

Summary of key messages for residents

The importance of ventilation

- It is important to ventilate your home when you have visitors from outside your household – including family, or if someone in your household has COVID-19.
- Letting fresh air into indoor spaces can help remove air that contains virus particles and prevent the spread of coronavirus (COVID-19).
- Ventilation is important if someone in your household has COVID-19 or if you are indoors with people you do not live with. You can pass COVID-19 on to others if you only have mild symptoms or even no symptoms at all.

How to ventilate your home

- Opening windows and doors at home is the simplest way of improving ventilation.
- If you have people working in or visiting your home, let as much fresh air into your home as possible without getting uncomfortably cold while they are there, and for a short period before they arrive and after they have left
- If someone in your home is self-isolating, keep a window slightly open in their room and keep the door closed to reduce the spread of contaminated air to other parts of the household. If the person self-isolating needs access to shared spaces in your home, ensure that these areas are well ventilated by following the guidance above.
- Ventilation can be increased by leaving extractor fans in bathrooms, toilets and kitchen areas running for longer than usual, with the door closed, after someone has been in the room.
- In the winter months, it is crucial that ventilation, such as trickle vents on windows, are not blocked and that other ventilation is not switched off. These actions will have minimal implications for heating costs but put you at more risk from COVID-19 transmission.

Mechanical ventilation in the home

- If your home has a mechanical ventilation system, make sure this is working and maintained in line with manufacturers' instructions. Your landlord will be able to tell you how to check the ventilation system is working.
- If possible, set ventilation systems to bring fresh air in and not recirculate indoor air. If you are unsure of how to do this, seek guidance from your landlord. Devices that only recirculate indoor air will not remove airborne virus from the home. You can use the boost mode (if available) to increase ventilation if someone in your household is self-isolating due to COVID-19 or if you meet people you do not live with indoors.
- Ventilation can also be increased by leaving extractor fans in bathrooms, toilets and kitchen areas running for longer than usual, with the door closed, after someone with COVID-19 or a visitor has been in the room.
- If necessary, to ensure safety, we would advise that you latch windows – this will allow ventilation whilst reducing safety risks.

How to keep warm

- Ventilation does not mean you have to be cold – opening your windows for just 10 minutes an hour can help reduce the risk and allow the air to refresh.
- In colder weather, where it is not comfortable to leave windows open fully, opening the windows slightly can also provide ventilation and reduce cold drafts.

Support for low income/vulnerable residents

- There is advice available about how to keep warm and well. If you are having difficulty heating your home, you may be able to claim financial and practical help even if you don't own the property. Visit the Simple Energy Advice website for information about the help that is available or call their helpline on 0800 444 202. Ofgem has further advice on what to do if you are struggling to pay your energy bills.
- Depending on your circumstances and other criteria, you may also be eligible for support with your energy bills:
 - The Warm Home Discount supports low income and vulnerable households. Please see the [Warm Home Discount](#) webpages for further information on eligibility and how to apply for the scheme.
 - The Cold Weather Payments and Winter Fuel Payment also help vulnerable households with their winter energy costs. Please check the [Cold Weather Payment](#) and the [Winter Fuel Payment](#) webpages for more information.
- If you are in financial distress during this time should, you should talk to your energy supplier, who will be able to discuss personal circumstances and consider options to help, including reassessing, reducing or pausing payments.

More information can be found in our guidance: Ventilation of indoor spaces to stop the spread of coronavirus (COVID-19).