

CONDENSATION

Condensation results when warm air encounters a cold surface and condenses from vapour into water. This is particularly common on walls and windows and develops as a black mould, formed by live bacteria. Condensation is completely avoidable provided simple procedures are followed.

Firstly, it is essential for the property to be constantly heated to a reasonable temperature as changes in the level of heating increases condensation. It is a false economy to turn the central heating system on and off; as more power is used in reaching acceptable temperatures than if the system was left running continuously on a slightly lower level. Keep the heating on constantly, or more regularly during the months from October to March inclusive, as stated in your Tenancy Agreement

Secondly, condensation will be prevented if there is a current of fresh air. This involves leaving a window in each room slightly open when safely possible. Many modern windows have a facility to enable the window to be left securely open on a special latch. We know from experience how difficult it is to convince people that it is actually warmer if you keep the window open than closed. Please try it – it really does work! Dry air is warmer than wet air. Some modern windows have small vents at the top which can be left open without any security risk. They have mesh to avoid any insects or rain entering.

Thirdly, do not pack a room or cupboard so full of your possessions that there is no room for the air to circulate around and behind them. This will aggravate the situation. Always use an extractor fan, if you have one, in the kitchen and bathroom. Be sure to open the window in the bathroom every time you finish using it, and leave windows slightly open as often as possible when you are in the property. It is important to draw back the curtains in all rooms every day to avoid staining the linings.

Lastly, if you do see any black mould growth caused by condensation, it is essential to wipe it off promptly using a proprietary mould treatment solution, or undiluted bleach. Mould is a living organism and ordinary soap and water will not prevent it from reforming.