

Mould - avoidance and removal



Mould is toxic and should not be allowed to spread in the flat. Tiny mould spores enter any home through the air. They only become a problem, however, if they settle and spread out. This happens if mould spores find areas that are permanently damp. Examples of this are cool walls and the silicone joints of windows and in bathrooms. The moisture nourishes the mould. Appropriate ventilation is absolutely crucial in order to prevent any spreading of mould. Take a look at our info sheet **Airing pcorrectly: Save heating costs and avoid mould!**



Specific airing situations

We all sweat, take showers, cook, etc. These activities carry moisture into our homes. Therefore, in addition to the regular airing: Moisture should be expelled when there is too much of it – Open the windows widely **before you go to bed** and **after you get up**. Breathing and sweating which occurs when you sleep, dampens the air for many hours overnight! Also ventilate immediately **after taking a shower or cooking**: Open the windows widely (do not tilt) for 5 – 10 minutes!

Fans

Electric fans can often be found in bathrooms without windows. Leave an electric fan running for about 15 minutes after you have taken a shower. Many of these devices have a filter which can be cleaned or exchanged. Take a look to see if your fan can be opened, and clean the filter twice a year with a vacuum cleaner.

If the fan is not working, contact the building management (Hausverwaltung) and ask for it to be repaired.



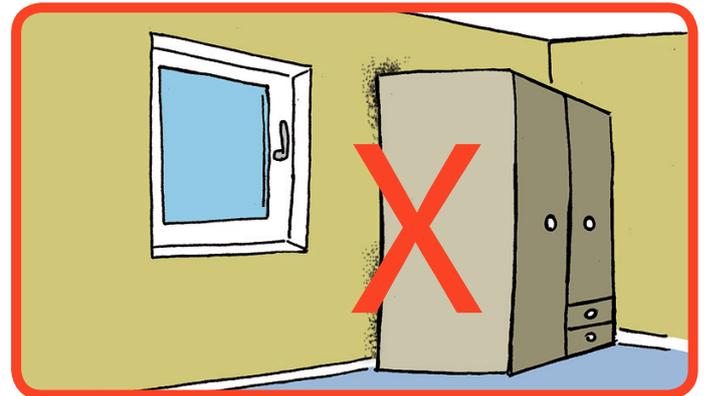
Remove condensed water

Condensed water often trickles down window panes. Make sure you regularly wipe it off of the glass and the window joints. Likewise, water should be wiped from the shower cabin, bathtub, and tiles, before it evaporates into the air. Avoid trouble with the building management – as a tenant you are responsible for mould damage to the joints!



No furniture at outer walls

Air is not able to circulate behind large pieces of furniture, and thus it cannot carry moisture away. Avoid placing cupboards, etc. along cold exterior walls if possible. If this is not possible, allow a distance of 10 cm between the furniture and the wall to the exterior.



Removing mould

You can often remove small patches (up to about half a square meter) of superficial mould yourself. Pay attention! No special fungicidal chemical substances are needed for this purpose! As a matter of fact, those types of products kill the mould, but their own toxic evaporations are a strain on the air in the room!

Also very effective, but **cheaper** and **less unhealthy**, is methylated spirit. It is available from chemist's shops (drugstores).

By use of a sponge, rag, or brush, the mould areas are imbued to about 20 cm beyond their outer limit. On the following day, this procedure is repeated, and the mould can be wiped off.

Attention! Although less harmless than other mould killers: methylated spirit has a narcotic effect and is easily inflammable! Protective gloves and goggles must be worn on all occasions (available from DIY stores). The rooms must be aired while the work is going on and for at least one hour after it is completed. Pay attention to the safety instructions on the packaging.



Imbue mould area with methylated spirit



Imbue again after 24 hours and wipe off