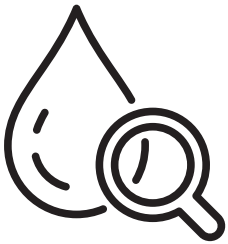
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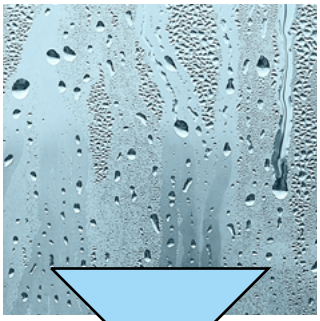
Keeping your home free from damp and mould





Types of damp

It is important to understand the difference between the types of damp so you can effectively treat the problem.

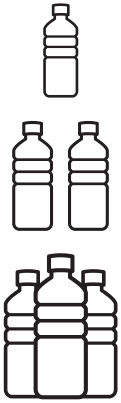


Condensation (most common cause of damp)

This happens when there is too much moisture in the air and usually occurs during cold weather, whether it is raining or dry. You notice it when you see your breath on a cold day, or when the mirror mists over after a shower.



When this water vapour comes into contact with colder surfaces, such as wallpaper, paintwork, or even plasterwork, it can soak into them. If this continues over time, it can cause black mould to grow.



Did you know...

Drying clothes indoors can add **10–15 litres** of water a week into your home

Showering, cooking and bathing can add **15–20 litres** of water a week into your home

The breathing of a family of four adds moisture into the air equivalent to **30–40 litres** of water each week



Penetrating damp

Penetrating damp indicates that something is wrong. The water causing the damp has found its way into your home from the outside; this can happen anywhere in the building. Penetrating damp can appear as a well-defined damp patch, which looks and feels damp when touched. It is usually caused by defects such as missing or slipped roof slates, blocked guttering, badly fitted windows and missing pointing. Once the defect has been fixed, the damp patch should fade and dry out over time.



Rising damp

This usually leaves a 'tide mark' low down on the wall. You may also notice white salt deposited on the affected walls. This is caused by a failed or 'bridged' damp-proof course, which allows moisture from the ground to rise up through the walls to the height of one metre.



Defective plumbing

This can be caused by leaks from water and/or waste pipes, causing a damp patch in your home. Once the defect has been fixed, the damp patch should fade and dry out over time.

If you have any of these conditions in your home, talk to your landlord about how they can help to resolve the issue.



How to reduce condensation in your home

Most homes will be affected by condensation at some point. However, you can do a lot to reduce it, and prevent mould growth.



Cooking

Cover pans when cooking, so the steam doesn't go into the air.



Drying clothes

Drying your clothes outside is the best way to reduce moisture in your home. If this is not possible, use a tumble drier that is correctly ventilated, or dry your clothes on a clothes maiden in a room with an open window. Drying clothes on radiators is not advised.



Ventilation

It is important to ventilate your home properly to get rid of excess moisture, especially in the kitchen when cooking, in the bathroom after showering/bathing, and if you find water droplets/condensation on your bedroom windows in the mornings. Ventilating a room can be achieved by opening a window or by using an extractor fan that is vented to the outside. Other means of ventilating a house are ensuring that any trickle vents on the window are open, or leaving your windows 'on the latch'. It is also important that any air vents are not closed or blocked.



Heating your home

Keep your home well heated; try to have your living rooms at 18–21°C for a comfortable temperature.



Dehumidifiers

The use of a dehumidifier helps to reduce the amount of moisture in your home, but always make sure you follow the manufacturer's instructions when in use.



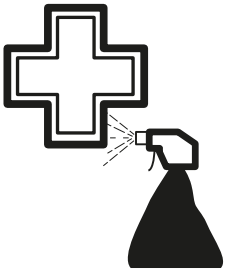
Removing excess moisture

Remove the water vapour by wiping your windows each morning with a window squeegee or microfibre cloth.



Avoid using paraffin or a flueless bottle gas heater.

Avoid your furniture touching the walls (a small gap behind will allow the air to flow behind the furniture).



To kill and remove mould

— Carefully remove excess mould with a damp cloth, then throw it away. Do not brush mould, as this releases spores into the air.

— Wipe down affected areas using a fungicidal wash (mould and mildew cleaner) or diluted bleach. These are available at most major supermarkets and DIY shops. Wear rubber gloves and safety goggles, and always follow the manufacturer's instructions carefully.

— After treatment, redecorate using a fungicidal paint or fungicidal wallpaper paste. If necessary, dry-clean any mildewed clothes, and shampoo carpets.





Prevention

To help improve the conditions in your property, you can ask your landlord to take extra steps to prevent damp and mould by:

— ensuring the loft is insulated to the correct height

— draughtproofing windows and external doors

— considering cavity wall insulation and secondary glazing

— ensuring your property is watertight and free from leaks

— ensuring all rooms have appropriate openable windows or mechanical ventilation

— ensuring you have a heating system that covers the whole of the property.

Do you rent your home?

If you have damp and mould in your property, ask your landlord to work with you to resolve the problem. If it persists, visit **www.manchester.gov.uk/repairshelp** or telephone **0161 234 5004** to report the problem.