

## mould



Ceiling Mould – 173 North Street, Toowoomba

### What is mould?

Mould is part of a group of very common organisms called fungi that also include mushrooms and yeast. It is present virtually everywhere, both indoors and outdoors.

Mould may grow indoors in wet or moist areas that lack adequate ventilation, including walls/ wallpaper, ceilings, bathroom tiles, carpets (especially those with jute backing), insulation material and wood. If moisture accumulates mould growth will often occur on indoor surfaces. Many different types of mould exist and they all have the potential to cause health problems.



**Good housekeeping tips that all occupants should be taking to reduce mould! This means YOU!**

- Improve ventilation and airflow - open doors and windows (when it is not raining)
- Run your air conditioner on "dry mode"
- Move items away from walls to allow better air circulation

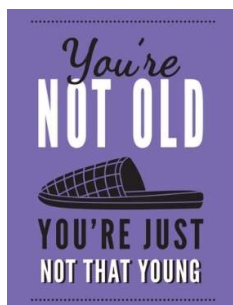
- Don't over fill cupboards with clothing etc as this does not allow air to flow around them properly
- Use your bathroom exhaust fan (best practice is for it to exhaust to the outside and not simply discharge into the ceiling space)
- Minimise clutter in the bathroom to assist with ventilation
- Wipe down wet surfaces after use particularly in the bathroom
- Ensure your dryer is vented to the outside not simply creating large amount of condensation inside
- Regularly wash and dry your bath towels and floor mats outside – having wet bath towels and floor mats only increases the level of humidity and condensation
- Do not dry items inside in front of the heater this simply releases condensation inside when drying
- Clean more often – regularly wipe all surfaces particularly bathrooms, laundries and kitchens
- Check stored items regularly eg clothes and shoes that are not used infrequently
- Don't over water indoor plants as this simply adding more to the moisture inside
- Avoid using gas heaters as these create a very 'wet heat'
- Fish tanks might be nice but are a source of condensation

Not attending to these housekeeping issues will allow mould to grow. **YOU** are the biggest part of the solution.



**Possible building issues that might require attention ... read the signs**

Spot mould on the ceiling ie a very distinct black mark in one area	This might be the result of a small roof leak that requires fixing.
More general ceiling mould	Generally, the problem is lack of ventilation inside. However, on occasion it might be related to moisture build up in the ceiling space. For example, buildings with tiled roofs and no sarking.
Mould around windows	Generally, this relates to leaving windows open. However, if the window itself is leaking then window seals and rubbers might require replacement.



## Mould Loves Old

Like everything buildings get worse as they age. Let's look at some of the features and issues older homes have.

Old Building Problems	Possible Solutions
Poorer ventilation and often have less windows	More and bigger windows – this might require body corporate approval
Dryers not being vented to the outside	Get the dryer vented properly to the outside
Lack of bathroom exhausts fans and these fans only discharging to the ceiling space	Install a better-quality exhaust fan with the steam being taken outside and not to the ceiling space
Internal bathrooms with no natural ventilation	Consider ventilated skylights to help improve ventilation
Popular in the 1970's to 1990's was to have 'face brick' feature walls that are very good at holding moisture – have you noticed they are cold to touch	Consider covering the brick with gyprock plaster etc
Old more porous gyprock	Time to replace old gyprock and paint with a paint that has anti-mould properties
Old internal paint	Paint inside and with anti-mould paint
Lack of air-conditioning	Install a proper air-conditioner with 'dry mode'
Old Bathrooms inc old grout, poor water proofing etc	Time to update your bathroom



### Do you mean I need to clean??

Good housekeeping means good cleaning and not after the mould has taken over ... because then it might be too late. You should be cleaning all the time!

### How to remove mould from walls and other hard surfaces

Studies have shown bleach can kill mould on hard surfaces like tiles, but Queensland Health says it may not be effective in removing it from porous surfaces.

Try

- Put ¼ teaspoon of clove oil into a litre of water — no more clove oil is necessary as it can discolour surfaces
- Use a spray bottle to lightly mist it onto the mould, then leave it for 24 hours
- After a day, wipe the surface over with a white vinegar and water mixture (three parts vinegar, two parts water)
- A 1-litre bottle of the formula should last about a year for the whole house.

### Treating mould on leather or timber:

Mould can grow on all types of surfaces, especially if they are not kept clean.

- Mix 1/4 teaspoon of clove oil into 250 millilitres of baby oil and shake
- Apply very lightly to leather and timber surfaces to kill the mould
- Do not overuse! — this small bottle should also last about a year.

### Getting mould out of soft surfaces and fabrics:

- Put 1 kilogram of non-iodised cooking salt into a 9-litre bucket of water
- Stir with your hands until it dissolves
- Put the mouldy item of clothing into the solution and soak overnight
- Take the soaking wet item and hang it on the clothes line to slowly dry
- The slower it dries the better — as the salt crystals reform, they expand in the fibres, pulling the mould out
- When it's dry, brush off the mould.

### Canvas awnings/umbrellas, etc:

- Dip a broom into the salt solution above and slather over the surface
- Wait for it to dry then brush off.

Source: <https://www.abc.net.au/news/2022-05-27/removing-mould-best-solution-brisbane-queensland/101100886>