

Winter Indoor Humidity Checklist

The right winter humidity number moves with the weather, so a humidifier isn't always the fix. Use this checklist with the Pro Grade Home Science video to measure first, read your home's signs, and decide whether to add moisture.

1 · MEASURE BEFORE YOU BUY

- ☐ Put a small digital humidity meter (a hygrometer) in your main living area, away from the kitchen and bathroom.
- ☐ Watch it for a week. Write down the indoor reading and the outside temperature below.
- ☐ Compare your readings to Step 2. On target and comfortable? You don't need to buy anything.

	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat	Sun
Indoor humidity %							
Outside temp							

2 · FIND YOUR TARGET FOR TODAY'S WEATHER

Outside temperature	20 to 40°F (-7 to 4°C)	10 to 20°F (-12 to -7°C)	0 to 10°F (-18 to -12°C)	-10 to 0°F (-23 to -18°C)	-20 to -10°F (-29 to -23°C)	Below -20°F (Below -29°C)
Keep indoor humidity under	40%	35%	30%	25%	20%	15%

General cold-climate guidance: the colder it is outside, the lower your target, because warm, moist air leaves water on cold surfaces like windows. If water collects on the glass, your target is too high for that day.

3 · WHICH SIDE OF THE ROPE ARE YOU ON?

Signs it's too dry

- ☐ Static shocks off doorknobs
- ☐ Dry skin, chapped lips, a scratchy throat or nosebleeds
- ☐ Gaps opening in hardwood floors or trim
- ☐ Doors that fit in summer but rattle now

Signs it's too humid

- ☐ Water running down the inside of windows
- ☐ Mould on window sills or frames
- ☐ Frost on attic roof boards (if you can view it safely)
- ☐ Spring ceiling stains that look like a roof leak

4 · IF YOUR HOME FEELS DRY, CHECK THIS FIRST

- ☐ **Newer, tightly built home with a ventilation unit?** A heat recovery ventilator (HRV) swaps stale indoor air for fresh outdoor air, which is very dry in winter. Running on high, it can pull moisture out of your home. Ask a qualified HVAC professional about the right setting, or about an ERV, a similar unit that holds on to more indoor moisture.
- ☐ **Older, leakier home?** Dry outdoor air leaks in all winter, and older windows collect water quickly. Add humidity in small steps and watch the glass.

5 · IF YOU DECIDE TO ADD HUMIDITY

Portable (one room)

A low-cost way to test whether extra moisture helps. Clean the tank every few days. Fine white dust? Distilled water usually fixes it.

Furnace-mounted (whole home)

Adds moisture to air moving through your ducts, so it only works while the heat is on. Heat with a heat pump? Ask how well it will work.

Steam (whole home)

Makes its own steam, so it can hold your target closely whatever the furnace is doing. Usually costs more to buy and run.

- ☐ **Ask before you buy:** What is the total installed cost, what does it cost to run, and what maintenance does it need?
- ☐ **Ask before you buy:** Will it work with my heating system? Do I need a permit? Requirements vary by location, so check your local municipal website.

Good to know: Neither side of the rope is good. The goal isn't more humidity. It's the right amount for today's weather, and your windows are your early warning system. These numbers are general guidance, and your home, windows and heating system can change what works. If you see mould or moisture stains that keep coming back, ask a qualified professional to take a look.