



Why Is There Water on My Windows?

Understanding condensation and what your windows may be telling you.

You wake up in the morning and notice water on the inside of a window. Is the window leaking? Is the seal failing? Is there too much humidity in the house?

Sometimes it's simply condensation — and understanding why it happens can help you decide whether you're seeing a normal condition or something worth a closer look.



WARM AIR + MOISTURE + A COLD SURFACE = CONDENSATION

When warm, moisture-containing indoor air meets a cold surface, such as window glass, some of that moisture can change from a vapor to liquid water droplets. That's why a window can be wet even though no water is leaking through it.



WHERE DOES THE MOISTURE COME FROM?

Everyday activities can add moisture to the air inside your home.



Cooking

Boiling water and everyday cooking add moisture to indoor air.



Showers & Baths

Warm water releases moisture into the air.



Laundry & Daily Living

Drying clothes indoors and normal household activity contribute moisture.



Humidifiers & Plants

Humidifiers and indoor plants can add moisture to your home.



A WET WINDOW DOESN'T AUTOMATICALLY MEAN A BAD WINDOW.

The first question isn't necessarily "Do I need new windows?" It's "Where is the moisture coming from — and where exactly am I seeing it?"

WHERE THE MOISTURE APPEARS MATTERS.

Let's take a closer look on the next page.



Where Is the Moisture on Your Window?

The location of the moisture can tell you what's causing it — and what to do next.

Condensation can appear on the inside surface, between the panes or on the outside surface of your windows. Each one has a different cause.



Not all window condensation means the same thing. By looking at where the moisture is, you can better understand the cause and take the right next step.

1. ON THE INSIDE SURFACE

Room air is the source

**What it looks like:**

Water droplets on the inside of the glass.

**What it means:**

Warm, moisture-rich indoor air is meeting a cooler window surface.

**Common causes:**

High indoor humidity, cooking, showers, drying clothes, houseplants, or inadequate ventilation.

2. BETWEEN THE PANES

The insulated-glass seal may have failed

**What it looks like:**

A cloudy or foggy appearance between the glass panes. You cannot wipe it off.

**What it means:**

The insulated-glass seal is no longer keeping moisture out, allowing moisture to get inside the window unit.

**Common causes:**

Normal wear and aging, or physical damage to the seal.

3. ON THE OUTSIDE SURFACE

Often a normal condition

**What it looks like:**

Water droplets on the outside of the glass.

**What it means:**

The outside glass has become cool enough for moisture in the outdoor air to condense on it.

**Why you may see it:**

Cool glass, humid outdoor air and certain weather conditions — often during clear, calm mornings. Well-insulated windows may experience this because less indoor heat reaches the exterior glass.

A QUICK SUMMARY

The same symptom can have very different causes.

**Inside surface**

Look at the indoor environment (humidity and ventilation).

**Between panes**

Moisture between the panes can indicate a problem with the insulated-glass seal.

**Outside surface**

Often weather-related and temporary.



KEY TAKEAWAY

The location of the moisture tells you what's happening. Inside moisture is about your indoor environment. Moisture between the panes can indicate a problem with the insulated-glass seal. Outside moisture is typically normal and often related to weather conditions.



The Window May Be the Messenger

Condensation on your windows can be a sign of extra moisture inside your home. The window is often one of the first places you see it — but it may not be the only place moisture is showing up.

COMMON SOURCES OF INDOOR MOISTURE

Everyday activities and small issues can add significant moisture to the air inside your home.



Showers & Baths

Warm water releases moisture into the air, especially in enclosed bathrooms.



Dripping Faucets

A persistent hot-water drip can contribute moisture to an enclosed bathroom over time.



Cooking

Boiling water and everyday cooking add moisture to your home.



Laundry & Drying Clothes

Indoor drying and normal household activities contribute moisture.



Plants

Indoor plants release moisture through a natural process called transpiration.



Humidifiers

Humidifiers add moisture to indoor air, which can lead to condensation if levels are too high.



