

November 2024



PEAKS & PLAINS
Housing Trust

Customers guide to

Damp, Mould & Condensation



Introduction...

We're not expecting your home to have problems with damp or mould. Living in a cold and wet country, it's still important to know what to look for.

This quick guide will show you the signs and causes of the key types of damp, mould and condensation.

Remember: report these problems as soon as you see them.

**Spotted a problem?
Don't delay, report it today**

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Take a look at what you should and shouldn't do if you notice damp, mould and condensation in your home and **make sure you contact us as soon as you spot it.**

Damp

Damp often appears as wet patches. But there are key things to look out for.

Signs of damp

- ✓ Too much condensation around windows
- ✓ Discoloured patches on walls
- ✓ A musty smell
- ✓ Walls feeling wet or cold

Causes of damp

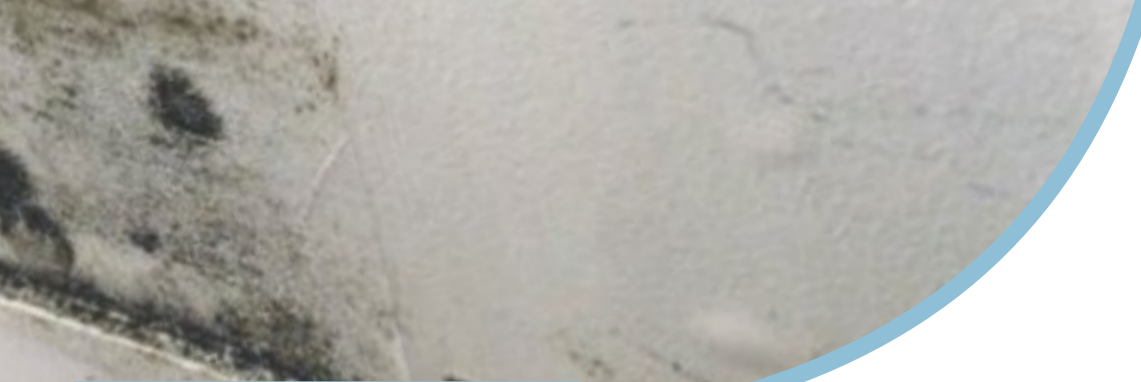
- ✓ Condensation
- ✓ Leaks within the home
- ✓ Rainwater seeping into your home
- ✓ Water from the ground travelling up through the walls

Damp can develop quickly. So it's really important to know what to look for and to report it to us promptly.

There are three main types of damp

1. Rising damp
2. Penetrating damp
3. Condensation damp





Penetrating Damp

Penetrating damp is caused by water leaking through walls. It tends to happen because of structural problems, such as faulty guttering or roofing, or cracks in external walls.

Causes of penetrating damp

- ✓ Leaking walls
- ✓ Air gaps
- ✓ Burst gutters and pipes
- ✓ Cavity wall problems
- ✓ Poor cavity insulation
- ✓ Porous bricks

The first sign of penetrating damp is often a watermark that appears on your walls. With penetrating damp, damp patches grow as the water continues to come into your home.

If you notice any signs of damp, contact us immediately. Penetrating damp requires professional attention to identify and fix the underlying causes before the issue worsens.



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Rising Damp

Rising damp is a less common type of damp. It affects walls and it caused by moisture in the ground travelling through the walls.

It can also spread into other porous building material - like plasterwork, timber floorboards, joists or skirting. These materials can also absorb this water from the ground, causing other problems like 'wet rot' in the timber.

Tip! Avoid having items leaning against your home - this can transfer damp.

Damp proof course (DPC)

Most buildings have some form of barrier at the lower level of the wall, called a damp proof course (DPC). This helps to prevent water rising from the ground.

A DPC is usually made of non-absorbent, water-resistant materials like slate, bitumen or plastic. It depends on when your home was built. Sometimes these physical DPCs fail - or, in older houses, they may not have been put in at all.





Condensation Damp

This is the most common form of damp. It forms quickly and easily - but can also be dealt with quickly and easily.

What is condensation?

Condensation happens when warm moist air comes into contact with a cooler surface like a wall or window. The air can't hold the moisture and tiny drops of water appear.

Why does ventilation help?

Ventilation helps by allowing moist air to escape and replacing it with drier air.



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Mould

Mould can grow anywhere in your home. They are microorganisms important for life on Earth - but not all moulds are the same and some types can quickly become a problem in your home.

Some types of mould can release spores that contain mycotoxins and allergens. These can affect our health and cause allergic reactions.



