

**CONTACT THE ENERGY SAVING TRUST ADVICE CENTRE ON:
FREE PHONE**

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The Warm and Well scheme has been set up to help people in Gloucestershire keep their homes warm, comfortable and healthy. The scheme is aimed at home owners and private tenants.

Gloucestershire



Warm & Well



SevernWye
ENERGY AGENCY



*avoid damp from condensation
keep your home warm
and stay well*

Read this leaflet to find out how to avoid damp from condensation and make your home easier to keep warm

Gloucestershire



Warm & Well

What is condensation?

There is always moisture in the air, and we add to it through the things we do in our everyday lives, such as cooking, washing, drying clothes and even breathing!



Warm air can hold more moisture than cold air can - so condensation is more likely to be a problem in a cold or poorly insulated home with lots of cold surfaces. It can also happen because of a lack of ventilation. These are often connected, because we tend not to ventilate rooms enough if the home is difficult to keep warm.

*Condensation occurs when warm moist air meets a cold surface. It cools down and then deposits the moisture on the surface.
The change from vapour (in the air) to liquid (on the surface) is called condensation.*

How can damp from condensation affect my health?



Condensation can cause a damp problem if it happens a lot and doesn't dry out during the day, as it encourages mould growth and an increase in the amount of dust mites.

Dust mites and mould spores can cause, or make worse, allergic reactions and respiratory (breathing) illness.

There are several other possible causes of damp in the home, such as blocked gutters, a leaky roof, and rising damp. Here are some tips to help you to recognise damp caused by condensation:

The symptoms of condensation damp

- There is mould growing on the damp area
- It is on the coldest surfaces
- It is in rooms with little heating or ventilation
- It gets worse in cold rather than wet weather

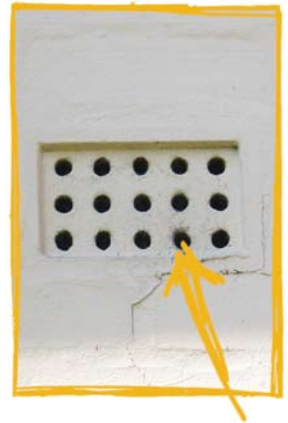
How to avoid condensation damp

Step 1: Ventilation

People breathe out moist air, so every room needs some background ventilation. It is possible to provide this and not suffer with uncomfortable draughts.

Modern windows have narrow ventilators at the top called trickle ventilators – these should be kept open all the time except in very severe weather.

Airbricks built into the wall act as an important form of ventilation and should be left clear at all times.



Airbrick

Remember it can be fatally dangerous to block off ventilators in rooms with open or unflued combustion appliances. One of the risks is carbon monoxide poisoning.

Think about where and when a high level of moisture is produced and try to get it out of the house as soon as possible, for example:

Cooking and washing

- Where possible keep lids on cooking pans.
- Ventilate the room with an open door or window.
- Close the internal door to keep moist air from circulating around the home.



Drying clothes

Do this outside if you can, or in a tumble dryer vented to outside. If neither is possible, dry them in a well-ventilated room with the inner door closed.

The right amount!

Try to be aware of ventilation and aim for the right amount in the right place at the right time – too much will just make you cold but too little can be dangerous.

How to avoid condensation damp

Step 2: Insulation

Insulating your home keeps the heat in, makes it easier to keep it warm, and can save you energy and money. Where the building is insulated, the surfaces will be warmer, and condensation is less likely to be a problem.



Roof

- Put at least 270mm of insulation in the loft
- Include insulation when you repair a leaky flat roof or replaster a sloping ceiling

Windows

- New windows are double glazed as a minimum nowadays, and you can get ones with extra features making them more efficient
- Older windows can be secondary glazed

Walls

- Cavity walls can be filled by a specialist installer
- Walls with no cavity can be lined with insulation when you are replastering

Step 3: Heating

Condensation is best avoided by a fairly even background heat throughout the house. You can still choose to heat some rooms to a higher level, but try not to leave any other areas completely unheated even though it saves fuel.



The result can be that the warm moist air from the rooms you are using the most travels through to these colder areas when you open the door, and causes condensation on cold spots such as the top outer corner of an unheated bedroom.



To make your heating economical and efficient, make sure you use the thermostats and timers to control it properly, keep appliances well-maintained, and consider updating if you have an older system.