

All About Dehumidifiers

How do they work?



A dehumidifier is a **machine that takes water out of the air**. Water in the air is called **humidity**. Dehumidifiers are great for damp basements. Used after a flood or plumbing leak is repaired, they can get the last bit of water out of walls, carpets, and floors.

They work by running a fan that sucks in air over a coil. The water in the air turns to water drops on the coil, and the drops fall into an internal bucket. Empty the bucket in a sink when full to get rid of the water. Some models can have a hose attached to the bucket to go into a floor drain. The drain needs to be lower than the bucket.

How do I set it up?



Set it up near the wet area. You will need to be near an electrical outlet. If using an extension cord, make sure it is a **heavy-duty extension cord**! Then turn it on.



You can set it to the humidity level you want in your room. Keep your basement humidity at **50% or less**. Once set, the dehumidifier will automatically keep humidity at that level. Mold can be a problem at high humidity levels.

How do I maintain it?



Empty the bucket when full. A light on the dehumidifier will tell you when the bucket is full. Pull out the bucket and empty it in a sink, toilet, or drain. If the bucket has a hose attachment, it will automatically empty the bucket.

How do I know it's done?

At first, the dehumidifier will run almost all the time. You may need to empty the bucket twice a day! In a few days, you may only need to empty it once a week. Then, you can either turn the humidifier off and put away, or let it run. It should come on only once in a while.

What is the cost? Which should I buy?



Dehumidifiers cost between **\$150.00 to \$300.00**, depending on the size. A 30-pint dehumidifier will clear a 17-foot by 20-foot room, like a large room in a basement, in a few days. A larger area may need a bigger dehumidifier. Dehumidifiers do use electricity, so get an **Energy Star** labeled dehumidifier if possible. It will be cheaper to run.

Should I Get DAMP-RID, or Another Moisture Absorber, or a Dehumidifier?



Products like Damp Rid or other moisture absorbers are good too. They come in a tub or a hanger bag and remove moisture from the air. They are good for closets and enclosed areas with a little bit of moisture in the air. **They won't remove large amounts of moisture.** They are better for keeping an area dry, not for drying a very wet area!

What is a moisture absorber?



Moisture absorbers have a crystal in them that absorbs moisture. You've probably seen a little packet of the crystals in dry soup packages or in something you've bought. They keep things dry during shipment. Moisture absorber in tubs or bags don't move the air and can only absorb water in the air around them.

What's the difference?



A dehumidifier moves the air by sucking it into the machine, removing the water, then pushing the dry air back out. Dehumidifiers dry larger areas faster and better. Dehumidifiers aren't meant for small enclosed areas.

A moisture absorber doesn't move air. It just draws up moisture from the air around it. It can't remove as much water as a dehumidifier can.

Should I get both?

Maybe. Dehumidifiers are best for spaces that are very wet or very damp. A moisture absorber is best at keeping things dry. If you have a very wet or damp area, your best choice may be to dry it out with a dehumidifier, then use a moisture absorber to keep the space dry.

How do I dry a closet?

Open the door and set up a dehumidifier nearby. Setting up a floor fan, blowing into the closet will help the dehumidifier work even faster and better. After the closet is dry, a moisture absorber will keep the closet dry. Moisture absorbers are good to hang in closets or other closed areas to keep moisture low and prevent mold.