Different types of mould

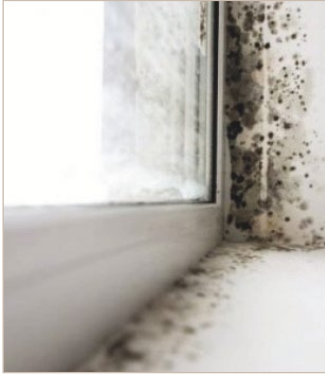
Mould can be **black, grey, orange** or **blue**. One strain of mould can be all of these colours, so it's hard to know which exact type of mould you have. Because of this, it's safest to treat all types of mould as potentially harmful and address them quickly.

The most common types of mould to grow in the home are black and green.

Did you know?

Mould only needs three things to grow:

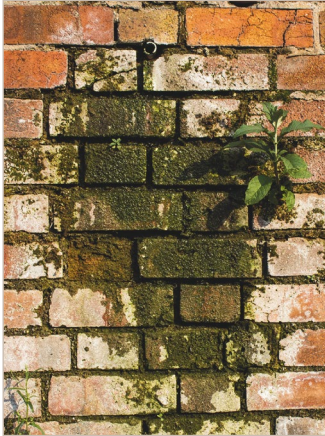
- ✓ Organic material like paper, wood or plaster
- ✓ Oxygen
- ✓ Moisture



Green mould

Green mould is common in many houses in the UK - but this type of mould isn't necessarily 'green'.

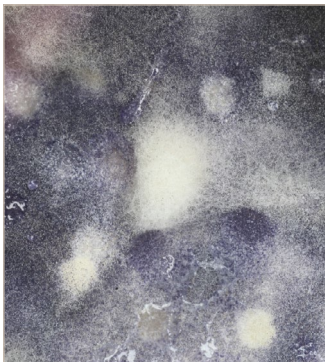
Green mould can usually look 'fluffy' in appearance and can often be found growing on damp walls, inside cupboards and carpets and on damp fabrics and mattresses.



White mould

This is often described as 'furry'. It's mostly found in cool, damp environments like cellars.

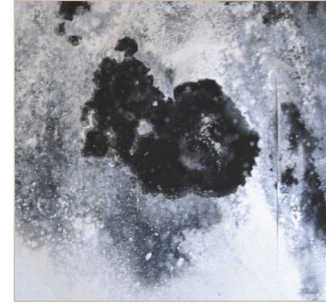
White mould can be overlooked because it looks like salt deposits, especially on brickwork. You can tell the difference between the two by spraying water on the surface. If it doesn't dissolve, it's white mould.



Blue mould

Blue mould is another common household mould. It usually appears in wetter rooms like bathrooms.

Steam from showers and bathing is the perfect, optimum moist environment for mould to grow.



Black mould

Most black moulds are common and often come from the same strain as green mould.

They can be treated with normal treatment methods and are not to be a cause of great concern.

Preventing mould

Mould thrives in moist conditions - that means we need to make sure there is no moisture build up inside your home

Our top tips

- ✓ Check to see if your windows are allowing rain to get inside. Is the sealant damaged?
- ✓ Dry wet areas immediately. Wipe up spillages and dry floors and walls after you wash.
- ✓ Keep an eye on your gutters and drainpipes - make sure there are no leaks.
- ✓ Keep internal doors open as much as possible and try to keep furniture a couple of inches away from walls.
- ✓ Open windows on dry days and let fresh air into your home to reduce humidity.

If mould keeps returning, it may indicate a deeper issue. Let us know, and we'll send a professional to help identify and resolve the root cause.





Condensation

When we talk about condensation, we mean the build of water on surfaces like walls, windows or mirrors. Condensation can lead to both damp and mould.

Our top tips for reducing condensation

- ✔ Dry clothes outdoors (when the weather allows it!), or try to dry your clothes in your bathroom with the door closed and windows open where possible.
- ✔ Close kitchen doors when you're cooking
- ✔ Make sure your tumble dryer is properly ventilated (check the manufacturer's guidelines for proper installation and ventilation)
- ✔ Use pan lids when you're cooking
- ✔ Turn on extractor fans in the kitchen and bathroom to help remove excess moisture from the air
- ✔ Use bath mats



Trickle vents

These are the little gaps above your windows or doors. If you have them, keep them open to allow air to circulate and reduce moisture build-up.

We want to hear from you!

Hold us to account on our approach to damp, mould and condensation by joining our Damp & Mould Customer Panel.

Our customers meet every other month, online or in person, to look at what we're doing to tackle these issues and challenge us to do better. They even recommended we create this booklet. We'd love to have you join us.

Join our Damp and Mould Customer Panel

- 📍 www.peaksplains.org/getinvolved
- ✉ getinvolved@peaksplains.org



Next steps Report your damp or mould

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Find out more about the products we use for mould washes and more facts on our approach to damp, mould and condensation.



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