

# Do I have a wet basement?

No one wants a wet basement, but unfortunately, it can happen. There are five ways water can get into your basement:

1. Through FLOOR CRACKS, from groundwater in water-saturated soils being pushed up into the basement by hydrostatic pressure,
2. Through surface water coming in through WALL CRACKS or MORTAR JOINTS,
3. From surface water causing BLEEDING or SWEATING of walls,
4. Over the FOOTER, and/or
5. Under the FOOTER.

If you think you may have a water problem in your basement, look for some of these signs:

1. Peeling paint or loose floor tiles: Sign that the wall has taken moisture inside, as paint will not stick to a wet surface; floor tiles lift due to water leakage.
2. Rust on appliances or fixtures: Look for rust on bottoms of furnaces, water heaters, support posts and other metal appliances/fixtures.
3. Warped paneling: Moisture will cause paneling to bow and discolor, commonly at the bottom portion of the paneling.
4. Water marks on floor and/or walls: This is evidence that water seepage has occurred in the past. Look for staining on the concrete floor starting at the wall. There also may be water stains in cracks.
5. Dry Rot: Dark brown/black fungus. Grows on walls and other surfaces. Grows mostly on wooden surfaces (paneling, partitions, old wood floors, steps, windows), causing wood to decay.
6. Mold and/or mildew: Fungus that grows in damp, dark areas; causes discoloration, musty smells and odors.
7. Musty odors: This is the result of the decay process from mold, mildew and dry rot.
8. Damp spots on walls: This is a sign that water has absorbed through the wall. Blocks will have dark gray splotches in various places.
9. White chalky substance on walls: Known as efflorescence, this is a chemical breakdown of the bonding agent that holds your walls together. Sign of possible structural deterioration.
10. Cracked/Bowed Walls: Signs that the foundation has moved/shifted. Should be inspected to determine the exact cause.