

Keeping your home free from condensation and mould

A guide for private renters



What is condensation?

Condensation comes from water vapour in the air. It occurs in all homes but, if left unchecked, can become a serious problem.

Extra moisture is created by everyday activities such as cooking, washing clothes and bathing. Even asleep one person creates about half a litre of water in a night just from breathing and perspiration.

Condensation occurs in cold weather, whether it is raining or dry. It appears on cold surfaces and in places where there is little air movement such as in corners, on or near windows, and in and behind wardrobes and cupboards. Mould in these areas is often the first sign of a serious condensation problem.

The only lasting way to avoid severe mould is to reduce condensation.

The difference with damp

Damp is caused by issues like leaking pipes, drains and overflow, or rainwater from damaged roofs and guttering. Homes can also get penetrating damp around windows and in walls, or rising damp. All issues of damp need treatment so report it to your landlord or managing agent.



Mould

Mould may look black, white, yellow or green in colour, depending on the specific type of mould and the surface it grows on. But all mould, regardless of what it looks like, needs to be regularly cleaned as it increases the risk of asthma and respiratory illnesses in some people.

How to clean off mould

- Wipe down walls and window frames with a mould and mildew cleaner or fungicidal spray, available in supermarkets. Always follow the instructions exactly
- Do not dust the mould patch as this can disturb it and spread spores into the air
- After cleaning, you can redecorate using a good quality anti-mould or fungicidal paint to help prevent regrowth.
- If wallpapering, use a paste containing a fungicide to prevent further mould growth

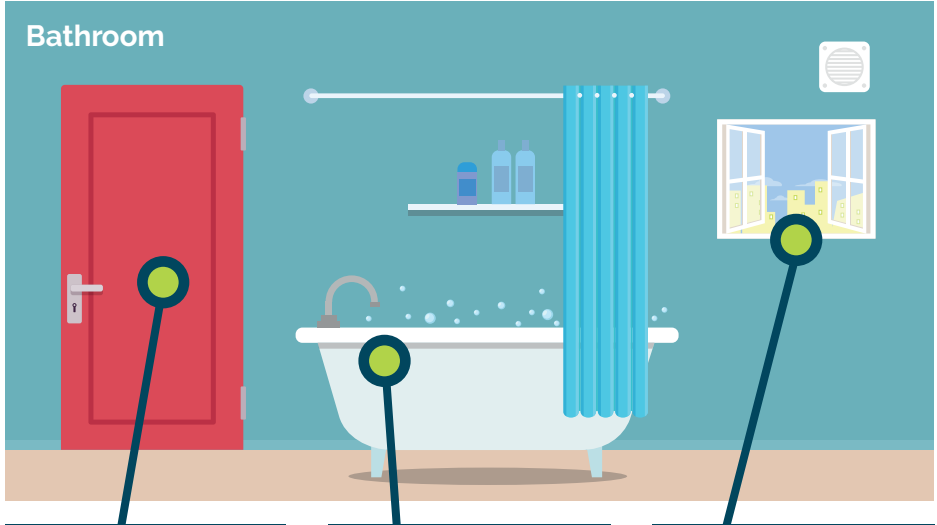


Tips to prevent condensation

- Dry your windows and window sills every morning.
- Ventilate your home – keep any vents open at all times, or open your windows 5-10cm for about 30 minutes each day.
- Try to heat your home to at least 18C. Support is available to help with the cost of living. Go to www.towerhamlets.gov.uk/costofliving
- Use your thermostat to regulate room temperature, rather than heating at a high setting for a short period of time.
- Don't dry laundry on radiators. If drying clothes outside isn't possible, try to put them in the bathroom with the door closed and the window open.
- Allow space for air to circulate around your furniture. You can place furniture on blocks to allow air to circulate beneath.
- If you have one, use a dehumidifier to reduce moisture in the air.



Bathroom

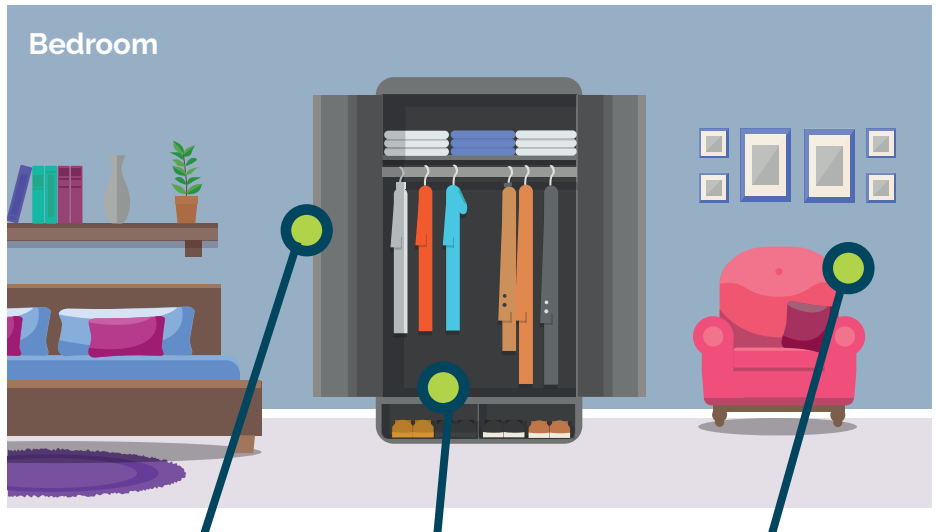


Keep the door closed to avoid moisture spreading

Run the cold water first then add the hot

Open windows and use the extractor fan

Bedroom



Leave space between the back of a wardrobe and wall

Allowing air to circulate in wardrobes and cupboards. Don't overfill them

Try to put furniture against internal walls

Who is responsible?

As a tenant, you are responsible for keeping condensation under control and treating any mould growth to prevent mould occurring. Report any issues of damp and serious mould to your landlord.

Landlords are responsible for the structure of your home and facilities, such as heating, reasonable insulation and ventilation. Any issues of dampness like plumbing or rainwater leaks are also the landlord's responsibility.



Help, support and complaints

Environmental Health Team

Contact the council's Environmental Health Team if you need help and advice about damp and mould problems in your home, and if your landlord is not taking action.

Telephone: 020 7364 5008

Email: Environmental.health@towerhamlets.gov.uk

Website: www.towerhamlets.gov.uk/healthandhousing

Housing Ombudsman Service

If your home is managed by a housing association, first contact them directly and use their internal complaint process. However, if you are still unsatisfied with their response you can contact the Housing Ombudsman Service.

Telephone: 0300 111 3000

Email: info@housing-ombudsman.org.uk

Website: www.housing-ombudsman.org.uk

(Live Chat or online complaints form)

**Write to: Housing Ombudsman Service, PO Box 152,
Liverpool, L33 7WQ**

