

Condensation – Help & Information Pack

What is Condensation?

Condensation is an extremely underestimated cause of damage to our homes and is almost certainly the most common form of dampness within a building. It occurs where warm moist air comes into contact with cold air or a surface that is at a lower temperature. When the moist air cools, it is unable to retain the moisture and is released to form condensation in the air or on the surface.



How is condensation caused?

The moisture in the air comes from a number of sources within the house. Water vapour is produced in relatively large quantities from normal day to day activities - a 5 person household puts about 10 litres of water into the air every day (without taking into account any heating) - i.e.

- Breathing (asleep) 0.3 litres
- Breathing (awake) 0.85 litres
- Cooking 3 litres
- Personal washing 1.0 litres
- Washing and drying clothes 5.5 litres
- Heating - especially paraffin and flueless gas heaters

Moisture can also be drawn from the structure of the building into the internal air; from below the floor or through the walls/ceilings.



How to spot Condensation

Condensation is generally noticeable where it forms on non-absorbent surfaces, i.e. windows or tiles, but it can form on any surface and it may not be noticed until mould growth, rotting of material, peeling of decorations or damage to clothes occurs. This is also normally coupled with a strong musty smell. If you come across any of these conditions, please read on to get free tips and advice on combating your Condensation problem.

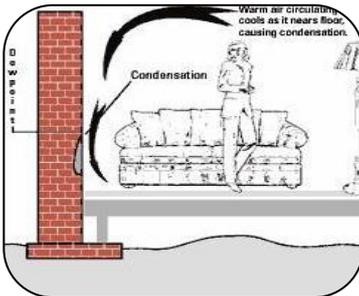


Where it typically occurs?

The conditions for condensation exist in areas around the home with poor circulation and or high heat loss such as in the following areas:

- ✓ Cold surfaces (i.e. single glazed windows, mirror and metal window frames)
- ✓ Cold corners of rooms
- ✓ Kitchens
- ✓ Bathrooms
- ✓ Built in cupboards
- ✓ Behind furniture against an outside wall
- ✓ Walls in an unheated room
- ✓ Unventilated bedrooms

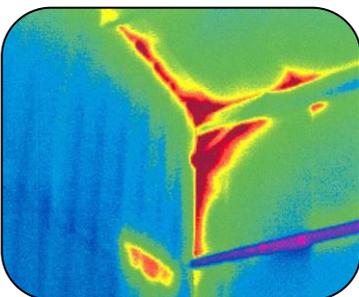
Condensation Circulation



Condensation Problem



Condensation Cold Spot



How to control Condensation

In order to try and keep your bills down and avoid excessive condensation treatments, there are various free condensation tips and measures you can adopt to try and minimise your problem. First of all, you need to ensure that the amount of moisture in the air is not excessive. Start off by trying the following measures:

- ✓ Keep your property well ventilated by opening all your windows on a daily basis to allow moist air to escape
- ✓ If using the kitchen or bathroom, try to keep the door closed when possible so that moist or stale air is contained within the room
- ✓ Try to keep a small gap between walls and furniture, particularly against 'cold walls', and allow ventilation of any cupboards to keep air flow moving
- ✓ If drying clothes, it is always better to do it outside. If this is not possible, put them in an enclosed room with plenty of ventilation and keep the window open. If using a tumble dryer, make sure the vent pipe runs outside your property or out a window
- ✓ While cooking, try to cover all pots and pans and avoid leaving anything on the boil for too long
- ✓ Check to make sure airways within your property are not blocked, such as air bricks or chimneys
- ✓ As it is cold air that causes warm air to release moisture, try to keep heating levels within your property at a constant temperature, especially in the winter.

Additional Condensation Checks

Sometimes, further condensation checks are necessary. If so, try the following:

1. Check the structure of your Building:
 - ✓ Check that any wall cavities are clear of rubble or debris. This can accumulate over the years and to remove it normally requires removal of a brick at each corner and raking the cavity clean.
 - ✓ Check the roof. Make sure that it is sound and directing rain into the guttering, not into the structure of the building and causing additional moisture problems.
 - ✓ Check the guttering and down pipes, make sure that they are carrying the water away and that there are no damaged/blocked guttering or drainpipes causing the external wall to become soaking wet.
 - ✓ Check solid floors to ensure that damp is not coming through. If it is, you may need to introduce or replace a damp proof membrane.
 - ✓ Check that there are no leaking water pipes or tanks within the house.
2. Look at your life style within the building:
 - ✓ When people come in with wet coats, hang them outside the living area to dry. A good reason for a porch.
 - ✓ Increase ventilation. Add forced ventilation/extraction to areas that produce a lot of moisture (kitchen, bathroom). Extractor fans are available with an air-moisture switch so that they operate automatically while the moisture in the air is above a set amount.
 - ✓ Consider changing the fuel you use. Electric is the driest, paraffin probably the wettest.
 - ✓ Consider using a dehumidifier - domestic types are now available and can remove a surprising amount of water from the air.

What if the Problem Continues?

Unfortunately, the free condensation tips above don't necessarily work every time as it really depends on the extent of your condensation problem.

If you have tried the free condensation treatment tips and still suspect your property may require further condensation treatment such as our Condensation Mould Kits, call White Preservation today on **08000 147 170** and speak to us about our additional Condensation solutions. With our 20 year repair guarantee, you can have peace of mind that your condensation problems will soon be over.

**Still having
problems with
Condensation?**

**Call
08000 147 170**

Or find your local White
Preservation Branch at
whitepreservation.com.uk