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- [Dehumidifiers Information Page](#)
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Humidity levels (the level of moisture in the air) are too often overlooked in the home. Studies of personal comfort have shown that a comfortable humidity level for an average person ranges between 30% and 65-70%, depending on activity. However, the recommended humidity level is between 30% and 50%.

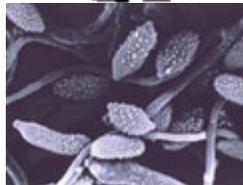
During the winter months, humidity levels are low (sometimes very low). However, these levels skyrocket during the summer months. The high humidity during the summer reduces the rate of evaporation of moisture from our bodies. Since our body relies on that effect to cool itself, without it we can feel uncomfortable. In the winter, the air is generally very dry. This causes moisture to be drawn from our skin making us feel even colder.

## Effects of high humidity

Humidity is considered too high when its level goes above 45% - 50%, sometimes as high as 80% and up.



High humidity can be especially dangerous when combined with high temperature - as mentioned above, high humidity disrupts the body's ability to cool itself, which may lead to a heat stroke. Exceptionally high humidity can also trigger asthma symptoms. Therefore, people with heart problems or asthma are advised to be extremely careful during such conditions.



Another unpleasant effect of high humidity is the appearance of [mold](#). High humidity makes it easier for molds to reproduce, and they can appear virtually anywhere, damaging whatever they grow upon. Mold spores also pose a threat for [allergy and asthma sufferers](#).



[Dust mites](#) also thrive when the humidity is high. Present in almost every home, these tiny pests are yet another nuisance for people with allergies and asthma.

**See also:**

- [Allergy & Asthma Avoidance Information:](#)
  - [Mold](#)
  - [Dust Mites](#)
- [University of Maryland Medical Center:](#)
  - [First Aid - Dehydration and Heat Stroke](#)

## Effects of low humidity

Humidity levels under 35% can have several effects on your health, which may range from discomfort to serious complications. A common sign that your air is too dry is when your nose, throat and skin feel dry and scratchy. Insufficient moisture in the air makes the mucous membranes inside your nose and throat - your organism's first barrier against airborne infections - dry and more susceptible to diseases like cold and flu. Dry air is also dangerous for allergy and asthma sufferers, since it can aggravate their symptoms.

Another effect of dry air is the one it has on your surroundings:

- **Hardwood floors, wooden furniture** and expensive **musical instruments** lose moisture and contract when the air in a home is extremely dry. This can cause them to develop cracks or for the floor to separate at the seams.
- **Static electricity** is a direct result of dry air. In addition to causing painful shocks, it can damage computers and other electronic equipment.
- **Houseplants** suffer from dryness caused by low humidity.
- **Wallpaper** may peel at the edges if the air in a home is excessively dry

As mentioned above, low humidity can make you feel as if the air temperature is lower than it actually is. Since low humidity usually happens during winter months, maintaining a proper humidity level can even save you a bit on heating bills!

## How to keep track of humidity levels

The simplest way to tell that there is something wrong with the humidity in your home or office is if you experience any of the symptoms described above. Also, keep an eye out for the following:

- **High humidity** can be present:
  - During summer months
  - In areas located near waterfronts
  - After continuous rains and/or flooding
  - In rooms with plumbing running through them (kitchens and bathrooms), especially if there are leaking pipes present
  - In undergrounds facilities (basements)
  - In rooms with poor ventilation
- **Low humidity** can be present:
  - During winter months
  - In areas with no large bodies of water present
  - In rooms and buildings with excessive air conditioning

Although the best and most accurate way to keep track of humidity levels is using a [hygrometer](#) - a device specifically made for measuring humidity.

## How to deal with improper humidity

### High humidity:

- If excess humidity is caused by leaks in plumbing or roof, fix any water problem or leaks before doing anything else.
- Proper ventilation is very important when dealing with high humidity. Air your home frequently, especially the rooms you spend most of your time in (like bedrooms). Using a [portable air conditioner](#), you can direct a flow of fresh air right where you need it. Make sure that places like bathrooms and basements, which tend to have high humidity levels, also receive a constant influx of fresh air.
- While air conditioners can remove moisture from the air to a certain degree (and still others have built-in dehumidification capacities), [dehumidifiers](#) are designed specifically for this task. You can use them to quickly reduce moisture level within a given area. Powered models work best in larger areas like living rooms and basements. Non-electric dehumidifiers can be used in smaller enclosed spaces like closets and bathrooms.

### Low humidity:

- Turn off any excessive air conditioning.
- There are many ways to introduce moisture into the air - some of them might include using water sprayers, boiling water on a stove, placing pots with water in the rooms, or even leaving the bathroom door open with the bathtub filled with water.
- The most comprehensive way to solve the low humidity problem is to use a [humidifier](#) - an appliance that introduces water vapors into the air. They come in all shapes and sizes, from small tabletop models to whole house console versions to ones connected directly to your home's ventilation, heating or A/C system.

## Where to find more information

- [US Environmental Protection Agency:](#)
  - [Mold Resources](#)
  - [Indoor Air Facts: Use and Care of Home Humidifiers](#)
- [University of Maryland Medical Center:](#)
  - [First Aid - Dehydration and Heat Stroke](#)