

Damp, condensation and mould guide

This guide will take you through how to identify different types of damp, condensation and mould and what causes them, what you can do about it yourself and how we can support you to effectively deal with it.

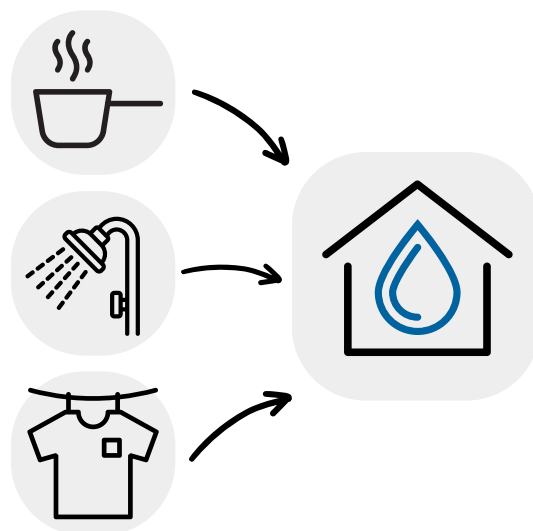
Condensation

What is condensation?

Condensation occurs when warm, humid air settles on cold surfaces and appears as water droplets. Windows steaming up is a common symptom of condensation in homes.

Condensation can also accumulate on windows, walls and surfaces.

Everyday activities such as cooking, bathing, washing clothes and even breathing can create warm, wet air which can settle on cold surfaces, and can cause damp and mould growth if left to build up.



How to prevent condensation

The first steps you can take to tackle your condensation issues involve simple steps such as opening windows regularly and drying clothes outside where possible.



Here are some ways you can reduce the build-up of damp and mould in your home:

Heating

Set your heating properly. By keeping your home at a steady temperature rather than having it heat up and cool down by a larger margin, you can help prevent condensation forming. If you need help with setting your heating or if your heating is faulty contact the Housing Repairs team.

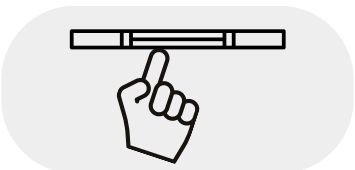
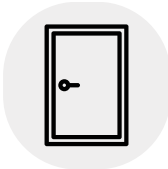


Cooking

Keep lids on saucepans, open windows and use your extractor fan. Keep the door closed to prevent damp air from travelling into other rooms.

Bathing

When having a shower or bath, close the door and make sure you open a window and use your extractor fan, when finished wipe down any excess water on surfaces.



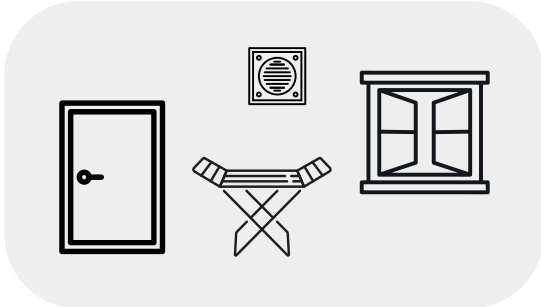
Window ventilation

Keep trickle vents open. They can usually be found at the top of your window frames if they're fitted. Open windows when needed to ventilate rooms.

Drying clothes

Dry your clothes outside when you can or in the bathroom with an extractor fan running or a window open ensuring the door is closed.

If you have a tumble dryer, make sure you vent it to the outside, unless it is the self-condensing type.

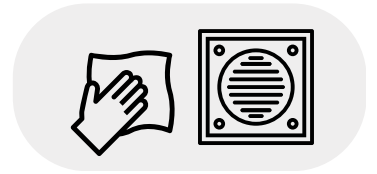


Curtains

Open curtains or blinds during daylight hours to prevent the build-up of condensation on windows. Check windows for condensation daily and wipe them dry with a cloth.

Extractors Fans

Make sure your extractor fans are working and the fan is clean and clear of dust or blockages. The extractor fans fitted should never be turned off and are very energy efficient with minimal running costs.



Dehumidifiers

Use dehumidifiers and moisture traps in problem areas to help reduce moisture in the air



Furniture

It is important to keep a gap between your furniture and walls to allow air to circulate.

Damp



What is damp?

Damp happens when moisture collects and can't fully dry out. It's usually caused by condensation and often occurs in areas with low air flow such as a bathroom when the extractor fan is not on or when the windows are closed. Damp can also be caused by problems on the outside of your home such as a blocked gutter causing moisture to seep into the brickwork.

