

Is your dwelling mouldy?

**Avoid moulds –
keep your dwelling
dry**

**Ventilate –
in particular the
bathroom, kitchen and
bedrooms**

**Turn on the cooking
hood when cooking**

**Keep the bathroom
door shut when
showering**

**Do not dry wet
clothes indoors**

**Increase airing
in the early heating
season**

**Small water
damages should be
fixed immediately**

Moulds can cause allergic symptoms and asthma and be the cause of tiredness, headaches and respiratory problems.

The food sources of moulds are wallpaper, wood, organic matter in walls, clothes etc. Moulds can only grow on moist surfaces in the dwelling.



Do you have mould growth in your flat?



Looking for mould growth

Mould growth shows as green, black, brown or white spots or as a stain, that often feels like velvet to touch. Check for mould growth on floors, walls and ceilings. Look thoroughly in the corners of the shower, around windows and by the radiator.



Is there a mouldy smell?

Mould growth can also occur in hidden places, where it can be difficult to detect. For example, inside walls or behind wallpaper.

Use your sense of smell to check for moulds when entering your flat. Do the cupboards smell or the areas around plugs and skirting boards or places where the pipes come through the floor or walls. Ask other people, if your flat or clothes have a mouldy smell.



Check behind the furniture and loose wallpaper

Pull loose wallpaper aside. Feel if the wallpaper is moist and check the walls for mould growth. Check if there is moulds behind shelves, cupboards, notice boards and other furniture that lean against a cold exterior wall. Mould growth can also occur on the bathroom wall or in the area around the kitchen drain.

How to get rid of moulds



Use bleach or Rodalon

Moulds can be removed from floors, walls and ceilings by cleaning the surfaces with anti-mould disinfectants such as bleach and Rodalon. Let the disinfectant work for approximately 20 minutes. Wash it off and leave the place to dry completely. Be aware of the fact that bleach can remove the colour from coloured surfaces and that such disinfectants should not be used for daily cleaning.

Wallpaper, plasterboards and similar materials, which cannot be disinfected and which are seriously damaged by mould growth, must be replaced. Contact the caretaker, so the moulds can be removed.



Look for leaks and water damage

Check for leaks by the kitchen drain, bathroom outflow, and floor outlets in the shower or by the sink. Moreover, check if the water runs towards the outlet in the bathroom floor. If the water runs the wrong way and stays along the walls, the moisture can be absorbed in the walls and become a base for mould growth.



Check the exhausts

It is important that the exhaust works all the time. Test the mechanical ventilating system in the bathroom with a piece of paper in order to check if it is powerful enough to keep the paper from falling. Test the cooking hood to see if it removes the steam when you cook (pasta etc). Clean any blocked air outlets.

If you have a tumbler it should be connected to a suction tube, as it will otherwise blow moist air directly into the room. It is important that the tumbler has its own suction tube as the ordinary ventilation system can easily become blocked with fluff from clothes. An alternative is a condensing dryer, which does not need this.



Contact the caretaker

If you suspect water damage due to leaking pipes, a leaky roof, leaking gutters or moisture penetrating for example through the exterior walls, contact your caretaker or the housing association. This is also the case, if the ventilation system does not work.

Consult a doctor

If moulds have been found in your dwelling and a family member suffers from unaccountable tiredness, headache, respiratory problems or allergic symptoms such as a runny nose or eye irritation, you should consult a doctor. Tell your doctor that the problems may be caused by the moulds in your house.

How to avoid mould fungi in your house

Moisture occurs when we shower, dry clothes, clean and water the plants, even when we breathe and sweat. The more people living in a house, the more moisture there is. If moulds and moisture are to be avoided, limit the sources of moisture as much as possible. For example, by closing the bathroom door, when showering and by turning on the hood, when cooking.

Ventilation

It is important to air the rooms every day to get rid of the humid air. Air well during the autumn, as during this period the humid air in the flat will condense on cold surfaces like windows and exterior walls.

Old and new houses

Old houses are often poorly insulated and consequently cold. In cold dwellings, there is a higher risk of the humid air condensing to form water on the inside of windows and cold exterior walls. There might not even be a mechanical ventilating system or air outlets. In brand new or renovated houses the moisture in the building materials can be a problem for up to a year.

If you live in an old or newly built house, you must be very thorough with the airing. You can get rid of the humid air in all the rooms by leaving the heating on (minimum 20-22 degrees) and leaving the windows half open for several hours. The energy consumption will increase a bit, but it is important for your health. If you like a cool temperature when sleeping, just heat during the daytime.



Foto: Peter Elmholt

Use outdoor drying facilities or a tumbler

It is not a problem to dry a few clothes in the bathroom, but large quantities of clothes should not be dried inside the dwelling, as this will create a lot of moisture.



Avoiding condensation

It is not a problem if the bottom of the bedroom window has some condensation in the mornings, but if this continues throughout the day as well, this could be an indicator of too much moisture in the dwelling. With regard to double-glazed windows, LowE-units (energy efficient glass) etc. this should not happen. To avoid this single-glazed windows can temporarily be provided with double-glazing during the autumn and winter periods.

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