HYGROMETER / THERMOMETER

Introduction

The Hygrometer/Thermometer is a convenient table or wall mountable unit that allows you to quickly and easily monitor the humidity and temperature in your home. Use the advice below to keep the needle in the green zone and help prevent black mould.

Locating your Hygrometer/Thermometer

The Hygrometer measures the amount of water in the air in terms of relative humidity whilst the Thermometer measures the temperature of the room (°C). Locate your Hygrometer in a living area away from the moisture produced by the kitchen or a bathroom

How to read your Hygrometer/Thermometer

For maximum comfort, humidity levels should be between 40% and 60% and the temperature should be between 18°C - 24°C. Anything under 30% or over 60% will be uncomfortable and potentially damaging to your home.

For your convenience these are the green areas on the dials of the Hygrometer/Thermometer. Keeping the humidity and temperature in the green will help prevent black mould.

Note: This unit has a tolerance reading + / - 2°C and + / - 5-7%.

Note: When the unit is initially used or if moved from a different location the Hygrometer/Thermometer needs to stabilise/acclimatise to its new environment. This will normally take 24 hours.

General Advice on condensation and mould

What is condensation and mould?

Condensation is caused when high levels of humidity in the air meets cold surfaces such as windows, mirrors and walls and turns into water. Excessive condensation can lead to mould growth. Mould appears on surfaces where condensation regularly forms. The external walls of a room are usually the coldest and are most affected by both condensation and mould. Airborne spores may spread the mould to other areas of your home. Mould often appears around windows, at the corners and edges of rooms, on walls behind furniture.

What causes condensation?

All air contains moisture vapour that can't be seen unless is condenses. Condensation mainly occurs in cold weather, and forms on or around windows, on wall tiles and behind furniture positioned against external walls.

The three main causes of condensation are:

- Too much moisture in the house
- Too little ventilation
- Cool temperatures.
- Everyday activities such as cooking, showering/bathing and drying clothing indoors.

Preventing condensation and treating mould

The most effective way to prevent condensation is to increase ventilation and reduce moisture levels.

Increase ventilation
- Keep all vents and window vents open and clear.
- Open windows when you can (this brings in dry air from outside, try to do this for about 30 minutes a day). Try to 'cross ventilate' by opening two windows on opposite sides of the house. At the same time, open interior doors to allow the drier air to circulate.
- Always ventilate your kitchen while you're cooking or washing up.
- Keep your kitchen and bathroom doors closed to prevent moisture escaping around your home.
- Leave space between furniture and walls to allow air to circulate, if possible place furniture against internal walls where there is less risk of cold and damp.

> **WARNING:** Do not leave accessible windows open when you go out. This is a security risk.

Reduce moisture levels

- Dry your clothing outdoors if possible or in a room with the window open and the door closed.
- Don't dry your washing on radiators. If you use a tumble dryer, make sure it has a ventilation pipe leading outside or is a new condensing type.
- When you're cooking, open a window or use an extractor fan to let steam out.
- To reduce steam, keep a lid on saucepans and turn down the heat when the water has started to boil.
- Open a window or use an extractor fan when taking a bath or shower.
- You can reduce steam when you run a bath by running the cold water first.
- Don't use portable gas or paraffin heaters as these produce a lot of moisture.
- Don't warm unheated bedrooms by leaving the door open to a heated room, as this will cause warm damp air to condense on cold surfaces in the cold room.

Heat your home

- It is better to heat your home gently throughout the day than to heat it for a brief period.
- Don't trap heat – ensure large furniture is kept away from radiators as it prevents heat from circulating.
- Keep curtains above radiators as thick curtains stop heat from escaping.
- Keep curtains open on sunny days to help warm rooms.
- Keep doors open in rooms that get lots of sunlight- this will allow the warm air to circulate throughout the house.

Treat problem areas

- Wipe down windows and window sills to dry them and dry the cloths outside.
- Remove and kill mould by wiping down surfaces with a fungicidal wash. Ensure the wash carries a Health and Safety Executive (HSE) 'approval number'. Keep the cleaner in contact with the mould for a few seconds to make sure it penetrates and kills it before you wipe it off.
- When you redecorate, use a good quality anti-fungicidal paint to help prevent mould appearing again.
- Don't brush or vacuum the mould as this can increase the number of mould spores in the air.
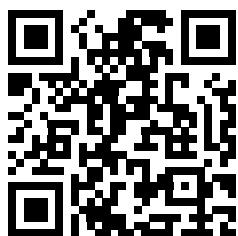
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