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TIPS FOR MOULD CONTROL

Understanding Why Mould occurs.

Mould occurs when tiny spores have the ideal conditions to germinate and thrive. Mould requires nutrients from moisture and other organic matter to survive and grow. You will typically see Mould appearing as black or brownish discolourations once it has attached in a suitable location.

What are the Main Causes of Mould in the home?

There are many reasons why Mould can grow. The most common causes are:

- Water Ingress – home maintenance issues
- Weather/Environmental conditions
- Internal Condensation

Once water ingress has been ruled out, we can discuss how to manage the other common causes.

Weather/Environment

The prevailing weather conditions and seasons can influence Mould growth. For example, severe weather events, extended periods of rain, high humidity or changes in temperature. Mould often becomes more visible especially during extended periods of wet weather. You may see Mould appearing on belongings, furniture, and other hard surfaces as weather conditions provide the ideal environment for naturally occurring airborne Mould spores to attach to the lingering moisture and germinate, this is a natural occurrence that can be managed. As we move into the colder months especially, we need to be more vigilant in keeping the home dryer and warmer.

Providing a food source for Mould

There are 3 main principles in controlling this.

1. Keep the home dryer and correctly aired. Mould spores must have moisture to germinate.
2. Allow natural light to enter the home.
3. Declutter.
4. Keep the home free from dirt, dust, organic matter, and bacteria. (Food source for Mould spores).
5. Reduce internal dampness. How do we do this?

See the following simple tips to control excess dampness and Mould in the home.

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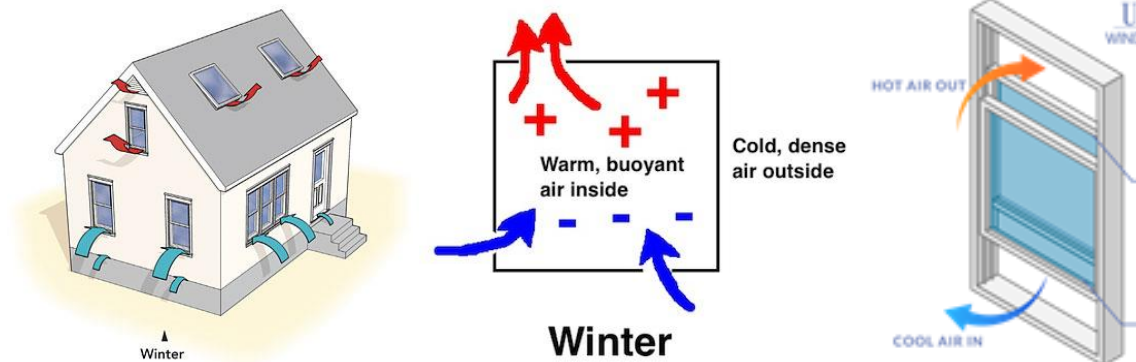
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Ventilation

The crossflow of air is key. In winter it's important to cross ventilate regularly on DRY days, between 10 am and 2 pm for as long as possible (aim for at least 1-2 hours - can be extended during summer months).

Cross ventilation is a successful drying process that is made possible by opening several windows and/or doors in the middle part of the day on dry days and allowing air to flow through the home. Just opening a window randomly at any time or in any weather is NOT correct ventilation. There is a correct time to open a home, over ventilating can increase internal moisture levels making the home more susceptible to Mould germination. Declutter so that air can flow to all areas of the home. Sash windows are excellent for correct cross ventilation.



Cleaning

Whilst this may seem inconsequential, regular dusting, cleaning, and sanitizing of all surfaces to remove dirt and dust and organic matter that Mould feeds on (food, hair, skin cells, etc.). This can significantly reduce the likelihood of Mould growing.



Reducing clutter can make this job easier.

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Tip. Indoor potted plants provide the ideal place for Mould spores to emanate from. Spores thrive in damp soil and decaying organic matter. Spores then become air borne and spread inside the home.



Reduce Internal Dampness.

Condensation due to lifestyle is common to most dwellings. Mould growth is the visual sign of excess moisture and condensation. It is usually the responsibility of the occupier using the home to reduce any lifestyle activities that create high moisture and condensation inside the home. If this moisture stays trapped inside and cannot escape, you are likely to see Mould as a result!