There are several types of damp including:



Damp caused by condensation

This is caused by a build-up of condensation in your home.



Penetrating damp

Penetrating damp is caused by moisture entering the house through leaking pipes, a damaged roof, blocked gutters, gaps around window frames and cracked or defective rendering and brickwork.



Rising damp

Rising damp is due to a defective (or non-existent) damp course. This will leave a 'tide mark' about one meter above the floor. The issue needs to be addressed by a qualified professional within Wiltshire Council Housing.

How to prevent damp

Regularly look up and visually check the guttering, roof, and walls of your property from ground level. If you can see water leaking from the gutters or an overflow pipe down the wall, if the wall looks wet or has patches that won't dry out or, if you are able to identify a fault such as water entering around the windows or broken tiles then contact the Housing Repairs team. Make sure plants, soil or other items are not piled up against the walls and creating a bridge over the damp course.

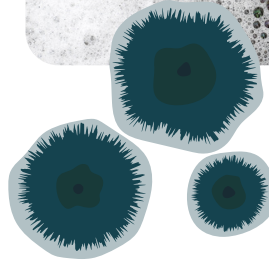
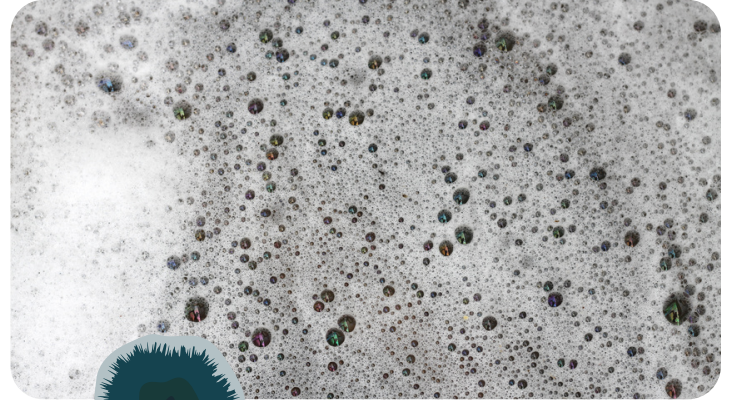
Inside your home you can check your cupboards under the sink. Any unexplained puddles of water could be coming from the plumbing. Report any wet patches that appear internally on ceilings or chimney breasts. Even if it hasn't rained, there could be a plumbing problem.



Mould

What is mould?

If condensation and damp are left untreated, they can create conditions that are suitable for the growth of mould. Mould is a type of fungus that grows in damp, moist conditions, often in areas with poor or low lighting and no ventilation. It can grow on most surfaces where moisture is present and can form on the sealant around windows and tiles. It can sometimes grow in places that you cannot usually see such as behind wallpaper and under carpets. Mould is caused by condensation and can form on the sealant around windows and tiles. Mould can affect your health and should be dealt with as soon as possible for your safety and wellbeing.



How to treat mould

First treat the mould already in your home. If you deal with the basic problem, mould should not reappear.

To kill and remove mould, wipe down walls and window frames with a fungicidal wash which carries a Health and Safety Executive 'approval number.' Follow the manufacturer's instructions precisely.

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

After treatment redecorate using a good quality fungicidal paint to help prevent mould. Note that this paint is not effective if overlaid 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 dampness. You can find out more about treating damp and mould in your home on our website www.wiltshire.gov.uk/housing-maintenance



Landlords

What are your landlord's responsibilities?

Wiltshire Council Housing has a legal obligation to provide you with a suitable fixed form of heating and means to ventilate your accommodation.

What are my responsibilities as a tenant?

The mould will not go away by itself. It is important that you take the most appropriate action to reduce the condensation in your home to prevent health risks from mould and possible damage to your personal belongings. You also have an obligation to use your accommodation in a 'tenant like manner.' This means that you must not make your home damp or mouldy by excessive condensation.

Wiltshire Council take damp and mould concerns very seriously.

If you have been affected by any damp and mould issues, please contact us via your online iHousing account in the first instance **[ihousing.wiltshire.gov.uk](https://www.wiltshire.gov.uk/ihousing)**

We will arrange to visit you at home, to discuss any concerns you may have.

Following this, you can report concerns via email to **housingrepairs@wiltshire.gov.uk** or call the Housing Repairs team on **0300 456 0117** option 2.