

## How to deal with damp

Dealing with dampness in your home requires identifying the type of dampness and addressing the underlying causes. Here are some steps to deal with each type of dampness:

### 1. Penetrating Dampness:

- Identify and fix any defects on external walls or roof, such as missing pointing, cracked rendering, or defective rainwater goods.
- Repair any roof leaks promptly.
- Consider applying water-repellent coatings to external walls.
- Ensure proper drainage around the property to prevent water from pooling near the walls.
- Monitor affected areas for signs of dampness and address any issues promptly.

### 2. Defective Plumbing:

- Inspect water and waste pipes in bathrooms and kitchens for leaks.
- Check seals around baths, showers, and sinks for any signs of damage or wear.
- Examine external pipework, such as guttering, for leaks or blockages.
- Repair any leaks or damaged seals immediately.
- Consider installing leak detectors or sensors to alert you to any plumbing issues.

### 3. Rising Damp:

- Check for signs of rising damp, such as tide marks or efflorescence salts on walls.
- Ensure that the damp proof course (DPC) is intact and functioning properly.
- Install or repair a DPC if necessary to prevent moisture from rising through the walls.
- Improve ventilation in affected areas to help reduce moisture buildup.
- Treat any affected areas with damp-proofing solutions or specialist treatments.
- Monitor the affected areas regularly to ensure that rising damp is not recurring.

### 4. Condensation:

- Improve ventilation in your home by opening windows or using extractor fans, especially in areas prone to moisture, such as bathrooms and kitchens.
- Avoid drying clothes indoors, especially in unventilated areas.
- Insulate cold surfaces, such as walls and windows, to prevent condensation from forming.
- Wipe down surfaces regularly to remove excess moisture and prevent mould growth.
- Consider installing insulation or double-glazing to reduce condensation on windows.
- Address any underlying issues, such as inadequate heating or insulation, that may be contributing to condensation.
- Use a dehumidifier to reduce humidity levels in the air.

By identifying the type of dampness and taking appropriate measures to address the underlying causes, you can effectively deal with dampness in your home and prevent further damage. If you're unsure about how to tackle the issue, consider consulting a professional damp specialist for advice and assistance.



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There are 4 types of dampness:

1. **Penetrating Dampness:** only appears because of a defect outside the home, such as missing pointing, cracked rendering, missing roof tiles or defective rainwater goods.  
Penetrating dampness is far more noticeable following rainfall and will normally appear as a well-defined 'damp-patch' which looks and feels damp to the touch.
2. **Defective Plumbing:** Leaks from water and waste pipes, especially in bathrooms and kitchens, are relatively common.
3. **Rising Damp:** This is generally caused by water rising from the ground into the home. Rising damp will usually only affect basements and ground floor rooms. It will normally rise no more than 12 to 24 inches above ground level and usually leaves a 'tide mark' low on the wall.

Note: Black mould is rarely seen on these 3 types of dampness

4. **Condensation:** the most common type of dampness.

Condensation is controlled by:

### 1. Minimise moisture:

- Dry windows and sills every morning and keep surfaces in the kitchen and bathroom dry. Wring out the cloth rather than drying it on a radiator.
- hang washing outside to dry if possible. Or hang it in the bathroom with the door closed and a window open, or extractor fan on.
- cook with pan lids on and the extractor fan on. Use only as much water as needed to cover vegetables and turn down the heat when the water has boiled.
- reduce steam when having a bath by running the cold water first and then adding the hot.
- Close the kitchen door when cooking to stop steam escaping to other parts of the house.

### 2. Ventilate:

- Always use the fan in the bathroom and open windows and vents whenever possible to allow air to circulate, especially when cooking or washing up.
- use an extractor fan or open a bathroom window for about 20 minutes after showering or bathing.
- leave bedroom window open at night, even if only slightly.
- keep the kitchen and bathroom doors closed so moisture cannot escape into the rest of the house.
- keep a small gap between large furniture and the wall, and where possible place it against an internal wall.

### 3. Heat adequately:

- Avoid rooms cooling completely. Experts recommend that the ideal temperature:
  - for living rooms is 20°C,
  - 23°C for the bathroom and children's rooms, and
  - 16°C for the bedroom and kitchen.
- It is recommended that you never let the temperature of your home fall below 14°C.

**Note, that the first three are generally the responsibility of the landlord, and they must be informed as soon as a problem appears.**

**Condensation, and problems from are general in the control of the tenant.**