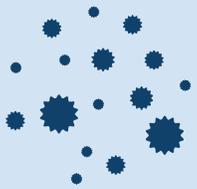


# Steps for Cleaning Mold

Before getting started, get to know M.O.L.D.



## Mend

There are many places you can find mold in your home. However, mold always needs a damp or wet place to start growing. If the water problem isn't fixed, the mold will keep coming back no matter how well you clean.



## Observe

Look around. Where is the mold growing? How much mold is there?

It may be safe to clean up mold yourself, especially if the mold is small and is growing on something that you can clean with bleach and water. However, you may want to hire a contractor to clean up mold if it is covering a large area or if you have health conditions, such as asthma or other breathing problems.



## Learn

Learn where to look for mold in your home, how mold can affect your health and your rights as a homeowner or renter by going to [Michigan.gov/Mold](https://Michigan.gov/Mold) or calling 800-648-6942.



## Disinfect

Use the directions on the following pages to safely clean up mold on your own.

Gather supplies for your mold cleaning kit.



Long rubber gloves  
(like dishwashing  
gloves)



Goggles without any  
holes or air vents



N-95 mask (you  
can buy at a home  
improvement store)



Household bleach  
(do not use pool  
bleach)



A measuring cup



Two buckets (gallon  
size or larger)



Two sponges or rags



Water

## Make a mold cleaning mix.

1. Open windows to let in plenty of fresh air. If you can't open windows, use fans to blow clean air from other rooms.
2. Put on gloves, goggles and face mask.
3. Mix 1 cup of bleach with 1 gallon of water in the first bucket.
4. Stir the water and bleach mixture; be careful not to splash.
5. Add the first sponge or rag to the bucket.
6. Fill the second bucket with water only and add the other sponge or rag.



**NEVER MIX BLEACH AND AMMONIA. Serious injury or death may occur. KEEP YOUR MOLD CLEANING MIX AWAY FROM CHILDREN AND PETS.**

If you or others in your home have asthma or other breathing problems, you should not use bleach. Contact the Michigan Department of Health and Human Services 800-648-6942 for other cleaning options.

## Sort everything that is moldy into two groups.

### Things water CANNOT soak into:

- Linoleum floors.
- Stoves.
- Sinks.
- Plastic toys.
- Tile walls.
- Metal.

### Things water CAN soak into:

- Couches and chairs.
- Carpet.
- Stuffed animals.
- Clothes.
- Wood.
- Drywall.

## Follow these directions to clean items that water CAN NOT soak into.

1. Make the **mold cleaning mix**.
2. Wipe the mix onto the things that are moldy using the sponge or rag. If the items are small enough you can soak them right in the bucket of the **mold cleaning mix**.
3. Let the items sit or soak for 10–15 minutes.
4. After 10–15 minutes, rinse the items using plain water.
5. Use towels or fans to completely dry the items and areas you cleaned.
6. Repeat steps 2–5 until there is no more mold.
7. If the mold still cannot be removed, consider throwing away the item.



Bleach may discolor some items. Be sure to test the **mold cleaning mix** in a hidden area before using it on an entire item.

Bleach can discolor, rust or ruin metal objects. For these items, wipe the mold off with warm water and dish soap.

# Follow these directions to clean items that water CAN soak into.

## Small Items



1. If the item is small enough that it can fit in a washing machine and can be safely washed, try washing it on a HOT water cycle with regular laundry soap.
2. Dry everything completely.
3. Do the items still smell like mold or dirt? Can you still see the mold? If so, you should throw it away. If not, it should be OK to keep.

## Big Items



- **Has everything been wet for two days or more?**  
If you answered yes, you will probably need to throw those items away. This includes carpet and couches. Mold is already growing, even if you can't see it yet, and could cause health problems later.
- **Has everything been wet for less than two days?**
  1. As long as you don't see any mold growing already, try to soak up as much water as you can with towels or a wet/dry vacuum (like a Shop-Vac).
  2. Open windows or turn on air conditioning or heat blowers to get fresh air moving through the area where the wet things are found. If you have a fan, use it to blow fresh air directly on the wet area.
  3. You need to dry everything as fast and completely as possible to keep mold from growing.

## Wood and Drywall



- While wood and drywall feel hard, water can still soak into it. This means mold could be growing inside your walls where you can't see it.
- If there is a lot of mold on your walls or ceiling, the BEST thing to do is to cut it out and replace the section.
- You might want to hire a home contractor to do this, especially if the mold has grown on the wood and support beams inside the wall.
- If you decide to hire someone to remove and repair damage caused by mold, it is recommended that you use a home repair contractor. A home repair contractor is usually cheaper than a mold remediator, or someone who only repairs homes with mold, because they do not do all the testing that mold remediators do. Testing for mold is not needed and only adds to the cost. A regular home repair contractor is capable of cleaning and repairing your home after a problem with mold.
- Removing the wood or drywall is the only way to be totally sure you get rid of all of the mold. However, if you prefer to try cleaning it, see the next page for instructions.
- **Note that the State of Michigan does not license or certify companies for mold clean-up.**

## Follow these directions to clean the wood or drywall yourself.

If the area that is moldy is small (the US Environmental Protection Agency suggests an area smaller than 3 feet by 3 feet), and you do not want to cut it out of the wall, you can first try to clean the wood or drywall yourself with the **mold cleaning mix** (see directions on page 2). If the mold comes back after you try to clean it, then you will need to cut out the wood or drywall.

1. Make your **mold cleaning kit**.
2. Wipe the **mold cleaning mix** onto the wood or drywall using the sponge or rag. Remember that the bleach might discolor some items, so test it on a hidden area first.
3. Let the **mold cleaning mix** soak into the wood or drywall for 10-15 minutes.
4. After 10-15 minutes, wipe the wood or drywall with the plain water.
5. Dry the wood or drywall well. Soak up as much water as you can with towels, and if possible use fans to blow on the area to dry it as quickly as possible.
6. After the wall is dry, you can repaint the area. There are special paints available that are advertised to cover mold stains. Talk to a local paint supplier to find the paint that best meets your needs.



## Want to know more?

Call the Michigan Department of Health and Human Services at 800-648-6942.

Find more fact sheets about mold at [Michigan.gov/Mold](https://Michigan.gov/Mold).



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