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Bathroom maintenance: tips for keeping your bathroom in good shape

From the best ways to prevent mould to keeping your tile grout in good condition, here's our round-up of handy maintenance tips for your bathroom.

- AS Adam Snook
Researcher & writer
- GT George Thompson
Market analyst



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Keeping your bathroom clean and in good working order is unlikely to be the most exciting thing on your to-do list. But putting off some small and regular maintenance could end up leading to bigger problems later down the line.

Whether it's getting into good regular habits that will help stop mould from taking root, or addressing the first signs of a leaky sink early on, there are plenty of things that you can do to maintain the upkeep of your bathroom.

So we've put together a list of bathroom maintenance tips that will help you steer clear of (bigger) future issues. Read on to find out more.

If your bathroom is in a truly bad state, and you have the budget for a total overhaul, read our guide on the [best and worst bathroom brands](#) to find out which companies we rate highly for value for money, quality, durability and delivery.

1. Prevent mould forming in your bathroom



Bathrooms offer great conditions for mould to thrive: they're often wet, warm and, at times, dark. Not only is mould unsightly, but it can cause damage to the surfaces it forms on, such as the walls and ceiling.

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It can also impact your health, especially if you have respiratory problems, skin problems or a weakened immune system. Elderly people and children can also be more sensitive to the effects of mould.

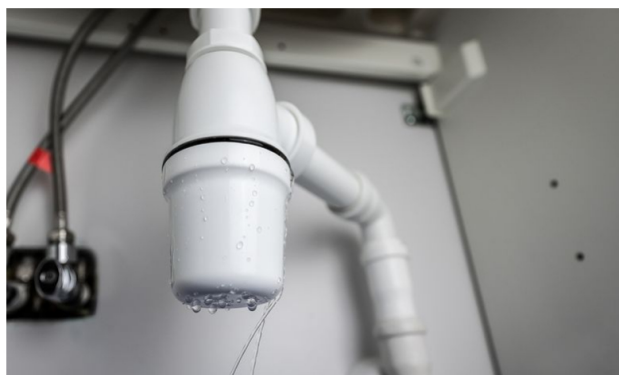
Once it appears, mould will continue to grow and spread, so it's best to try and prevent it from forming in the first place.

Here are a few things you can do to keep mould from developing in your bathroom:

- **Keep the room ventilated** – open a window or use the extractor fan while showering, for example. If you have one, try keeping the extractor fan on for around 10 minutes after showering to continue removing moisture from the air and to help the bathroom dry quicker
- **Wipe down after a shower** – it may seem like a bit of a chore, but it's good to get into the habit of wiping down the glass and tiles after every shower to remove excess water. Keeping a squeegee in the bathroom can help with this
- **Wash towels and bath mats regularly** - and make sure you have a place to hang your towel to dry properly after using it
- **Check regularly for early signs of mould** – don't forget to keep an eye on the more hidden areas, such as behind the door, underneath the sink, in fixtures and fittings and on the shower curtain
- **Keep the bathroom tidy** - try to avoid cluttering spaces in your bathroom, as it will make it much easier to spot signs of mould forming. Visit our [bathroom furniture](#) page for storage ideas and tips.

If you're having issues with condensation or mould elsewhere in your home, read our guide on [how to stop condensation](#).

2. Fix leaks in your bathroom



A leaking bathroom appliance or pipe will waste water and can cause damage to your property, such as damaging the ceiling of the floor below. Check all your pipes and under your sink for leaks.

Act promptly if your toilet starts leaking, too. Thames Water estimates that a trickling leak within your toilet could waste up to 200 litres of water a day. Major leaks, known as rippling or flowing, could waste up to 600 and 8,000 litres a day, respectively.

Tom Reynolds, CEO of the Bathroom Manufacturers Association (BMA), said: 'Many people may not realise they have a leak in their toilet because it does not look like a pool of water on your bathroom floor.'


'Routine maintenance will help prevent leaks, and when a leak is spotted, it can usually be repaired with some simple and inexpensive solutions.' The BMA is running a [Get Lavvy Savvy campaign](#) to encourage and educate people about toilet maintenance and the ease of fixing and preventing leaks. It aims to demystify toilet maintenance and provides tips on how to spot a leak and check your toilet's seals, diaphragms, inlet and outlet valves.

If you have any leaks or water issues that require professional help, call a [Which? Trusted Trader plumber](#) to ensure you'll be paying for good quality work.

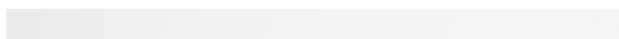
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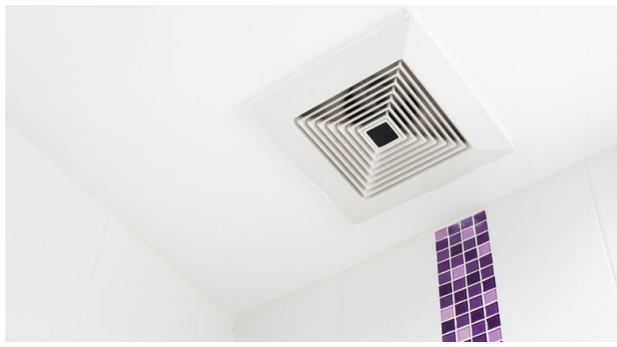
What do you need?

