

## Good ventilation – natural ventilation – fresh air

We have all heard of “hands, face, space, fresh air” but what does fresh air mean? This is a short guide about how to improve the flow of air in your setting to avoid transmission of Covid-19. When we talk, raise our voices, cough, sneeze, sing, respiratory droplets leave our mouth and nose. Some droplets are large and medium-sized and gravity makes them fall to the ground – if you are more than 2 metres away from other people then there is less chance of you being infected by these droplets.

Small droplets can be suspended in the air and build up over time – the longer you stay indoors, the more people in the room, the more droplets in the air. Spending a long time indoors with other people increases your risk of being infected in this way. Fresh air through natural or mechanical ventilation can swap the stale air full of invisible droplets with clean air which it is safer to breathe. This guide is about natural ventilation – if you use mechanical ventilation in your setting then please see that guide.

### Go outside!

- If it is safe to do so, go outside.
- The best ventilation is outdoors where fresh air dilutes the virus and UV light further weakens the virus
- Partially enclosed gazebos, summer houses, marquees, conservatories may still have poor ventilation so follow the good ventilation advice

### Open windows

- If it is safe to do so, open windows.
- Open windows at different sides of the room to get air flowing through the space. Opening high level windows can prevent people sitting in drafts
- It may not be safe if there are young children or vulnerable people – think about using approved devices for limiting opening and check with your health and safety teams.
- Think about how you will manage insects coming in, for example in food settings.
- Be mindful of safety in terms of crime if windows are open in unoccupied ground floor or easily reached rooms.

## Open doors

- ☑ If it is safe to do so, open doors.
- ☑ Never prop open fire doors.
- ☑ It may not be safe if there are young children or vulnerable people.
- ☑ Think about how you will manage insects coming in, for example in food settings.
- ☑ Be mindful of safety in terms of crime if doors are open in unoccupied ground floor or easily reached rooms.

## How many people in the room?

- ☑ The more people in the room, the more exhaled droplets will be in the air so reducing room occupancy levels can make it easier to achieve good levels of ventilation.
- ☑ Some people use CO2 monitors as a way of measuring if the room is poorly ventilated and if more action needs to be taken. These work best in medium sized spaces – check HSE for more information, link in header.

## High ceilings – bigger rooms

- ☑ If you have a meeting with lots of people, try to choose a big room with a high ceiling like a sports hall – this will increase the amount of fresh air available to each person.

## Fans

- ☑ Fans stir the air already in the room to create a breeze, they do not swap the stale air for fresh air.
- ☑ For this reason, you are advised not to use fans unless you are the only person in the room or unless the room is already very well ventilated.
- ☑ Position the fan near a window and do not direct the flow of air towards people's faces.

## Vents

- ☑ Your building may have air vents in walls or trickle vents on windows – make sure these are open and clear of anything blocking the flow of air

## Purge ventilation

- ☑ When the room or vehicle is empty - if safe to do so- open all the doors and windows for 10 minutes to completely exchange the air in the room.
- ☑ You could use purge ventilation at the shuttle bus terminus for example or during coffee or lunch breaks.

## Room temperature

- ☑ Maintaining room temperatures to a comfortable level may be difficult without heating as well as ventilating the space
- ☑ Check with your health and safety representative about what temperature you should aim to achieve in your workplace  
<https://www.hse.gov.uk/temperature/>  
<https://www.gov.uk/workplace-temperatures>

## Dress codes and PPE

- ☑ We all feel the heat and the cold differently and some people feel the cold more than others there is guidance for minimum workplace temperatures (see above)
- ☑ Even at acceptable minimum levels some people may feel cold more than others, particularly if they are older and/or female and/or lower bodyweight and/or have medical conditions. These people may need reasonable adjustments to feel comfortable.
- ☑ In workplaces or schools with uniforms or dress codes it may be necessary to relax dress codes so employees/students feel comfortable by adding extra layers
- ☑ In workplaces or settings where PPE is required staff may feel uncomfortably hot and more attention may be needed to indoor temperatures

## Vehicles

- ☑ Follow government guidance on vehicles <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/coronavirus-covid-19-safer-travel-guidance-for-passengers>

Check out our Business Resources page for useful posters and checklists for your business  
**[www.sheffield.gov.uk/home/business/coronavirus-business-resources](http://www.sheffield.gov.uk/home/business/coronavirus-business-resources)**

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