

How can I prevent condensation on windows?



An easy guide with short and long-term solutions to your home condensation problems.

Condensation on your windows can cause damp and mould, damaging not only your home but also your health. With this guide, we'll help you understand the signs of condensation and how to tackle the problem.

What's condensation and what are the signs?

Condensation is essentially water droplets that appear on a hard surface. It forms on windows when water vapour from the air comes into contact with cold glass, which can then pool on windowsills causing damp and mould.

Condensation occurs more frequently in winter when central heating in the house increases the difference in air temperature. With modern insulation and double-glazing, this moist air has no way of escaping.

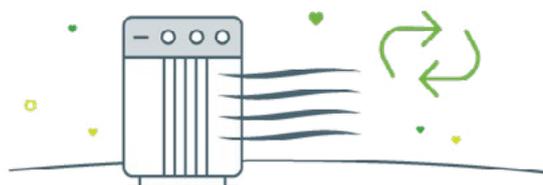
It can appear on kitchen windows when cooking or washing up, laundry areas when you're using a tumble dryer, when drying washing inside or when showering and bathing. If condensation has been occurring for a while, black mould may form around the window frame or on walls in unventilated areas. This excess moisture on walls and window frames can lead to damp forming.



Types of condensation on windows

There are three main types of condensation:

1. Condensation on the inside of windows shows there could be a ventilation issue inside your home.
2. If condensation appears on the outside of your windows, this shows your double-glazing is working as it should and keeping the heat inside your home. This type of condensation is caused by cold air from outside hitting the warm window.
3. Condensation between panes of glass in a window suggests there's a problem with your double-glazing. It's likely that the seals on the window have failed and ideally the window should be replaced.



Quick fixes to stop condensation

- Keep lids on pans and dry your washing outside where possible; plants can also add to the water vapour in your house so consider if these could be adding to your issue.

- Make sure your home is well ventilated – leave your windows open when you're at home. When cooking or using the bathroom, try opening the windows until the excess water or steam has gone.

- Extractor fans in the kitchen and bathroom can be highly effective as these rooms are often responsible for most of the moisture in your home.



- If extractor fans aren't enough, you might want to consider a dehumidifier to draw out the additional moisture. These can be particularly useful as you can move them around to where they're most needed, for example, near drying clothes inside the house or in the bedroom at night.

- Consider improving the insulation in your home to make sure the temperature is consistently kept above dew point (the temperature at which moisture in the air turns into a liquid). Upgrading to double-glazing or even triple-glazing will also help reduce condensation as the panes stay much warmer than single-glazed windows, and therefore don't experience as much condensation.

- Moderate the heating: instead of quickly turning up the heating in your home to a high temperature, try putting your boiler on at a lower setting for longer. This can help prevent condensation in your house by reducing large temperature fluctuations. Try keeping doors closed in rooms you are using and attempt to keep the thermostat at the same temperature in every room.



Whilst these short-term fixes may alleviate some issues, you may want to consider some **long-term solutions** to prevent further problems.

- Building airbricks into external walls and installing air vents in internal walls – this will allow airflow through the house. Fitting roof ventilation tiles in and under the roof and guttering will increase ventilation into the loft. Window vents on the tops of window frames should alleviate condensation on windows.
- Installing a heat recovery system – it can also reduce condensation due to its de-humidification effects and temperature regulation.



Top tip

Don't forget - it's important to dry up any water that forms as a result of condensation. Always mop up the excess water, using a squeegee or an old towel. Make sure you pay particular attention to any wooden or fabric surfaces that could be damaged by the water.