Where are you looking?



3. Make sure you have a working bathroom extractor fan





Often overlooked as it whirrs away at the top of your bathroom wall or on your ceiling, it can be easy to forget your bathroom extractor fan is even there. But it plays an important role in removing moisture from the air, particularly if your bathroom has no windows.

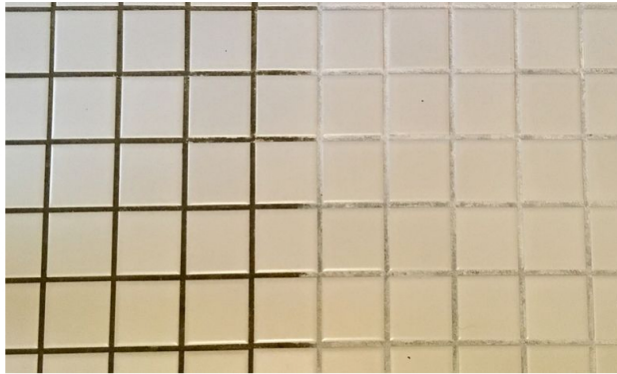
If your extractor fan is not working effectively, or has stopped working altogether, it can be tempting to put off doing anything about it.

But you shouldn't ignore it as, in the longer term, excess moisture in the air could result in a build-up of mould. Poor ventilation and excess moisture can also reduce the lifespan of various elements of your bathroom through damage to paint and furniture, for example.

Use [Which? Trusted Traders](#) to find a local qualified electrician to repair or replace a malfunctioning bathroom extractor fan.

Or find out more about [how to improve your indoor air quality at home](#).

4. Keep bathroom tiles and grouting clean



Bathroom tiles often look great when they're newly laid, but the grout that holds them together is light-coloured and porous. This makes tile grout easily damaged by water – which is problematic given all the water-based activities happening in a bathroom.

Grout that isn't properly cleaned and maintained can become stained, mouldy and liable to crack. Once it's cracked, water can seep into the wall and cause damage.

As we mentioned earlier in relation to mould, prevention is better than cure. If you get into the habit of wiping down all surfaces after a shower, it will help maintain your grout. Additionally, every week or two use water and baking soda paste to scrub the grout, using a grout brush or an old toothbrush. Then rinse with water.

If your daily wipe down and weekly scrubbing hasn't prevented or removed serious grout stains, try using oxygen powdered bleach. This will be better for your grout than liquid, chloride-based bleach, and should still be strong enough to get rid of the stains.

When stains stubbornly refuse to come out, it doesn't have to mean replacing the entire grout. Grout renewal products work by adding a layering of protection and colour to resist further staining, so your grout can remain a while longer.

However, if your grout is flaking and breaking, or tiles start to come off, you'll need to bite the bullet and replace it. It's best to do this as soon as possible to avoid water damage to your walls.

Bored of the same old bathroom tiles and stained grout you've had for years? Read our [bathroom designs guide](#) to get some inspiration for revamping your bathroom.

5. Keep your bathroom floor dry – and don't install carpet in your bathroom





A wet bathroom floor presents two dangers. The first is slipping and falling, the second is mould growth, which can be damaging to respiratory health. A build up of water can also cause your flooring to warp or peel.

This means it's important to keep water off your bathroom floor. Some easy ways to do this are:

- Buy a bath mat
- Mop the floor
- Use a dehumidifier in the hall or room that connects to your bathroom – have a look at our [dehumidifier advice guides](#).
- Increase ventilation by opening windows or using an extractor fan
- If you're concerned about slipping, wear bathroom slippers to pop on straight from the shower. Opt for a pair with rubber soles to prevent slipping, and an absorbent lining to soak up drips from your feet.

Bathroom carpet emerges as a trend every so often, and some homeowners like the look or feel of it, but it presents some problems. If you have carpet in your bathroom, it might be best to remove it as moisture will get in and under the carpet.

It's difficult to properly dry out carpet in a frequently wet environment, so mould and mildew can easily develop. This may cause the carpet to need replacing multiple times, and it may put off a potential buyer if you try and sell your house.

If you're looking to replace your bathroom flooring, check out our [bathroom designs guide](#), which includes a section on [bathroom flooring and tiles](#).

6. Keep your bathroom clean



The thought of regularly giving your bathroom the clean it needs might not inspire you with glee. After all, keeping toilets, sinks, showers and bathtubs free of dirt and grime, and the drains free of clogged-up hair, certainly requires time, effort and elbow grease. But it's an important part of your bathroom's maintenance.

Not only is it vital for keeping a safe and hygienic bathroom, but thorough and regular cleaning also underpins many of the maintenance tips featured above, such as in the battle against mould.

A tidy bathroom is easier to clean. If you've accumulated a large number of tubes and bottles, consider some cheap space-saving solutions, such as baskets and storage tubs.

If you notice that your bath or shower is becoming clogged with hair and slow to drain, read our [guide on the best shower drain unblockers](#).

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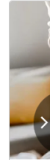
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