



PEOPLE
POTENTIAL
POSSIBILITIES

Preventing damp and mould in your home



An awareness guide to checking your home

Damp is very common in UK homes and can cause all sorts of problems, including mould on walls and furniture or making timber window frames rot. Damp also encourages the growth of mould and mites which can be the source of many health problems, including respiratory infections, asthma and allergies.

TYPES OF DAMPNESS

There are four main types of dampness that could affect your home. It is important to understand the difference between them so that you can effectively treat the problem.

1. RISING DAMP.

This is caused by water rising from the ground into the home.

The water gets through or round a broken damp proof course (DPC) or passes through the natural brickwork if the property was built without a DPC. A DPC is a horizontal layer of waterproof material put in the walls of a building just above ground level.

2. PENETRATING DAMPNESS.

This type of dampness will only be found on external walls or in the case of roof leaks, on

ceilings. It only appears because of a defect outside the home, such as missing pointing to the brickwork, cracked rendering or missing roof tiles. These defects then allow water to pass from the outside to the inner surfaces. Penetrating dampness is far more noticeable following a period of rainfall and will normally appear as a well-defined 'damp- patch' which looks and feels damp to the touch.

3. DEFECTIVE PLUMBING LEAKS

from water and waste pipes, especially in bathrooms and kitchens, are relatively common. They can affect both external and internal walls and ceilings. The affected area looks and feels damp to the touch and remains damp whatever the weather conditions outside.

4. CONDENSATION.

Condensation occurs when moist air comes into contact with a colder surface like a wall, window, mirror etc. The air cannot hold the moisture and tiny drops of water appear. It also occurs in places the air is still, like the corners of rooms, behind furniture or inside wardrobes.

CONDENSATION PREVENTION CHECKLIST

These steps can help to reduce the amount of condensation and thus black mould growth around your home.

- In colder weather try and **keep temperatures between 18-21°C** in main living areas whilst indoors.



- **Don't block** airbricks or air vents.



- To kill and remove mould wipe down walls and window frames with a **fungicidal wash** which carries a Health and Safety Executive approval number.



- **Dry washing outside** where possible.



- **Don't dry clothes on radiators.** This will make your boiler work harder to heat your house and cost almost as much as using a tumble dryer, whilst creating a lot of condensation.



- If you have to dry clothing indoors, and don't have a tumble dryer, **place clothes on a drying rack in a sunny room** where a window can be opened slightly and keep the door closed.



LIVING ROOM

- **Open window trickle vents** during the day or when going out, or open windows for at least 10 minutes every day.



KITCHEN

- Close internal doors whilst cooking and open window(s). Use an **extractor fan** if you have one.



- **Put lids on pans** (this also reduces boiling times and helps save money). Only boil as much water as you need in a kettle to reduce steam and save money.

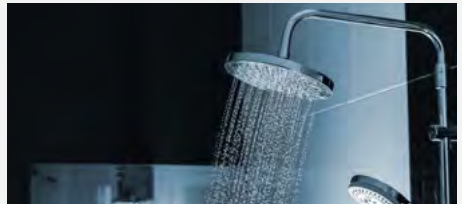


BATHROOM

- **Open windows after bathing/** washing and leave them open for about 20 minutes if possible



- Use an **extractor fan** if you have one.
- Take shorter and **cooler showers!**



- **Wipe down windows/mirrors/** tiles/shower doors with a window squeegee and mop up the moisture with a super absorbent cloth which can be wrung out in the sink.



- **Do not leave** wet towels lying around.

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KITCHEN

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TREATMENT

If you see mould growing, you may be able to get rid of it yourself if it's only a small amount. The bathroom, outside-facing walls and window and door frames are the most common areas for damp, so monitor them and keep them clean.

Black mould spots can usually be wiped away with a damp cloth. Dry the surface afterwards and ventilate the room.

If you develop mould or mildew, keep the room well ventilated and wear gloves and a face mask while you clean them. Read the instructions on chemical products carefully and throw away any cloths that you use to clean the mould.

CONTACT US!

If you're not sure how to proceed, or you still have the mould problem after following the tips in this guide, get in touch with us or speak to your support worker. We'll be happy to help you!



FOR MORE INFORMATION ABOUT DAMP AND MOULD PLEASE VISIT THESE WEBSITES

www.cse.org.uk/advice/advice-and-support/damp-condensation

england.shelter.org.uk/housing_advice/repairs/damp_and_mould_in_rented_homes

www.citizensadvice.org.uk/housing/repairs-in-rented-housing/repairs-common-problems/repairs-damp/





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