

Keeping your home free from damp, mould and condensation

Simple everyday steps, how to tell condensation from damp or a leak, and when to tell us. Most homes get some condensation in colder weather. A few small habits make a big difference, and we are here to deal with anything that needs a repair.

Everyday

Moisture is normal

Cooking, showers, drying clothes and even breathing all add water to the air.

Daily

Let damp air out

Open windows for a few minutes, keep trickle vents open and use your fans.

18°C+

Steady warmth

Try to heat the rooms you use most to at least 18°C, with low, steady heat.

Early

Tell us

Report mould that comes back, spreads, or damp that isn't condensation.

✓ Quick wins checklist

Small habits that stop moisture building up. Tick off what you already do.

Let moist air out

- ☐ Open windows for a few minutes each day, and wide for a short time after cooking or a shower
- ☐ Keep window trickle vents open
- ☐ Use the kitchen and bathroom extractor fans, and leave the bathroom fan running after a shower
- ☐ Don't switch fans off at the isolator switch

Keep warmth steady

- ☐ Heat the rooms you use steadily, rather than in short, hot bursts
- ☐ Keep some background heat in colder rooms
- ☐ Don't block radiators with sofas or beds
- ☐ Worried about heating costs? See the free help below

Stop moisture building up

- ☐ Put lids on pans; keep kitchen and bathroom doors shut
- ☐ Wipe condensation off windows and sills each morning
- ☐ Leave a gap between furniture and outside walls
- ☐ Dry clothes outside when you can, not on radiators



Tell us early: you will never be blamed for reporting

Please report it straight away if mould **keeps coming back or is spreading**, if there is a **leak**, or a **damp patch that doesn't look like condensation**. Tell us too if an extractor fan, the heating or a window isn't working. Damp and mould can affect health, so we would always rather hear about it early.

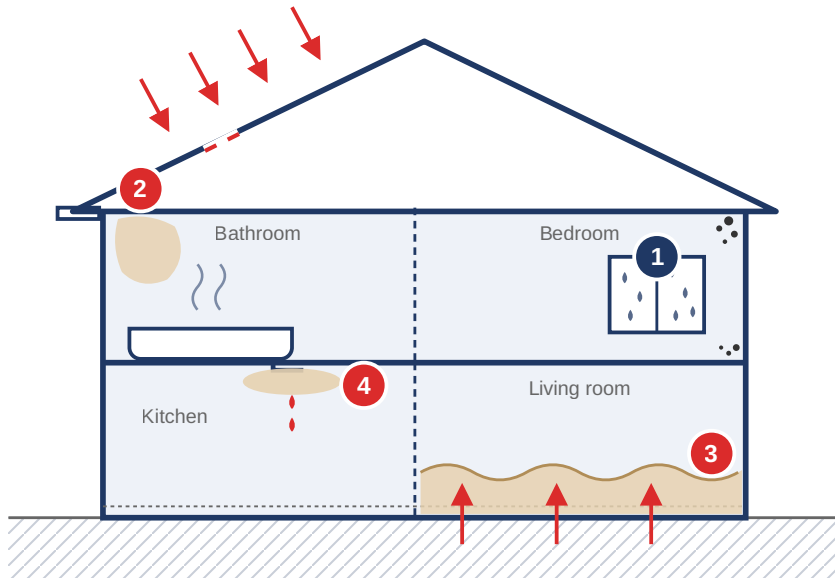


Help with heating bills and advice

If heating costs are a worry, free help is available from **Citizens Advice** (citizensadvice.org.uk), **MoneyHelper** (moneyhelper.org.uk), **Shelter** (england.shelter.org.uk) and your local council: **Buckinghamshire Council** (Aylesbury area) or **Central Bedfordshire Council** (Leighton Buzzard area). You may be eligible for schemes such as the Warm Home Discount.

👁️ What's causing it? How to tell the difference

There are four main types of damp. Condensation is the most common, but the others are usually repairs, so they need reporting.



1 Condensation

Droplets on cold windows and walls, black spotty mould in corners. Worse in cold weather and first thing.

2 Penetrating damp

Water getting in from outside, e.g. roof, gutters, walls or window seals. Patches that grow after rain.

3 Rising damp

Ground moisture rising up low walls: a tide-mark, salts, flaky plaster or skirting, usually near floor level.

4 Leak (from pipes or appliances)

A wet patch or ceiling stain, often below a bathroom, pipe or appliance. Can happen at any time of year.

