

# 20 TIPS

**FOR A HEALTHIER HOME  
THAT WON'T BREAK THE BANK**

The logo for SMART·VENT features a stylized rainbow arch above the brand name. The arch is composed of two curved lines, one red on top and one blue on bottom, meeting at the ends.

**SMART·VENT**

the experts' choice for a healthier home



# 20 Tips for a healthier home that won't break the bank!

A free guide from Smart Vent on how to reduce condensation and mildew in the home without spending a fortune!

Here's what you can do to create a warmer, drier healthier home that won't break the bank – most of the tips won't cost a cent to put into action!

## Mildew & Condensation

Winter is usually the time when mildew and condensation really become big problems. Apart from the obvious effects of causing dampness and rot in homes, the warm, moist air is conducive to the spread of diseases and often hinders recovery. Mould

In New Zealand, dampness in a home is even defined as a nuisance pursuant to health legislation and it is illegal to allow conditions that promote dampness to continue unabated!

Condensation occurs when warm, moist air meets a cold surface such as a window, mirror or wall and causes water droplets to form.



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Health risks are so extreme that it's actually illegal to allow conditions that promote dampness to continue unabated!

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## What causes condensation?

Condensation occurs when water vapour is converted into liquid water. All air contains water but the higher the temperature, the more water it can hold. If the air temperature drops, at night for example, some of that moisture will be released when the warm air comes in contact with a cooler surface like a wall, ceiling or window pane and then droplets of water form on the surface.

Condensation is widespread but is likely to be worse in colder climates. It occurs on windows, especially metal framed ones, on walls and ceiling linings. It can leave water stains, help rot to set in and cause mildew growth.

Our daily habits create a cycle of condensation. Morning showers and cooking breakfast produce water. Turning on heaters enables the air to absorb this moisture. The home is then closed up for the day and usually cools down. Evening activities may produce more water in the house from cooking, washing and drying clothes.

## What causes mildew and mould?

Mildew is a primitive form of plant growth. It grows from spores that abound everywhere and will grow in any home or premises where the humidity remains high. Mildew can occur in any type of construction and is common in both new and older homes. It's often found on shoes and clothing in wardrobes, on wallpaper, curtains and ceilings and around window frames.

## Good home ventilation is the answer

There are two ways to keep the humidity down – ventilation and heating. Ventilation takes away the moisture released from cooking, showers, clothes dryers and breathing, while heating will raise the temperature and allow the air to hold more moisture.

**Ventilation is the most fundamental answer.** Until there is enough ventilation, nothing else can help, although too much may increase the problem by preventing the house or premises from warming up. Both insulation and heating throughout the home will assist, but not prevent, mildew and condensation.



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The average in home activities – washing, cooking, heating, breathing - produce the equivalent of **two spa pools** of water every year!

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## How and when to ventilate

Ventilate little and often. Many windows open slightly are better than one fully open. If you can't keep windows open due to cold, insects or pollens or general security then a home ventilation system from Smart Vent is a great answer.

But there are a few things you can consider doing before investing in a Smart Vent system.

If windows start steaming up, then open them wider. There are now a number of ventilation systems on the market that provide continual ventilation of the house.



# 20 TIPS TO A HEALTHIER HOME

## Keep moisture to a minimum

1. When cooking keep pots covered and try to avoid leaving kettles boiling.
2. Use an outside ducted range hood when cooking, particular with gas appliances.
3. Always vent tumble dryers to the outside. Refrain from hanging and drying cloths indoors.
4. Oil and portable gas heaters put a lot of moisture into the air - avoid using portable unflued gas heaters. Avoid the use of LPG and kerosene without proper ventilation..
5. Bathroom extractor fans should be ducted to the outside rather than into the ceiling space.
6. A dehumidifier can help but aren't as effective as a home ventilation system.
7. If you care for a lot of plants, group them in one sunny room and avoid over watering.
8. Dry and store firewood outside.



Oil and portable gas heaters put a lot of moisture into the air - avoid using portable unflued gas heaters.

## Ventilate to remove moisture

9. Some ventilation is needed to remove moisture as it is being produced. Keep a small window gap or vent open when there is moisture in the room.
10. In the kitchen and bathroom open the windows wider or use an extractor fan. Close the kitchen and bathroom doors when these rooms are in use (even if are using an extractor fan)
11. Leave doors open slightly to ventilate cupboards and wardrobes – filling them with too many things stops air circulating. Where possible, position wardrobes and furniture against internal walls.
12. Open blinds and drapes. Heavy window coverings restrict the flow of warm air over the interior glass surface.
13. Operate ceiling fans to improve air circulation.

## Insulation and draught-proofing

14. Draught-proofing some doors and windows can improve the warmth and dryness of the air.
15. Do not draught-proof rooms where there is a condensation or mould problem.

16. Do not draught-proof where there is a fuel burning heater or cook top.
17. Do not draught-proof windows in the bathroom or kitchen.

### Heat your home a little more

18. When the whole house is warmer and drier, condensation is less likely.
19. During cold spells, a low heat for a long time is better than switching heaters on high for a short period.
20. Where possible, try to heat the whole house. If you have central heating, set it to provide background warmth in all rooms, including unused rooms.

Get the life-time solution to a drier, warmer, healthier home

## Get a Smart Vent

If those mouldy walls, dripping windows and health concerns continue then it's time to consider a Smart Vent home ventilation system.

Call us and we can tell you all about the very affordable **Positive Pressure System** or an energy saving **Synergy Heat Recovery System**.

Call **0800 140 150** for a free in home assessment or visit [www.smartvent.co.nz](http://www.smartvent.co.nz)



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