

---

## Mould removal at home

---

### Summary

---

This information has been prepared to assist with general information on mould removal in the home.

For mould removal relating to flooding, including major internal leaks please refer to our [fact sheet](#).

### Safety considerations with mould removal

If you've decided to remove mould, make sure there is good ventilation and wear protective clothing, such as a shower cap, rubber gloves, eye protection, overalls, suitable footwear and a P1 or P2 face mask (available from your hardware store).

Some people should not remove or be present when mould is removed, including pregnant women, children and people with weakened immune systems or chronic lung diseases, such as chronic obstructive lung disease.

If you are allergic or sensitive to mould, you may develop a stuffy nose, irritated eyes, wheezing or difficulty with breathing or skin irritation. People with weakened immune systems and with chronic lung diseases may be susceptible to infections. People with a pre-existing heart or lung condition should seek medical advice before using a P2 mask as they can make it harder to breathe normally. If you are asthmatic and intend to do the clean-up work, keep your asthma medication with you at all times. If you show any signs of asthma, get some fresh air and follow your asthma action plan.

Do not dry brush the mouldy area, as the brush can flick spores into the air where they may be breathed in. If you vacuum mould-affected areas, only vacuum using a HEPA (high efficiency particulate air) filter. A HEPA filter is a type of filter that can trap large amounts of very small particles, which other vacuum cleaners would simply put back into the air.

If you've decided to remove mould, make sure there is good ventilation and wear protective clothing, such as a shower cap, rubber gloves, eye protection, overalls, suitable footwear and a P1 or P2 face mask (available from your hardware store).

Before deciding to wear a P2 face mask, consider that:

- They can be hot and uncomfortable to wear.
- If the seal around the face and mouth is poor (for example, people with beards may not get a good seal), the face mask is much less effective.
- They can make it harder for you to breathe normally, so anyone with a pre-existing heart or lung condition should seek medical advice before using them.

If you are asthmatic and intend to do the clean-up work, keep your asthma medication with you at all times. If you show any signs of asthma, get some fresh air and follow your asthma action plan.

### Steps for mould removal at home

Small to medium sized areas of mould may be removed at home. The following steps should be followed.

#### 1. Remove the source of moisture

The best way to control mould growth is to control moisture, so it is important to identify the sources of moisture and remove or control them, else the mould problem is likely to reoccur.

Mould will only grow in damp unventilated rooms. Check for sources of water from roofing and plumbing leaks

---

including damaged pipes and drains, and call a plumber if repairs are required and see [Mould and your health](#) on the Better Health Channel website for other sources.

## 2. Remove the mould

Dispose of any mouldy items that are unable to be cleaned including cardboard boxes and mattresses which should be disposed of.

Wash clothing, bedding and other soft fabric articles, such as soft toys, in a washing machine on a hot cycle. Items that have been mouldy for several weeks, like bedding may not be able to be cleaned and may need to be disposed of. Wash all the clothes you used for cleaning up separately to other clothes.

Other contaminated soft furnishings that cannot be put in a washing machine will have to be cleaned professionally. If this is not possible, they may need to be thrown out.

Thoroughly clean all affected hard surfaces.

In many cases, household detergent or white vinegar will be sufficient. Use a microfibre cloth and rinse the dirty cloth regularly in a separate container of clean water to prevent spreading the mould.

If using a commercially available product, check the label to see how much to use and on which surfaces it can be used and always read and follow safety instructions.

Do not mix bleach with ammonia, acids or other cleaners – this can release hazardous chlorine or chloramine fumes.

Apply the cleaner and give it time to work before you mop or sponge it up. Avoid getting areas too wet, and dry afterwards where possible.

If large areas of mould regrowth occur, consult a mould remediation professional.

To reduce the chance of mould regrowth, it is important to dry the area where the mould grew. The simplest way to dry a room is to open doors and windows to thoroughly air the house.

For further information and advice, contact the Environmental Health section of your local council.

### Where to get help

- Environmental health section of your local council
- Contact an Occupational Hygienist. Refer to [Australian Institute of Occupational Hygienists](#).

**This page has been produced in consultation with and approved by:**

Department of Health and Human Services - RHP&R - Health Protection - Environmental Health Unit

Content on this website is provided for information purposes only. Information about a therapy, service, product or treatment does not in any way endorse or support such therapy, service, product or treatment and is not intended to replace advice from your doctor or other registered health professional. The information and materials contained on this website are not intended to constitute a comprehensive guide concerning all aspects of the therapy, product or treatment described on the website. All users are urged to always seek advice from a registered health care professional for diagnosis and answers to their medical questions and to ascertain whether the particular therapy, service, product or treatment described on the website is suitable in their circumstances. The State of Victoria and the Department of Health & Human Services shall not bear any liability for reliance by any user on the materials contained on this website.

For the latest updates and more information, visit [www.betterhealth.vic.gov.au](http://www.betterhealth.vic.gov.au)

**Copyright © 1999/2021** State of Victoria. Reproduced from the Better Health Channel ([www.betterhealth.vic.gov.au](http://www.betterhealth.vic.gov.au)) at no cost with permission of the Victorian Minister for Health. Unauthorised reproduction and other uses comprised in the copyright are prohibited without permission.