

**Skill Level: BEGINNER** These how-to's are suitable for people who are new to DIY and who have a basic knowledge of tools. If you've painted a room or re-potted a plant, you can probably complete one of these projects by yourself in a few hours or less.

A common problem that homeowners face is controlling mold and mildew in the home. This situation should not be taken lightly. Exposure to mold can cause potential health problems for you and your family. But there is a remedy. Follow these steps to help rid your home of mold and mildew.

### Mold and Mildew

- Those ugly black and green spots in your bathroom or basement are probably Black Mold. Mold and mildew are fungi that can grow on any surface, providing there is excess moisture present. Your bathroom, basement, kitchen and laundry room are highly vulnerable to mold and mildew.



### Use Caution

- If a large area has been affected in your home, don't attempt to clean it yourself. Contact a professional for help.



### Locate the Problem

- The first step is to locate places where mold and mildew can grow. Check areas that have high humidity levels, such as your bathroom, kitchen and basement. Pay special attention to any places where water might collect in these rooms, like around the sink or near a drain.
- A leaky pipe can also promote mold and mildew growth.
  - If porous materials like wood, wallboard or carpet are affected by mold and mildew, remove and replace them immediately.
  - Nonporous materials, such as tile or countertops, can be cleaned.



### Removing Mold from the Bathroom

- Safety First**
  - Lowe's carries many disinfectants and cleaners that help eliminate mold and mildew. Follow the manufacturer's instructions regarding additional safety gear.
  - Keep the work area well-ventilated.
  - If you are using bleach, never combine it with any products containing ammonia. The result is a dangerous toxic gas.
  - Wear rubber gloves when cleaning.

### IMPORTANT

As for any home improvement project, follow the manufacturer's instructions and use proper safety precautions. Be sure to follow local building codes as well. If you're not comfortable doing a project, contact a professional for help.

### Removing Mold from the Bathroom (cont.)

#### ■ An Effective Solution.

1. A mixture of  $\frac{3}{4}$  cup of bleach diluted in a gallon of water helps remove mold and mildew.
2. Start in the shower. Remove the old shower curtain. Apply the solution from the top of the shower walls down to the drain.
3. When working on tile, fill an unused spray bottle with the bleach solution and spray the entire area.
4. Let the solution stand for about 10 minutes, then rinse with clean, hot water.
5. The same formula can be used on grout, just scrub the seams with a brush and let the solution stand for 10 minutes. Rinse with hot water and let dry thoroughly.
6. Also check around the tub, shower stall or toilet.
  - Any caulk that is affected should be removed.
  - Use a utility knife or putty knife to remove the old sealant.
  - Clean the joints with the bleach solution.
7. While allowing the seams to dry, clean the faucet, handles and tub basin.
8. Make sure the faucet and drain are working properly—standing water anywhere in the home will promote mold growth. If your drain is clogged, you'll need to fix the problem. Lowe's carries drain cleaning products to help unclog tough jams and open up drains.
9. When the tub area is dry, reseal with caulk. Just apply a bead along the seams and smooth it out with your finger, if necessary. Check other areas that need to be sealed, like your sink, faucets or toilets.
10. Use a sealant containing an antimicrobial, which resists the growth of mold and germs. Lowe's has many antimicrobial products, including toilets and exhaust fans.
11. The last step is to hang a new shower curtain and mildew-resistant liner.
12. If you're considering painting your bathroom now is a good time to do it since everything has been cleaned. Lowe's even carries mildew-proof paint designed for bathrooms and kitchens. If you want to learn about proper painting techniques, watch the painting videos at [Lowe's.com/Videos](https://www.lowes.com/Videos).



### Don't Stop at the Bathroom.

- Apply the same cleaning methods to other areas of your home. Just remember, nonporous materials can be rescued with a little cleaning and disinfecting. Porous materials will need to be replaced.

### Stop the Problem Before It Starts.

- The best way to keep mold and mildew from affecting your family is to prevent them from growing in the first place. Make a daily habit of cleaning moisture prone areas.
- Use a dehumidifier or your air conditioner to remove excess moisture from the air. Use exhaust fans in bathrooms and make sure the laundry room is well-ventilated, too.

For more Healthy Home information, visit [Lowes.com/HealthyHome](https://Lowes.com/HealthyHome). And to learn about other projects that you can do in your home, check out [Lowes.com/Videos](https://Lowes.com/Videos).

If you need more information on mold and mildew removal, please visit the Environmental Protection Agency's website at [EPA.gov](https://EPA.gov).

These "How-To's" are provided for informational purposes only. The information contained in Lowe's "How-To" videos is intended to provide general guidance to simplify jobs around the house. Because tools, products, materials, techniques, building codes and local regulations are continually changing, Lowe's assumes no responsibility for the accuracy of the information contained herein and disclaims any liability for omissions, errors or the outcome of any project. It is the responsibility of the viewer to ensure compliance with all applicable laws, rules, codes and regulations for a project. The viewer must always take proper safety precautions and exercise caution when taking on any project. If there is any question or doubt in regards to any element of a project, please consult with a licensed professional.