

Winter Damp & Warmth Checklist

For UK renters. Tick these off once at the start of winter, then keep the daily habits going. Nothing here needs drilling or permission – except where it says to ask.

Daily habits that cut condensation

- ☐ Wipe condensation off windows and sills each morning with a squeegee or cloth.
- ☐ Open windows or trickle vents when you can, even for a short while.
- ☐ Use extractor fans (or crack a window) when cooking and showering.
- ☐ Keep furniture a little away from cold outside walls.
- ☐ Dry washing in a room with the door shut and a window cracked or a fan on – not in the bedroom you sleep in.
- ☐ Spin washing hard first, space items out and turn thick ones halfway through.

Stop the draughts (renter-friendly)

- ☐ Twin-sided or fabric draught excluders under draughty doors.
- ☐ Removable window insulation film on the coldest windows (test the tape on a hidden corner first).
- ☐ An internal letterbox cover that pushes or sticks on – ask before swapping any hardware.
- ☐ A thermal curtain over the front door or a draughty hall doorway, on a tension rod or existing rail.
- ☐ Unused open fireplace? A removable chimney balloon – ask your landlord first, and take it out before lighting a fire.

Know your numbers

- ☐ Get a cheap digital hygrometer and check which rooms are dampest, and when.
- ☐ If you buy a dehumidifier: compressor types suit warmer rooms; desiccant types cope better in cold, unheated rooms (Which?).
- ☐ Size guide (Which?): 7–12 litres/day for small spaces, 14–16 for medium, 18+ for large.
- ☐ Look for a humidistat so the machine switches off once the room reaches your target.

Staying safe with heaters and airers

- ☐ Don't leave a heated airer running overnight or while you're out.
- ☐ Don't overload airers, especially with thick, heavy items.
- ☐ Keep heaters and airers away from curtains and soft furnishings.
- ☐ Plug heaters straight into a wall socket – avoid cheap extension leads and don't overload sockets.
- ☐ Read the maker's instructions for anything electrical you heat with.

When it's your landlord's job

- ☐ Damp or mould that keeps coming back, or is caused by a leak, faulty extractor fan, broken heating or rotten window frames – report it.
- ☐ Broken heating, a failing boiler or badly fitting windows – report as soon as you notice.
- ☐ Report in writing (email is fine) and keep a copy.
- ☐ Take dated photos or short videos; note hygrometer readings.
- ☐ Keep a record of every call, email and message, and let them in to inspect.
- ☐ Ask in writing before fixing anything to walls or frames.
- ☐ If nothing happens and it's serious, Shelter suggests contacting your council's environmental health team.

Rules differ between England, Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland and can change. Check current advice from Shelter or Citizens Advice for where you live before taking things further. This checklist is general information, not legal advice.

Sources: Which? dehumidifier reviews and buying advice ([which.co.uk/reviews/dehumidifiers](https://www.which.co.uk/reviews/dehumidifiers)); Which? on drying clothes indoors; Shelter England – Damp and mould in private rented homes, and Landlord and tenant responsibilities for repairs (england.shelter.org.uk); Uswitch draught-proofing guide; fire and rescue service guidance on portable heaters and overloaded sockets. Full guides with links: therentednest.co.uk