

What is Condensation?

There is always some moisture in the air even if you can't see it. When the air gets colder, it can't 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 in the bathroom mists over when you have a bath or shower.

Condensation mainly occurs during cold weather regardless of whether it is raining or dry. It tends to appear on cold surfaces and places where there is little or no movement of air, in the corners of rooms near windows or behind cupboards and wardrobes.

What you can do to prevent condensation?

These simple steps will help to prevent condensation occurring in your home:

Put less water into the air

- Put lids on saucepans
- Dry clothes outside
- If using a tumble dryer make sure it is vented to the outside
- Put a small amount of cold water in the bath before you turn on the hot tap
- Do not run your shower for longer than needed
- Mop up any condensation or water everyday

Stop water vapour spreading

- Shut kitchen and bathroom doors when bathing and cooking
- Use cooker hoods and extractor fans or open a window

Heating your home

- Apply more heat
- Heat more evenly i.e. Low level of heating all day rather than quick blasts when necessary – this should also reduce your heating bills
- Use thermostats to control your heating
- Avoid using bottled gas or paraffin heaters

Ventilate your home

- Keep a small window ajar or trickle vents open at all times
- Ventilate kitchens and bathrooms when in use by opening windows to remove the humid air
- Use extractor fans if you have them
- Close kitchen and bathroom doors when in use
- Make sure other doors are closed, especially bedroom doors as they are normally slightly colder and will attract moisture
- Ventilate cupboards and wardrobes and avoid putting too much in them as this stops the air circulating
- Do not put wardrobes against external walls
- Keep furniture away from walls and allow air to circulate

Dealing with mould

Treat any mould you have in your property by washing walls and window frames with a fungicidal wash that carries a Health & Safety Executive approval number. Follow manufacturers' guide lines.

If you do this and follow the other advice given above, mould should not reappear.

The only lasting way to avoid severe mould is to reduce the relative humidity and condensation by properly heating and ventilating your home.