	💧 Condensation	☁️ Penetrating damp	🏠 Rising damp	🔧 Leak
Where	Windows, cold outside walls, corners, behind furniture and in wardrobes	Anywhere water can get in: under roofs, around windows, outside walls	Low on ground-floor walls, from the floor upwards	Below or near bathrooms, pipes, radiators, tanks or appliances
When	Mostly in colder months, often worst first thing in the morning	Usually worse after rain or wind-driven rain	All year round	Any time; may get worse when water is used
What it looks like	Water droplets; black spotty mould; musty smell	Damp patches or rings that grow after rain	Tide-mark, white salts, crumbling plaster or rotting skirting	Wet patch or brown ceiling stain; drips; low water pressure
What to do	Follow the quick wins and wipe it away. Tell us if it keeps coming back.	Report it to us. It is a repair.	Report it to us. It needs a specialist to confirm.	Report it straight away. Turn off the water at the stopcock if it's safe and the leak is bad.

📌 Condensation isn't always down to everyday living

If condensation or mould keeps coming back even with the quick wins, it can point to a problem with the building, such as poor insulation, a cold spot, or a fan, vent or heater that isn't working well. Tell us and we will look at the cause with your landlord.

📋 A quick test

If the water **wipes away** from a cold surface and comes back in cold weather, it is most likely condensation.

If the **wall or ceiling itself** is wet, stained or crumbling, or the patch grows after rain or when water is used, it is more likely a repair.

📧 Not sure? Report it anyway

You don't need to work out the cause yourself, and there can be more than one. Send us photos and tell us where it is and how long it has been there. We will look into it and, if needed, arrange a specialist.

Room-by-room tips

Most moisture comes from a few everyday activities. Here is how to manage it in each room.

Kitchen

- Lids on pans, and the cooker hood or extractor fan on while you cook.
- Keep the kitchen door shut so steam doesn't spread.
- Open the window after cooking until the steam clears.
- Feed a vented tumble dryer's hose outside, or empty a condenser dryer's tank after each load.

Bathroom

- Fan on during your bath or shower and for about 20 minutes after.
- Door shut, and window open after bathing if you can.
- Wipe down tiles, the screen and the window sill.
- Run cold water into the bath first, then hot: it makes less steam.

Bedrooms

- Open the window for a few minutes when you get up (keep it closed at night in cold weather).
- Leave a gap (a hand's width) between wardrobes or beds and outside walls.
- Don't overfill wardrobes, so air can move around clothes.
- Condensation most mornings? Try a moisture-absorber box on the sill (see page 4).

Living areas and laundry

- Dry washing outdoors when you can.
- Drying indoors? Use one room, door shut, with the window open or a dehumidifier on (page 4), not radiators.
- Keep furniture slightly away from outside walls.
- No paraffin or bottled gas (LPG) heaters: they add a lot of moisture.

Cleaning small spots of mould safely

Small spots, for example on a window seal or bathroom sealant, can usually be cleaned away. Please tell us if it keeps coming back.

1

Take a photo

Before you clean, take a photo and, if you can, draw around the patch. It helps us find the cause if it returns.

2

Protect yourself

Wear rubber gloves, a mask and eye protection. Shut the door, and keep the window open during and after cleaning.

3

Clean and dry

Use a mould and mildew remover (a fungicidal wash), not bleach, and follow the label. Never mix products or brush dry mould. Let it dry fully.

4

Bin the cloth

Throw away or hot-wash the cloth. Don't paint or paper over mould.



Larger areas of mould: please don't tackle it yourself

If mould covers a large area, keeps returning after cleaning, or is on soft furnishings, carpets or the ceiling, report it to us. Larger areas should be dealt with by a professional, and the cause needs finding.



Damp, mould and your health

Damp and mould mainly affect breathing, can irritate eyes and skin, and can affect how you feel. Babies, children, older people, pregnant women and anyone with asthma, allergies, a lung or heart condition or a weakened immune system are more at risk. Worried about symptoms? Speak to your GP or pharmacist, or call NHS 111. Tell us if anyone at home is at higher risk: you don't need a doctor's letter for us to act.

Using a dehumidifier

A dehumidifier takes extra moisture out of the air. It works alongside ventilation and steady heating, not instead of them.

Moisture-absorber boxes

Small tubs or boxes of crystals that slowly soak up moisture. They need no electricity.

- Best for small, enclosed spaces: window sills, wardrobes, cupboards and small rooms.
- Stand them on a flat, stable surface, out of reach of children and pets.
- Pour away the collected liquid and replace the refill as the label says; don't let them overflow.
- They only take in a little water, so they won't dry a whole room.

