

Condensation, Damp and Mould

Hexagon

No one wants to live in a damp home. Damp can cause mould on walls and furniture and cause wooden window frames to rot. It's also unhealthy.

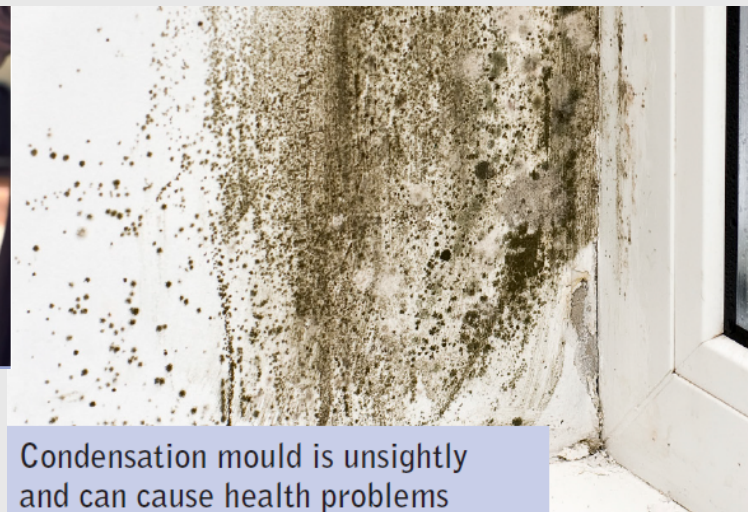
Some damp is caused by **condensation**. This can lead to a growth in mould that appears as a cloud of little black dots. Condensation occurs when moist air comes into contact with a colder surface, like a wall, window, mirror etc. The air can't hold the moisture and tiny drops of water appear. It also occurs in places the air is still, like the corners of rooms, behind furniture or inside wardrobes.

Condensation is not the only cause of damp.

Penetrating damp is moisture entering the house through leaking pipes, a damaged roof, blocked gutters, gaps around window frames and cracked rendering and brickwork. All these problems can be remedied.

Rising damp is due to a defective or non-existent damp course. This will leave a tide mark about 1m above the floor. Fixing rising damp requires building works.

Newly built homes can sometimes feel damp because the water used during construction (in cement, plaster etc) is still drying out



How to reduce condensation at home

1) Produce less moisture

Simple things make a huge difference, like keeping lids on pans when cooking, drying clothes outdoors (not on radiators), venting your tumble dryer outside (if it does not have a compressor), and avoiding paraffin heaters or flue-less bottled gas heaters.

If you have to dry clothes indoors, try to leave a window open or cracked, or an extractor fan on, to help get the moisture out of your home.

Dry air is cheaper to heat than warm air, so producing less moisture also helps you to keep your home warm for less.

Condensation mould is unsightly and can cause health problems

2) Heat your home a little more

While you don't want to waste money heating rooms you don't use, very cold rooms are more likely to get damp and mould. Set the thermostatic radiator valve to 1 in unused rooms so the radiator gives out a little bit of heat whenever you have the heating on. Remember, unused rooms will need a good airing from time to time.

You should aim to keep your home at around 21 degrees during the day and 16 degrees at night. Warm air causes less condensation than cold air and cold surfaces.

3) Let the damp air out and the fresh air in

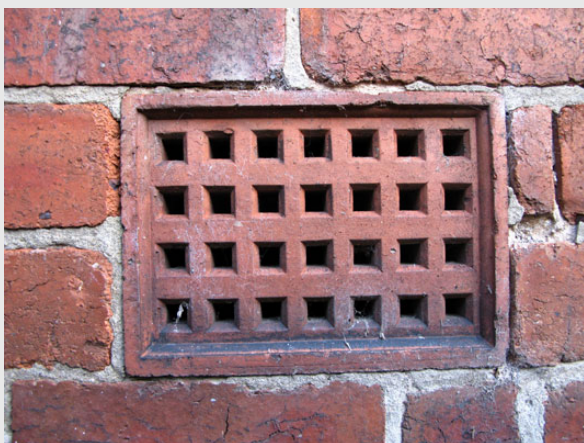
Extractor fans are a good way to get rid of moist air and steam so that less condensation forms. They use little electricity and don't add much to your bill. Fans typically have a rating of 8-30W, so would cost about 10p if they were on all day.

Stop moist air getting into the rest of your home; when cooking or bathing, keep the kitchen or bathroom door shut and open the windows to let the steam out.

Meanwhile, let fresh air circulate to avoid mould forming where the air is still. Make sure there is a gap between your furniture and walls, and give wardrobes and cupboards a good airing sometimes.

Check that your trickle vents are open and keep air bricks uncovered. These are important for letting damp air out and fresh, dry air in.

Leave air bricks uncovered:



Support

If you are struggling with the cost of heating your home or paying your electricity bills, please contact our Community Investment Team on 020 8778 6699 or email moneysupport@hexagon.org.uk

Keep trickle vents open

Closed:



Open:

More tips:

You can catch condensation dripping from windows with condensation channels and sponge strips (available from DIY shops). If you wipe down windows and sills in the morning this will also help, but be sure to wring out the cloth rather than dry it on a radiator.

You may want to invest in a mini dehumidifier. These can cost between £15-£40 and can make a big difference.

Repairs

Please report all damp and mould to Hexagon's repairs service. We will complete a mould wash to remove the mould, and we will investigate the source of the damp. If the mould returns, please let us know as soon as possible.

Contact our repairs team Gilmartins on 0808 178 6785 or email hexagonrepairs@gilmartins.co.uk

Contact Us

Freephone: 0800 393 338

Landline: 020 87786699

Repairs: 0808 178 6785

www.hexagon.org.uk

hexagonrepairs@gilmartins.co.uk
customer_desk@hexagon.org.uk