

Airing correctly: Save heating costs and avoid mould

We need fresh air in order to stay healthy and be comfortable. For this reason, it is important to ventilate our flat regularly. In winter, however, this lets cold air in. We need heating energy in order to warm up the fresh but cold air. So what can we do about this?

Do not tilt windows.

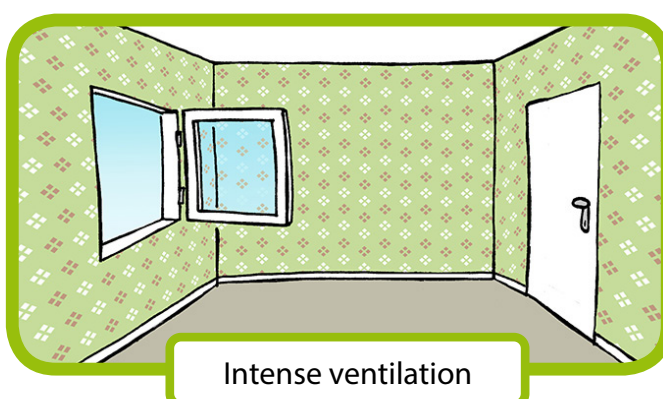
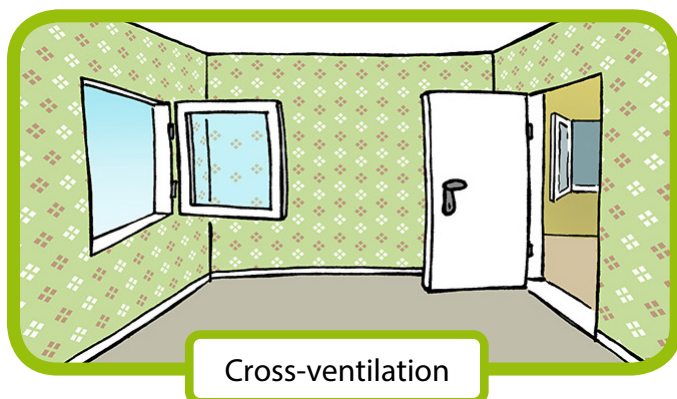
If windows are tilted for just a short period of time (e.g. for 5 or 10 minutes), the fresh air that comes in is insufficient. If windows are tilted for a long time however, the walls surrounding them cool down. This leads to two problems:

- 1.) The cold areas attract mould.
- 2.) The cold areas "draw on" the warm air so that additional heating is needed.



Cross-ventilation and intense ventilation.

The most effective airing method involves opening several windows at opposite sides of the flat (cross-ventilation). This often creates a strong draft. However, if this is not possible, open individual windows widely (intense ventilation). Important: You should only do this briefly, although several times a day (see overleaf). In this way, a lot of air enters quickly, but there is not enough time for the walls to get cold. Furthermore, moisture (which is food for mould!) is removed from the indoor air and all of the surfaces. Frequent cross-ventilation or intense airing is, therefore, one of the most important measures to be taken in order to ensure that mould does not form!



... "yes, but it gets very cold, then!"

That is right but it gets warm again very quickly, too. Due to the fact that the walls do not cool down, the previous room temperature normally returns after less than 10 minutes – without you turning the heating up to a higher level than usual.

Cross-ventillation and intense airing: How often? How long?

The question of how often and for how long a flat should be aired is very difficult to answer in general. Various factors have to be taken into consideration: The number of people in a room and the time they spend in it, outdoor temperature, room size, air tightness of the windows, and so on. As rough points of reference, you can use the following guidelines.

1. Guide values for airing frequency

If nobody is at home during the day	→	2 – 3 times per day
If there is always somebody at home	→	At least 4 times per day
If people are smoking or if there is already a problem concerning mould	→	At least 5 times per day

2. Reference values for each time a window is opened

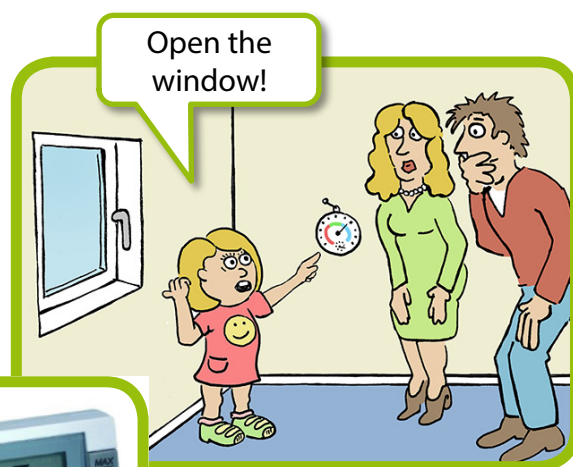
January	February	March	April	May	June
4 – 6 minutes		8 – 10 minutes		15 minutes or more	
July	August	September	October	November	December
15 minutes or more			8 – 10 minutes		4 – 6 minutes

Airing to prevent mould

If you already have or have had mould in your flat, using a hygrometer is ideal for checking when the time is right for airing. Hygrometers display the relative humidity of the air. If humidity rises to above 60%, cross-ventilation or intense airing should be carried out, because at this level the risk of mould formation greatly increases!

Mount the hygrometer close to where the mould can be found. Hygrometers are available at DIY stores and electronics shops, and only cost a few Euros.

Also take a look at our info sheet on how to deal with mould!



< Customary hygrometers