

## If you still have damp or mould in your home

If you have followed the advice on treating mould, or you can't follow the advice because of an issue such as the heating not working, or broken extractor fans, then contact your home provider (landlord, lettings agent or council) and:

- Clearly describe the problem, ask them to investigate and do the necessary repairs or improvements
- Do this in writing in case you need to prove that they knew about the problem at a later date. Provide photographs of the mould if you can
- Do not stop paying your rent. This could put you at risk of being served an eviction notice

If your home provider does not investigate or do the necessary repairs within a reasonable time period, you may want to contact your local Environmental Health Team for further advice. Contact details will be on your District or Borough Council's webpage

[www.surreycc.gov.uk/council-and-democracy/borough-and-district-council-responsibilities](http://www.surreycc.gov.uk/council-and-democracy/borough-and-district-council-responsibilities)

Visit [Help to reduce your energy bills - Surrey County Council](#) for free advice on ways to help you save money on your energy.

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# Damp and Mould Fact Sheet



# Damp and mould (due to condensation)

Many homes suffer from damp and mould growth, often due to condensation. To avoid mould growth you need to eliminate dampness e.g. from condensation.

## Causes and signs of condensation

Air holds moisture - the warmer the air, the more moisture it can hold. When moist air cools by contacting cold surfaces, such as walls, windows or mirrors, the moisture condenses into water droplets (known as condensation).

Mould appears as pinpoint black spots, usually on the inside surfaces of external walls, in corners and poorly ventilated spaces, such as behind cupboards and wardrobes. Mould is a type of fungi which grows in damp conditions and produces spores to help it spread. These spores can be inhaled which can cause ill health.

## Tips to help prevent condensation and mould growing in your home

### Heating

- Try to keep your home warm with a low background heat of at least 18°C
- Open windows or doors to unused rooms frequently to circulate air
- Avoid using gas bottle heaters as these produce moisture

### Drying clothes

- Where possible dry clothes outside
- Avoid drying clothes on radiators. Use a clothes rack in a room where a window can be opened, or an extractor or dehumidifier is on
- Vent tumble dryers to the outside or use a condensing dryer

### Kitchen

- When cooking close connecting doors and open a window, use extractor fans

- Put lids on pans

### Bathroom

- Use extractor fans where fitted
- Close connecting doors and open the window to let the air circulate
- After a bath or shower, use a squeegee to remove excess water from tiles and shower screens

### Windows

- Air your home, by opening windows when possible
- Leave trickle vents open
- Wipe away condensation on windows

### Furniture

- Leave a small gap between furniture and outside walls
- Avoid putting mattresses directly on the floor as air needs to circulate underneath

## How to treat mould

It is your responsibility to treat mould in your home that is the result of condensation.

- Carefully remove excess mould with a damp cloth and throw it away. Do not brush mould as this releases spores into the air
- Use mould and mildew products (or diluted bleach) to clean affected walls, ceilings and paintwork, and follow the manufacturer's instructions
- Empty cupboards and wardrobes affected by mould and thoroughly clean them and the contents
- Dry clean or wash clothes in hot water. Check care labels on clothes and wash at the highest recommended water temperature
- Shampoo carpets
- Once the mould is removed from walls, ceilings, and woodwork and the area is completely dry, redecorate using anti-mould (fungicidal) paint or wallpaper paste
- Remember, the only lasting way to avoid mould is to reduce condensation in your home