



your home

**Condense your problems!**

*Avoiding 'condensation dampness'*

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**‘Condensation dampness’ is a condition that affects millions of homes in the UK and usually gets worse in winter. This problem can lead to staining and mould growth which can damage wallpaper, wall surfaces, window frames, furniture and clothing.**

### **What is condensation?**

All air contains a certain amount of ‘invisible’ water vapour. The higher the temperature of the air the more water vapour it can hold. Condensation often occurs when air carrying this vapour comes into contact with a cool surface such as a cold window or wall. When it hits the colder temperature, less water can be held in the air, so this water is left on surfaces within the home. This is why the bathroom mirror steams up after a shower or a window when you breathe on it.

### **Where does condensation dampness occur?**

The areas where condensation is most likely to occur, will be rooms where a large amount of moisture is produced, i.e. bathroom/kitchen, or on cold surfaces in other rooms where this moisture can travel to.

You may be able to see the effects of this process, for example droplets of water on gloss painted windowsill’s, but often the water droplets will soak into the wall and you will not be able to see the problem until black mould patches start to appear.

The following areas are most prone to condensation:

- Cold surfaces such as mirrors, single glazed windows (above) and metal window frames.
- Kitchens and bathrooms.
- Walls of unheated rooms.
- Cold corners of rooms.
- Wardrobes/cupboards and behind furniture against an outside wall.

### **How to tackle condensation dampness**

The big difference between condensation and other forms of dampness is that you have the ability to reduce or solve the problem just through changing behaviour in the home.

Try following these steps:

**Reduce the moisture:**

Normal activities such as bathing, washing and cooking all produce moisture which cannot be avoided. Simple changes however can prove effective in reducing condensation dampness.

Steps to consider are:

- Keep lids on saucepans while cooking.
- Tumble driers should be vented to the outside.
- Avoid the use of bottled gas heaters as these produce high levels of vapour.
- Dry washing outside whenever possible. Do not put wet clothes on radiators.
- Use extractor fans in kitchens and bathrooms if available.

However, the most effective course of action you can take is:

- When creating steam in the kitchen/bathroom open windows and close doors to these rooms. This will let moisture escape and prevent it from spreading through the house.

**Increase ventilation:**

This is required so that moist air produced can escape, simply opening a window will do.

A suitable level of ventilation will allow this without making occupants uncomfortable by causing draughts and making the room cold. Ventilators fitted above windows should be left open.

Kitchen and bathrooms with severe condensation problems should not be draught proofed.

**Heating:**

Condensation is most likely to be a problem in homes which are under heated. Try to keep temperatures in all rooms above 15°C as this will reduce condensation forming on external walls.

## Extra services for customers with reduced hearing or vision

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Albanian

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Somali

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Urdu

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