

# Nip damp in the bud

Here's everything you need to know to treat and prevent damp

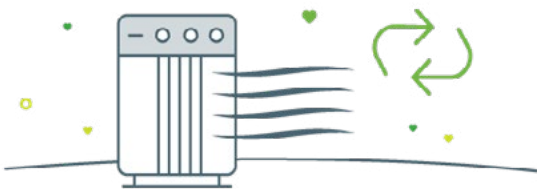
## Types of damp

### Condensation

Generally caused by moist, warm air settling on cold walls and indoor surfaces, condensation is common in kitchens and bathrooms. Whenever you wash, cook, dry laundry or even breathe inside your home, moisture is released into the air. Now imagine the amount of times you do this every week. Scary, right?

### Symptoms

- Water droplets on walls and other surfaces
- Dark mould forming, especially around windows
- Unpleasant smell



### Penetrating damp

Leaking roofs, gutters or damaged mortar and rendering on external walls can often lead to penetrating damp. Early signs include the sudden appearance of a brown damp patch, most commonly around chimney breasts or in the upper corners and ceilings of a room.

### Symptoms

- Damp, brown stains on ceilings or walls



### Rising damp

Most common in older homes that don't have proper damp-proofing, rising damp is usually caused by ground water moving up through a wall or floor.

### Symptoms

- Cold, wet surfaces and mould growing in the external corners of your ground floor
- Peeling paint and wallpaper
- Wet patches on walls
- Damaged and decaying skirting boards
- Sometimes a strong, musty smell

Dark mould around your windows is usually a sign of condensation



## Main causes of damp and how to treat them

Most cases of damp in homes are caused by poor ventilation or plumbing leaks.

### Poor ventilation

Condensation on windows and other cold surfaces inside your home means you may have a problem with ventilation. Low ventilation may also be an issue if it feels cool or damp inside your home or a certain room.

### How to cure damp caused by poor ventilation

- Reduce condensation
- Repair and prevent any existing moisture damage
- Keep your home ventilated by opening windows regularly

### Leaking plumbing

If your plumbing starts to leak, you might notice damp forming on the walls inside your home. As the leak continues, the damp patch will spread.

Damp caused by leaking pipes will usually start to form a wet patch on external walls and in the corners of a room. You're most likely to spot it on a ceiling or beneath sinks and radiators.

### How to cure damp caused by leaking plumbing

- Repair the damaged pipes to prevent it getting worse
- Ventilate your home to help dry out the room
- Call in the professionals for proper damp treatment if the damage is severe

Not all damp is the same. Different types will affect your home in different ways. Usually, if you catch a damp problem early enough, you should be able to repair the damage quickly and keep the costs down.

## How to prevent damp

Prevention of damp is often more effective than the cure. Understanding how to prevent damp can help you to maintain a fresh living space and also avoid the cost of repairing issues caused by excess moisture.

- **Monitor your roof** to reduce the risk of cracked and loose tiles causing significant damp problems
- **Clean your gutters** regularly so they won't crack and overflow, which could let water into your home
- Maintain a **steady temperature** in your home to avoid condensation to thrive
- Use **extractor fans, air bricks, window vents and roof ventilation** to improve ventilation of your home
- DIY with **moisture-resistant paint** and help prevent the problem returning
- Invest in a **dehumidifier** to help improve the air quality in your home and reduce the risk of damp

## When should you call a professional



You should be able to remedy most minor damp issues yourself by simply improving the ventilation of your home or reducing the moisture in the air. But sometimes, the type or severity of damp in your home may call for professional treatment.

- If you notice a damp patch growing gradually, there may be a problem with your plumbing
- For penetrating or rising damp, you might need to call in some professional help – this might include roof repairs or the installation of damp-roofing



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