

## Mould & Mildew

Mould and mildew are types of fungi and to grow they need moisture. Moisture accumulates in the house from people bathing, showering, cooking and generally breathing. Appliances, such as unvented gas heating, clothes dryers, dishwashers and washing machines also produce excess moisture into the air – often you can see it collect on the windows and doors as condensation. Often it is also absorbed into fabrics and building materials. Moisture can be worse in modern homes which are built to be almost airtight.

To prevent mould and mildew in your home, try the following:

- Use heating to increase the air temperature (heat pumps can be effective).
- Install extractor fans in the bathroom, laundry and kitchen.
- If the ground under your house is wet, cover with polythene sheeting, taping the joints and ensuring a fit around the piles.
- Make sure the air vents in your home's foundations are clear.
- Increase the airflow in your home by opening windows or install a ventilation system
- Remove moisture from the air using a chemical moisture absorber or a dehumidifier
- Install window joinery with built-in drains - that allow condensation to drain to the outside.
- Invest in good insulation to keep the home warm and reduce condensation and mould growth.

If existing mould is also a problem, try applying household bleach (using a spray bottle) to the affected areas. There are other products on the market to assist with the removal of moss or mildew – whichever you use, remember to follow the instructions and test on a small area first.

### For more information visit:

[www.consumer.org.nz](http://www.consumer.org.nz)

Your guide to a smarter home is available at: [www.smarterhomes.org.nz](http://www.smarterhomes.org.nz)

Researching the materials for your new home or renovation project can be exciting, but also daunting. There are a lot of choices and decisions to be made. For further information on this topic, visit: [www.consumerbuild.org.nz](http://www.consumerbuild.org.nz)

Thinking about making your home energy efficient? For energy saving and insulation options, visit: [www.level.org.nz](http://www.level.org.nz)

For interior design inspiration and external cladding options, a range of options are available at: <http://nzexplorer.co.nz>