

Handy Guide to



Condensation

Condensation and mould

What causes it and how to prevent it



UK Centre for Moisture in Buildings video

A longer but more in-depth video



What is condensation in the home?

Condensation is a common issue in most households and can occur when warm moist air meets a cold surface such as a window, mirror, cistern or wall causing water droplets to form.

The level of condensation in your home depends on how well you ventilate and heat your home, along with how much moisture is in the air.

Excessive condensation can cause mould that can damage clothing, furniture and wallpaper. Airborne mould spores can also induce respiratory illness in some people.

Daily removal of condensation from windows, walls and surfaces – using a towel or cloth – can help prevent mould-growth.

The causes of condensation:



Excess
moisture



Inadequate
ventilation



Inadequate
heating



Cold
surfaces

How to avoid condensation

There are four key steps that can help reduce condensation levels in your home:

1. Produce less moisture

Cooking

When cooking, always use lids on your pots and pans where possible and turn on the extractor fan.

Drying clothes

Dry clothes outside if you can. If drying clothes inside, put them in the bathroom or kitchen, keep the door closed, turn on the extractor fan and open a window for ventilation. If using a tumble dryer, make sure it is correctly vented to the outside (unless it is a self-condensing type).

Avoid using paraffin and portable gas heaters

These types of heaters are prohibited in all Hillcrest tenancies because they create excessive moisture in the air and can contribute to respiratory illness.



Top tip!

Keep window vents (found at the top of the windows) open at all times. This keeps air in your home fresh and releases moisture!



Top tip!

If drying clothes, turn the heating on and open the window slightly to let the moisture out.

2. Be aware of simple ventilation methods and actions to remove moisture and prevent build-up

Ventilation is required to remove moisture as it is being produced and there are other simple actions you can take to prevent moisture build-up.

When cooking, washing up, bathing or drying clothes, you should:

- Switch on an extractor fan and open a window. After cooking or bathing, keep the extractor fan on for around an hour until the room appears to have fully dried. Most modern extractor fans will only cost a few pence per hour to run.
- Keep doors closed to prevent moisture from spreading to other rooms.
- Allow for adequate airflow to circulate in and around your furniture, so avoid placing furniture directly against walls.
- Avoid over filling your wardrobes. If they are filled with too many items, this can block air circulation, which can lead to mould growth.
- We all produce moisture. For example, one adult will produce around half a litre of moisture over the course of an evening through breathing, so if possible, leave a window open a little overnight.
- Try 'cross ventilating' your home for a minimum of 30 minutes per day. Open two windows on opposite sides of your home - this will create an airflow to remove excess moisture.
- Keep your window trickle vents open at all times if possible.

3. Keep your home warm

When your home is warmer, condensation is less likely to occur, so try to maintain a temperature of 16c or more, although ideally your home should be 18c-21c.

During cold spells, using a lower heat setting for longer is better than than switching heaters on high for shorter periods.

If you have central heating, set it to provide background warmth in all of the rooms you use and ensure that doors to unheated rooms are kept closed.

4. Insulation and draught proofing

We strive to ensure that our properties are well insulated and draught-proofed. Having draught-proofed doors and windows, along with an insulated loft can help reduce energy costs.



Top tip!

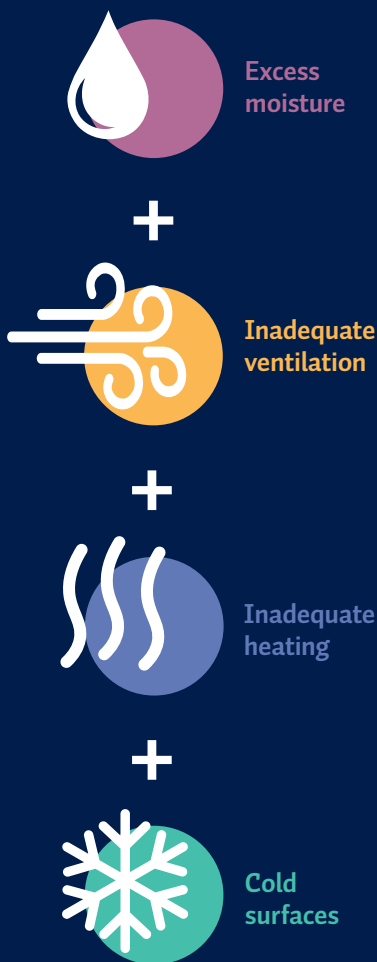
If you notice any draughts in your home, call our repairs team on 08000 324 888.

Treatment of mould growth

If condensation causes mould growth in your home, here is how you can remove it

- Dampen the affected area using an anti-mould or anti-fungicidal solution, which can be purchased from most DIY stores. Use a damp cloth to wipe the solution onto the affected area, rinsing regularly. Wooden window frames may need several applications. Once finished dispose of the cloth. Always read the instructions before proceeding and wear any protective items that the manufacturer recommends.
- Dry clean any mildewed clothing and shampoo carpets. Disturbing mould by brushing or vacuuming can dislodge spores, increasing the risk of respiratory problems, so wear a face mask when dealing with any mould.
- Keep any affected areas under observation for at least a week, and if the mould quickly reappears contact us on 08000 324 888, or email us at repair@hillcrest.org.uk
- If the treatment appears to have been successful, redecoration can be carried out. Use of antifungal paints can help to reduce the risk of new growth.

Remember...



= Condensation

If you have persistent problems with mould growth, please contact us on **08000 324 888** or email **repair@hillcrest.org.uk**

Hillcrest Energy Advice Team (HEAT) provide a free energy advice service for Hillcrest tenants

Here's just some of the things the team can help with:

- Showing you how to use your heating systems more efficiently
- Helping you switch to the cheapest supplier or tariff
- Checking if you are eligible for any upgrades, funds, allowances or grants - and helping you apply for them
- Advice on reducing damp and moisture in your home

... And much more!

Get in touch with the team now:

0300 123 2640

customerservice@hillcrest.org.uk

www.hillcrest.org.uk