The key to Mould control is to identify these lifestyle factors that increase internal dampness and focus on reducing them to a minimum. Often minor adjustments and a little diligence is all that is needed to control Mould spores germinating. For example:

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- Wet areas such as bathrooms and laundries create high moisture and condensation in the home therefore it's important to isolate these areas and ventilate to ensure moisture is aired to outside and the room is dried as quickly as possible after every use, especially when showering in the evening to stop moisture lingering throughout the night, and when using the clothes dryer.
- Always use the exhaust fan whilst showering or using a clothes dryer and continue after use until all condensation has disappeared. If you have heat lamps in the bathroom also use these during and after showering.
- Dry the bath or shower manually to remove moisture particularly if other means of ventilation are not available.
- Conventional clothes dryers create vast amounts of condensation in the air (if not ducted outside). Ventilation is vital.



- Drying washing inside on clothes racks increases internal condensation as the moisture in the clothing evaporates back into the internal air.



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- Ceiling fans can assist with drying condensation as they keep air circulating, particularly helpful in the bedroom where condensation is generated through the night. Most ceiling fans have a summer setting (blades turn clockwise pushing air down) and a winter setting (blades turn anti clockwise drawing air upwards) it is good practise to use the appropriate setting.



- Gas heating and gas cooking appliances (unflued) are said to generate 'wet' heat and produce high condensation and internal humidity. Homes that use unflued gas appliances can become highly damp and humid providing the ideal environment for spores to germinate and grow. Often the first signs are tiny spores appearing on clothing, furniture, blinds etc.



- Electric heating produces dry heat which helps to keep internal condensation/moisture levels low. Tip. Use the appliance for a short period on winter mornings in dampest rooms (usually those on southern aspect).



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- The use of an air conditioner when used correctly reduces internal condensation. Most modern air conditioners also have a **DRY mode** (this is a dehumidifier mode) which efficiently removes internal moisture from inside and also transfers it outside. Use the appliance first thing in the morning for approx..30 minutes, this is often all that is required to dry condensation.

Most brands have a dry cycle see chart of symbols below.

Brands	auto	heat	cool	dry	fan
Carrier	A	☀️	❄️	💧	🌀
Daikin	A	☀️	❄️	📺	🌀
Delonghi	🔄	☀️	❄️	💧	🌀
Fujitsu	AUTO	HEAT	COOL	DRY	🌀
Hitachi	🔄	☀️	❄️	💧	🌀
KELVINATOR	A	☀️	❄️	💧	🌀
Mitsubishi	🔄	☀️	❄️	💧	🌀
Panasonic	AUTO	HEAT	COOL	DRY	🌀
Samsung	🔄	☀️	❄️	👉	🌀
Sony	A	—	❄️	💧	🌀
Sharp	🔄	☀️	❄️	💧	🌀
Toshiba	A	☀️	❄️	💧	🌀



- A portable dehumidifier may assist somewhat to reduce condensation in small rooms/areas if it is used correctly. Remember - this is a moisture collection machine and NOT a moisture remover so it must be used correctly to be effective.



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Summary

Whenever condensation forms on walls or the inside of glass windows and remains there after mid-day, this is an indication that inside your home is staying too damp for too long. There are lots of simple ways to control moisture the secret is to focus on living a little drier.

Mould issues are simply the visual sign of excessive moisture in the home. Once you understand the contributing factors, you can control mould growth inside the home.

The use of mechanical ventilation devices is usually not an effective long-term solution as they do not solve the root cause. It is far better to rectify the cause and/or make suitable lifestyle adjustments for a permanent fix.

If condensation is excessive and/or Mould in your home is becoming worse or is a serious ongoing issue, even after following these tips, you should **contact your Property Manager to have an expert assessment carried out** to eliminate there is not a deeper issue occurring. We have a number of services available including a thorough Mould Inspection and a Mould Causation and Prevention Report. This service is highly recommended to identify all contributing factors specific to your home.

We hope you find this information helpful. Please visit our website for more information or contact the Team at Mould Removal Australia if we can assist you further.



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