

What is humidity?

Scientifically speaking, humidity is water vapour in the air but people misunderstand that and think its “moist air” instead. But for everyday use we hear it on the weather forecast, explaining the weather and how humid it would be for the day. There are 3 types of humidity: absolute, relative and specific humidity. The one used in the weather is relative humidity, but to understand that one would need to know what absolute humidity and that is the mass of water vapour divided by mass of dry air at a given temperature. Relative humidity is the ratio of the current absolute humidity to the highest possible absolute humidity. Specific humidity is just the ratio of water vapour to dry air in a mass.

For example if the air temperature was 24°C and the relative humidity is 0% then the air temperature would feel lower than it actually is. But if the air temperature is 24

°C and the relative humidity is 100% then it would feel a lot hotter than it actually is. This does not just affect us outside the house, but also inside the household as well with even an increase because of people using the showers, cooking, clothes dryers and even washing dishes. A high humidity can be bad for health in the way that it can increase mould and fungus in the house as well as bacteria because of the increase heat temperature. A dehumidifier would be able to keep the relative humidity under control while avoiding bacteria growth.

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