

LITTLE MANSIONS LTD



LITTLE MANSIONS

LETTINGS & PROPERTY MANAGEMENT

MANAGING DAMP & MOULD



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A guide to damp and mould management

Damp and mould in the home can be a health hazard, causing respiratory problems and exacerbating allergies. Making sure your home is free of mould and damp is not only important for your health, but it is also your responsibility as a tenant. Preventing damp and mould is much easier than you might think. This quick guide explains how some everyday habits contribute to damp indoors and offers simple solutions to minimise and deal with small damp and mould issues.



Air your property

Regularly Open windows but not wide just a little to make sure your property is continuously ventilated Even when it's cold, because moisture can gather in the home and by opening the window a little it will allow this moisture to escape.



Keep doors closed

Keep bathroom or kitchen doors closed when having a shower or bath, or when cooking. This will prevent moisture from spreading to other parts of the property.



Wipe away condensation

Cleaning the condensation from windows and frames every day will minimise the spread of black mould. You can use a Karcher wet vacuum, a papertowel, cloth or towel to wipe away condensation and dry the area.



Turn your heating on

Running your heating can avoid cold spots, dry out damp, and reduce your chances of getting mould. In cold weather, the best way to keep rooms warm and avoid condensation is to keep low background heat on all day rather than short bursts of high heat when you are in the house. Good heating controls on your radiators, room thermostats and a timer will help control the heating throughout your house and manage costs.



Keep an eye out for leaks

Leaky window frames, pipework, walls and doors are common sources of moisture. If you see a leak, you should report it to us as soon as possible so we can deal with the problem swiftly. This will also stop the issue from turning into more serious problems and cause further damage to the property. In the meantime, use a bucket or bowl to collect any drips and make sure to keep surfaces dry with a mop or towel.



Drying clothes indoors

Don't dry clothes on radiators. The vapour turns into moisture in the air and is then circulated around the rooms. This then gathers on walls, windows and other fabrics in the home and can easily turn into mould. Instead, dry clothes on a clothes airer in a well-ventilated room. Open a window or use a dehumidifier to minimise the spread of moisture indoors.



Use dehumidifiers and damp traps

Using a dehumidifier is a great way to take the moisture out of the air, especially if you dry your clothes indoors. You can buy an inexpensive one from a local hardware store or online. Disposable damp traps can be cheaper and can be effective, but over time, you might find it more economical (and environmentally friendly!) to use an electric dehumidifier.



Use extractor fans

If you have an extractor fan in the bathroom, always make sure it is running when you're having a shower or bath. Leave on for at least 10 minutes after using the bathroom too to help clear the vapour. If you have an extractor fan in the kitchen, you should also use it to disperse moisture and cooking smells. If you don't have an extractor fans, open a window when you cook to allow the moisture to escape.



Don't overfill your home

Do not push furniture flush against any wall and always allow a gap of at least 3 inches to allow adequate airflow. Do not overstuff wardrobes as this can cause damp and mould to grow and spread. Check behind furniture regularly for signs of damp or mould developing and act quickly when spotted.



Grow moisture absorbing plants

Some plants can absorb moisture and pollution from the air and are a great addition to your damp prevention arsenal. Peace lilies, tillandsia, palms and ferns are all moisture absorbers – some ferns actually thrive in damper rooms such as kitchens and bathrooms, just make sure you also give them some indirect sunlight.



Where does the moisture come from?

Our everyday activities add extra moisture to the air inside our homes. Even our breathing adds some moisture. One person asleep adds a pint of water to the air overnight and an active person adds twice that during the day. Our illustration below gives you some idea of how much extra water you could be adding to the air a day;

| | |
|----------------------------|----------|
| Two people working at home | 4 Pints |
| Bath/showers | 2 Pints |
| Drying clothes indoors | 10 Pints |
| Cooking/boil a kettle | 6 Pints |
| Wash dishes | 2 Pints |
| One person Sleeping | 4 Pints |

Striking the right balance between **warmth** and ventilation is important and can be very effective but takes some experimenting. By opening windows or **ventilating** your home it may appear that you are losing some heat, but what you are actually doing is allowing warm moisture-laden air to escape and permitting cool dry air to enter your home. Dry cool air is actually cheaper to heat than warm moist air! Many people who have double-glazing installed experience problems with condensation and mould growth that they never had with their old draughty window frames. This is because all the natural draughts around the poorly fitted windows have been sealed. However, by **using trickle vents** or opening windows slightly, then the necessary ventilation can be achieved.

Remember - The advice is to ventilate for an appropriate period of time, not to leave the windows open all day.

How to clean damp and mould spots

Black mould or damp commonly occurs in the bathroom, on exterior facing walls and around window and door frames and most can be dealt with easily if done so quickly. Keep an eye on these problem areas and clean the moisture and damp regularly to minimise your chances of getting black mould or mildew. If you do see mildew or mould forming, be sure to use gloves and a face mask before cleaning. Ventilate the room well when cleaning mould spots. When working with chemicals, you must always follow manufacturers' instructions and its important to dispose of any cloths that you have used.

Dust and grim made up of skin, hair, bacteria can also be a breeding ground for fungus causing black mould and so keeping surfaces clean and dust free will help you restrict the opportunities for mould to grow.

Clean carefully the area avoiding breathing in the particles - use a face cover to prevent inhalation.

Wipe down affected areas using a fungicidal wash or diluted bleach [use protection] Tea Tree oil is a natural antiseptic and disinfectant but it's also great for cleaning especially on mould or mildew. Try a dilute of 3-4 drops of Tea Tree oil in 2 litres of water (hot or cold). Soak mildewed items in the solution or spray on to trouble spots using a plant mister. Wipe, then rinse off. Always ensure you carry out a test on a small area of the fabric/material/surface beforehand.

After treatment dry the area thoroughly with a hairdryer or ventilate and keep an eye on it developing again. It is also recommended after treating paintwork to touch up the paint with an anti-fungal paint following closely the manufacturers instructions. This will help to prevent reoccurrence.

see it - spot it - scrub it



Mix a light bleach solution or use natural tea tree oils to clear away the black mould.



Clean off the area then dry it using a hairdryer or by leaving a window or door open to ventilate the area.



Use a stiff bristle brush to scrub the area.

Remember.....Dealing with condensation is not easy. But by carrying out the steps above it may help to resolve the problem. You need to do as many as possible every day, so that it becomes part of your habits and lifestyle.