



### **What is the Ideal House Humidity in Winter?**

It's the middle of winter and if the cold air outside didn't tip you off, maybe your insanely dry indoor air did. Dry indoor air can cause problems for your home and your health! Not only can it cause cracked paint, peeling wallpaper, and warped wood floors — it can lead to chapped dry skin, inflamed allergies and itchy eyes. Not to mention lots of static shock!

When the moist air in your home escapes, it is replaced by dry air from outside, which can seriously compromise comfort. That's why it's important to amp up the humidity in your home during the coldest months of the year.

In this blog, we'll answer some of the most common questions you may be

asking yourself related to the indoor humidity levels in your home:

- What should the humidity level be in a house in winter?
- What are the dangers of high humidity levels inside your home?
- How do I reduce the humidity in my house?
- How can I add moisture back into your indoor air?

### **What is a Good Level of Indoor Humidity in Winter?**

When asking about the best humidity levels for the air inside your home this winter, you'll want a relative humidity level between 30-40 percent. You may be asking yourself what is relative humidity?

#### **Relative Humidity**

Relative humidity is the amount of water vapor present in the air in relation to the amount of water vapor the air can hold. Let's say for example you had a reading of 100 percent relative humidity, that would mean the air is completely saturated with water vapor and cannot hold any more moisture at that temperature.

Signs of your humidity level too high would be if you find condensation on your windows around the house. There are also more serious signs of excessive relative humidity in the home that can lead to potentially dangerous situations for your family.

### **What Are the Dangers of High Humidity Levels?**

When the outside temperature drops, too much moisture is a bad thing. If the





humidity builds up too much, condensation on the windows can eventually bead up and roll down until it soaks into the window frame.

All throughout the winter months, this water can leak back behind the wall below the window, leading to wood rot and mold. Not only is mold a dangerous situation for your family in the home, but the damage this excess water in the air can leave behind your walls can get expensive.

### **How Do I Reduce the Humidity in My House?**

When you start to see condensation on your windows, try adjusting your humidifier so your humidity level is lower. This should fix the problem, and you should see results in a short amount of time. If it doesn't, have an HVAC specialist come to examine your whole-house humidifier.

Humidity control is the name of the game. There are many other ways to bring back low humidity levels into your home during the cold winter weather months:

- Take cooler showers or baths
- Use your exhaust/ventilation fans
- Use your laundry dryer less often
- Purchase a dehumidifier
- Open a window

When temperatures cool down, our usual response is to crank up the heat. But artificial heat from your furnace can leave your home feeling as dry as a desert. By turning down your thermostat and bundling up in extra layers, you'll not only save big bucks on your energy costs —

you'll help retain much more comfortable indoor conditions.

Remember, humid air feels warmer than dry air, so you likely won't need as much help from your heater if you do your part to retain your home's humidity with cooler indoor temperatures.

### **How Do I Increase My House Humidity in Winter?**

In the summer when we have our air conditioning running, we don't have to think about humidity levels so much because there's already enough warm air. If the humidity levels in your home are too low, there are some simple tips we can recommend to you.

### **Get Some Houseplants**

Many plants need high humidity levels to thrive, so consider buying a plant that can survive in drier climates. Group several plants, and you'll create a humid microclimate in that keeps them from drying out as quickly.

Houseplants not only humidify the indoor air around them — they purify it too! Through the process of transpiration, plants pull water up through their roots to their stems, leaves, and flowers where it then evaporates, adding much-needed moisture to your indoor air.

Plants with the highest transpiration rates remove the most airborne pollutant, too.

### **Spread Some Steam with Your Dishwasher, Shower, and Bath**

Some of the easiest ways to humidify your home involve household tasks that you perform daily.





In the bathroom, you can spread steam and moisture throughout your home by cracking the bathroom door when you shower or letting your bathwater cool before you empty the tub. And after bathing, turn on your bathroom fan to help push damp air out and into nearby rooms.

In the kitchen, skip the drying cycle on your dishwasher, leave the door open, and let your dishes air-dry. You'll heat and humidify the surrounding area for free.

### **Air-Dry Your Laundry Indoors**

Just like your furnace, your dryer robs your indoor air of moisture. To increase the humidity in your home, give your dryer a vacation.

Hang a few clotheslines around the house where you can air-dry your clean laundry. Your damp clothes will add humidity to the air as they dry while simultaneously saving energy!

Just make sure to hang your clothes in areas with adequate airflow to prevent mold and mildew from forming.

### **Adopt Some Fishy Friends**

If you love pets, then consider adopting a few fish. Adding a fish tank to an air-conditioned room is a great way to evaporate air into surrounding areas while enhancing your home décor. Make sure your fish tank has an open-top, and remember to keep it full of freshwater to prevent bad odors and mold spores from forming. Keep in mind that maintaining a fish tank requires lots of time, space, and expense.

### **Invest in a Whole-Home Humidifier**

The most effective way to combat dry indoor air is to invest in a whole-home humidifier.

Installed directly onto your existing HVAC system, a whole-home humidifier infuses humidity into your indoor air by distributing water vapor through your home's ducts and vents. As their name suggests, whole-home humidifiers add moisture to all the rooms in your home unlike portable humidifiers, which only add moisture to the room in which they are located.

And whole-home humidifiers only require one filter change per year, demanding much less maintenance than portable humidifiers, which need to be regularly cleaned and disinfected.

Follow the suggested manufacturer's operating / maintenance instructions to ensure the best results.

### **Owner / CPI**

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