THE BIG PICTURE

Persistent moisture can affect more than just windows. It can appear on ceilings, walls, trim, grout and other surfaces — and can create an environment where mold may grow. Finding and reducing the source of moisture is the key.

DON'T JUST SEE THE FAN — CHECK IT

A bathroom fan can help remove moisture, but it only helps if it works and vents outdoors.



- ✓ **Turn the fan on.** Does it actually run?
- ✓ **Does it seem to draw air?**
A simple tissue held near the grille can help indicate airflow.
- ✓ **Is the grille heavily covered with dust?**
- ✓ **If accessible or documented, does the duct exhaust outdoors rather than into an attic?**
- ✓ After a shower, does the room remain noticeably humid or surfaces stay wet for a long time?
- ✓ **No exhaust fan?** Older bathrooms may not have one. Pay closer attention to how quickly moisture clears and whether condensation or damp surfaces persist.



A FAN ISN'T JUST FOR ODORS. IT'S PART OF MOISTURE MANAGEMENT.

LOOK FOR SIGNS OF PERSISTENT MOISTURE

Condensation can show up in other places besides windows. Take a look around, especially in bathrooms and kitchens.



Ceilings



Walls & Paint



Grout & Caulk



Trim & Surfaces



Towels & Textiles

Recurring condensation, peeling paint, staining, musty odors or visible growth can indicate that moisture is remaining in the room longer than it should.



KEY TAKEAWAY

The thing you notice may not be the source. A wet window is a clue. Finding and reducing the actual source of moisture helps protect your home and keeps indoor air more comfortable.



What Do I Do Next?

Practical ways to understand and manage indoor moisture.

Now that you know what condensation can mean, here are practical steps to reduce indoor moisture, protect your home and know when to ask a professional.



A MORE COMFORTABLE HOME

Managing indoor moisture helps reduce the conditions that can support mold growth, protects your home's materials, and creates a healthier, more comfortable living environment. Small, consistent actions make a big difference.

OBSERVE → ACT → DOCUMENT

KNOWLEDGE TODAY. A STRONGER HOME TOMORROW.

REDUCE INDOOR MOISTURE

Simple habits can make a big difference.



Use Exhaust Fans

Run bathroom fans during bathing and for a period afterward, until excess moisture has cleared. Make sure they vent to the outside and are working properly.



Manage Cooking Moisture

Use a range hood that vents outside. Keep lids on pots when possible.



Limit Indoor Drying

Use a dryer with an outside vent. If drying clothes indoors, increase ventilation or use a dehumidifier.



Consider a Dehumidifier

If indoor humidity remains high, a dehumidifier can help remove moisture from the air. Use a hygrometer to understand humidity levels rather than relying on how the room feels.



Be Aware of Indoor Plants

Plants release moisture through a natural process called transpiration. Keep a balance and ensure good ventilation.

CHECK YOUR HOME ENVIRONMENT

Look, test and adjust as needed.



Monitor Humidity

Aim for 30–50% relative humidity indoors as a general range. Use a simple hygrometer to check levels, especially in winter. Ideal levels can vary with outdoor conditions and climate.



Check Windows Regularly

Look for recurring condensation and note where it appears (inside, between or outside the panes).



Look for Related Signs

Check for peeling paint, stains, musty odors or visible mold on nearby surfaces such as walls, ceilings and trim.

KEEP A SIMPLE RECORD

A few notes today can be helpful later.



Document What You See

- Date and location
- Where condensation appears (inside, between or outside)
- Conditions (temperature, weather)
- Photos (optional)
- Any changes you make

WHEN TO ASK A PROFESSIONAL

Get a qualified professional involved if you notice:



- Persistent moisture between the panes.
- Visible mold that keeps returning.
- Water damage to walls, ceilings or trim.
- Exhaust fans that don't work or don't vent outside.
- Concerns about your home's ventilation or humidity levels.

A qualified professional can help identify the cause and recommend appropriate solutions for your home.



KEY TAKEAWAY

Condensation is a sign of moisture. By understanding where it appears, taking simple steps to reduce indoor moisture, and keeping a record of what you see, you can help protect your home and keep it more comfortable all year long.