Electric dehumidifier

A plug-in machine that draws in damp air and collects the water in a tank. It removes far more moisture than boxes.

- Most useful when you have to dry clothes indoors, or in a room where condensation keeps forming.
- Many have a humidity setting and a timer, and switch off when the tank is full.
- Follow the manufacturer's instructions, including the safety advice.

Getting the best from an electric dehumidifier

1

Close the room

Shut the door and windows of the room it is working in, so it dries that room rather than the air coming in from outside.

2

Give it space

Stand it upright on a flat floor, well away from walls, curtains and furniture. Never cover the air vents.

3

Set a sensible level

Use the humidity setting if it has one. Don't aim for air that is as dry as possible: very dry air can make you cough.

4

Empty and clean

Empty the water tank regularly, and clean the tank and filter as the instructions say.

Drying clothes indoors

Dry the washing in one room with the door shut. Either run the dehumidifier there with the window closed, or open the window instead. Avoid drying clothes on radiators.

Running costs

An electric dehumidifier uses electricity. The cost depends on the model, its power (watts), your tariff and how long it runs. Use the timer or humidity setting so it only runs when needed.

Other simple helpers

A window vacuum or cloth to wipe condensation away each morning. Wring the cloth out in the sink rather than drying it on a radiator.



A dehumidifier helps, but it doesn't fix the cause

Keep ventilating and heating your home as in the quick wins. If you find you need to run a dehumidifier all the time to keep condensation or mould under control, please tell us. It can point to a problem with ventilation, heating or the building that your landlord needs to fix.

Dehumidifier boxes or an electric dehumidifier are available from any DIY or home store. We don't recommend any particular brand or seller.

Who does what

Dealing with damp works best when we work on it together.

You: everyday care

- ✓ Ventilate and heat the home reasonably, as in the quick wins.
- ✓ Use extractor fans and keep vents and air bricks clear.
- ✓ Wipe away condensation and clean small spots of mould.
- ✓ **Report** leaks, damp patches, faulty fans or heating, and mould that keeps returning, promptly.
- ✓ Let us and our contractors in, with notice, to inspect and repair.

Your landlord, through us: repairs and causes

- ✓ Keep the structure and outside in repair: roof, walls, windows, gutters, drains and outside pipes.
- ✓ Keep the heating, hot water, water pipes, sinks, baths and toilets working.
- ✓ Keep the home fit to live in, including free from serious damp and mould.
- ✓ Investigate the cause of damp, fix it and deal with larger areas of mould.
- ✓ Check back afterwards (usually at least 6 weeks after the work) that the problem has not returned.

How to report damp or mould

Use our normal repair reporting route. Please include photos.

1

Report it

Use **Report a repair** in our **app**, or contact your local office (details below).

2

Give the details

Where it is, how big, how long, photos, and whether anyone at home has a health condition.

3

We look into it

We let your landlord know, arrange an inspection and, if needed, a specialist or contractor.

4

Fix and follow up

We keep you updated on what will be done and when, arrange the work and check back that it has worked.

Aylesbury office

Phone: 01296 254425

Unit 13 The Courtyard, Milton Road, Aylesbury, HP21 7LZ

Leighton Buzzard office

Phone: 01525 301401

Email: lb@michaelanthony.co.uk

5 Market Court, Hockliffe Street, Leighton Buzzard, LU7 1HG

Or, for either office, use **Report a repair** in our **app**: eu.jotform.com/app/michael-anthony/get-started

Emergencies, such as water coming through a ceiling or near electrics: turn off the water at the stopcock if it is safe, and follow the emergency steps in your Tenant Handbook. **Let only or rent collection homes**: report to your landlord directly.

Your rights

- Your landlord must keep your home **fit to live in** (Homes (Fitness for Human Habitation) Act 2018) and keep the structure, outside and installations **in repair** (section 11, Landlord and Tenant Act 1985).
- Your local council can inspect and act on serious hazards, including damp and mould (Housing Act 2004).
- The Renters' Rights Act 2025 has ended "no-fault" section 21 evictions, so you can report repairs with confidence.
- **Awaab's Law** currently applies to social housing. Check gov.uk for updates.

We use the details and photos in your report to manage the repair, and share them with your landlord and contractors where needed. See our privacy policy: www.michaelanthony.co.uk/privacy-policy/. This guide is general information and does not replace your tenancy agreement or legal advice. Laws and guidance can change: see gov.uk for the latest.