless you take steps to reduce condensation it will eventually grow back.



If the problem continues after you have removed the mould and taken steps to reduce condensation you can contact the Council to arrange an inspection.

This visit can be booked through the Cambridge Online Portal or by emailing condensation@cambridge.gov.uk

Further help and advice

Keeping your home warm will reduce the impact of condensation and mould, but if you're struggling with the cost of living, please visit www.cambridge.gov.uk/cost-of-living-help for advice and the financial support you may be eligible for.

If you have a pre-pay meter and are struggling to afford to top it up, contact our partner PECT. They can offer advice, support and assess you for an emergency fuel voucher. They can also provide free energy saving products. Call their freephone on **0800 8021773** or email warmhomes@pect.org.uk

You can also contact LEAP which helps people who meet their criteria by offering energy tariff comparisons and installing simple energy saving measures. Book an appointment with LEAP by visiting www.applyforleap.org.uk or by calling their freephone **0800 060 7657**.

If you require any further help or advice in relation to condensation and mould issues please contact the Customer Service Centre team on **01223 457060**.