

## **11** tips on how to ventilate and heat your apartment properly



*These tips on how to ventilate and heat your apartment properly will not only protect the building fabric, which is one of your obligations as a tenant, but will also be beneficial for your health, your personal finances and – last, but not least – for the environment too!*

## 1<sup>st</sup> TIP

Please ventilate all rooms – even those that are used less often – regularly and, if possible, a number of times each day. Five minutes is sufficient. It is best and quickest to open all of the windows fully at the same time (through-ventilation/cross-ventilation). This applies even if it is raining or during wintertime. The exchange of air is most effective when the temperature difference between the outside (cold air) and inside (warm air) is great. Please do not ventilate for long periods otherwise the walls will cool down which will increase your energy costs. Shut the thermostat valves on all your radiators while you are ventilating your apartment – this will also help to save costs.

## 2<sup>nd</sup> TIP

Please never completely switch off the radiators, even in bedrooms, and close the doors between rooms that are heated fully and rooms that are heated to a lesser extent. Otherwise warmer, humid air will come into contact with cooler walls and the resulting condensation water could lead to mould.

## 3<sup>rd</sup> TIP

Do not ventilate basement rooms and boiler rooms in the summertime; do so only in wintertime when it is colder outside than in the basement. Otherwise humid, warm air will enter into the basement rooms and will encourage mould infestation or dry rot.

## 4<sup>th</sup> TIP

Allow larger amounts of water vapour to escape quickly by ventilating. Close windows and doors when cooking and immediately after having a bath/shower so that water vapour cannot spread through the entire apartment and possibly cause moisture damage. Please leave the ventilation device on in bathrooms with no windows until the tiles have dried again. Important: keep doors closed! This helps to avoid mould.

## 5<sup>th</sup> TIP

Avoid drying clothes in your apartment. Use drying areas, laundry rooms or a condenser dryer, if available.

## 6<sup>th</sup> TIP

Ask friends or acquaintances to ventilate your apartment regularly while you are away on holidays, and make sure that the room temperature does not drop below 19 °C during the heating period.

## 7<sup>th</sup> TIP

Furniture and cabinets should not be positioned directly adjacent to walls; instead, a ventilation gap of at least 5 cm should be allowed, particularly at exterior walls. It should be possible for air to circulate between furniture and the walls. This will help to avoid mould. This also applies to basement rooms.

## 8<sup>th</sup> TIP

Place 1 cm of foam or cork behind pictures to be hung on walls to allow air to circulate between the picture and the wall. Only install panelling, coverings or tapestries after the wall underneath has dried completely – after painting, for example.

## 9<sup>th</sup> TIP

Curtains – particularly in the corners of rooms – prevent the circulation of air. This also applies to net curtains. For this reason, curtains of all types should not be hung in front of radiators. Avoiding this will save on energy costs and improve the air circulation in your apartment.

## 10<sup>th</sup> TIP

Do not coat wall surfaces in a manner that is impermeable to water vapour. For example, using plastics, metal, sheeting or washable, waterproof wallpaper. When carrying out renovations, we recommend the use of mineral-based paints that have a high permeability to water vapour. In this way, the masonry can “breathe” and this will help to prevent water damage and mould. The use of insulating wallpaper is not permitted.

## 11<sup>th</sup> TIP

Sufficient heating must always be provided, as only heated air can absorb humidity indoors. For example, the air at 0 °C can only absorb 5 grams of water per m<sup>3</sup>. At 20 °C, this figure rises to 17.5 grams per m<sup>3</sup>. The degree of saturation of air can be measured using a hygrometer. Air humidity of between 40% and 60% is regarded as optimal for indoors.

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