

## Extractor Fans in Bathrooms – what are the benefits?

By their nature, bathrooms create much steam and water vapour. Without proper ventilation, this can turn to condensation and damp, not just in the bathroom but also in nearby rooms.

There are several ventilation solutions that can help, but one of the simplest and most effective is to fit an **extractor fan**.

Extractor fans in bathrooms offer several benefits:

1. **Ventilation:** Extractor fans help remove stale air, moisture, and odours from the bathroom. Proper ventilation prevents mould growth and maintains a fresh environment.
2. **Mould prevention:** Bathrooms are prone to high humidity levels due to showers and baths. Extractor fans reduce moisture, preventing mould and mildew buildup on walls, ceilings, and fixtures.
3. **Improved air quality:** By expelling damp air and pollutants, extractor fans enhance indoor air quality. This is especially important in small enclosed spaces like bathrooms.
4. **Odor removal:** Unpleasant bathroom odours can be quickly eliminated by running the extractor fan. It ensures a more pleasant experience for users and visitors.
5. **Condensation control:** Extractor fans prevent condensation on mirrors, windows, and other surfaces. This helps maintain clear visibility and prevents water damage.
6. **Comfort:** A well-ventilated bathroom feels more comfortable and inviting. It reduces the feeling of stuffiness and promotes relaxation.
7. **Energy efficiency:** Modern extractor fans are designed to be energy-efficient. They consume minimal electricity while providing effective ventilation.

Remember to choose an extractor fan that suits your bathroom size and noise preferences. Regular maintenance, such as cleaning the fan blades and replacing filters, ensures optimal performance.

### How condensation damp can form in your bathroom

According to a recent report by independent non-profit, the UK Centre for Moisture in Buildings (UKCMB), the number of properties suffering from significant damp problems in the [last English Housing Survey](#) was around 1 in 20 of the housing stock, or over a million homes.

There are many different root causes of damp, including rising damp, and penetrating damp, which comes from an outside source.

One of the main causes, though, is condensation, and bathrooms can be particularly susceptible to this kind of damp. Condensation occurs when warm, moist air comes into contact with a cooler area. Cooler air cannot hold as much water vapour so it condenses back into liquid water. You have probably seen this on your bathroom mirror - imagine all that water getting into your walls or window frames, either in the bathroom or another nearby room.

## **The dangers of damp and mould**

If damp takes hold, it can be difficult to get rid of, and can also be damaging, both to your home and to the health of you and your family. Damp can cause wooden structures to rot, plaster to crumble, and wallpaper to peel. It can also get into curtains, furniture, clothes and other belongings.

Damp can also cause black mould to grow, which can be particularly hazardous to health.

In 2004 the Institute of Medicine (IOM) found there was sufficient evidence to link indoor exposure to mould with upper respiratory tract symptoms, cough, and wheeze in otherwise healthy people; with asthma symptoms in people with asthma; and with hypersensitivity pneumonitis in individuals susceptible to that immune-mediated condition. The IOM also found limited or suggestive evidence linking indoor mould exposure and respiratory illness in otherwise healthy children.”

## **How an extractor fan can help**

An extractor fan can help by removing the moisture-laden air from your bath, shower and sink before the water vapour can condense back into liquid and become a problem. The fan draws out the air and expels it outside, through vents or ducts. This allows drier, fresh air to circulate through the room.

Extractor fans can also be used in kitchens and utility rooms to extract pollutants and **moisture**. They are must-haves in many bathrooms and wet rooms because these are the rooms that tend to create the most moisture in the average home. This is not just from steam but also from splashes and damp towels or clothes left in the room.

## **Odours and freshness**

As well as extracting out the moist air from bath and shower usage, extractor fans can be useful for removing odours, especially if the loo is in the same room.

Whole house ventilation systems are better for encouraging a constant flow of fresh, filtered air throughout the property but extractor fans can play a part in keeping individual rooms smelling clean and fresh.

## **Choosing the right bathroom extractor fan**

There are several considerations when choosing the right extractor fan for your bathroom. It should have a high enough capacity for your bathroom size and general usage. This is measured in 'Litres per Second' (L/s) or 'Metres Cubed per Hour' (m<sup>3</sup>/hr) and is the rate at which the fan moves volumes of air over time.

You might want an ultra-quiet fan, which can be particularly important if the bathroom is near to bedrooms. There are models that can help improve your energy efficiency through heat recovery, and you may also want to consider whether you want the fan to operate manually, be connected to the light switch, or have a humidity sensor, which can turn it on automatically when there is heavy moisture in the air.