

Condensation

Condensation is caused when moisture held in warmer air meets a cold surface like a window or wall and condenses into water droplets.

If this happens regularly, mould may start to grow. This usually appears on cold external walls and surfaces and in places where the air does not circulate well. The moisture created can also damage clothes, furnishings and decorations. Condensation usually occurs in winter because the building is cold and windows are opened less so moist air cannot escape.

Where does it occur?

You can often see condensation for short periods in bathrooms and kitchens because of the steamy atmosphere. Quite frequently it appears for long periods in unheated bedrooms.

Sometimes it is in cupboards or corners of rooms where ventilation and movement of air are restricted.

When does it occur?

All houses are affected by condensation at some time. It usually occurs when a lot of moisture and steam are produced. For example:

- When cooking
- When having a bath or shower
- When washing clothes
- When using rooms for long periods of time
- After a cold night when bedroom windows mist up



What to look out for

- Drying clothes inside the house/flat
- Steam from cooking in the kitchen
- Steam from bathing and washing
- Lack of air circulating in the house/flat
- No ventilation in the house/flat (this can be made worse by too much draught-proofing)
- Raising room temperatures suddenly. This can put warm air in contact with cold surfaces, thereby increasing the chances of water vapour condensing
- An unvented tumble dryer

How can I cut down on condensation?

- Try not to dry clothes in your home
- Don't put wet clothes on radiators
- When cooking, use the extractor fan and keep the kitchen door closed and lids on pans
- When bathing or washing keep the bathroom door closed, and switch on the extractor fan. If there is a lot of water vapour, open the window
- Keep furniture, such as beds, wardrobes etc., clear of the room walls in order to let air circulate
- Keep your house/flat warm
- Open any vents in windows or walls

While we sleep we produce about one litre of water vapour, so it will also help if you leave your window vents/windows open at night