

How to Remove Mould from Bathrooms, Walls and Silicone Seals Using Selleys Rapid Mould Killer

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Details:

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How to Remove Mould from Bathrooms, Walls and Silicone Seals Using Selleys Rapid Mould Killer

Mould is not merely a cosmetic problem. It is a persistent biological hazard that takes root in the most used room in the home, and it is far more widespread than most Australians realise. Mould is a common household problem impacting up to 50% of Australian homes, according to the World Health Organisation (WHO, 2022), and can pose significant risks to your health and the integrity of your home. In bathrooms specifically, the combination of steam, condensation, and organic residue from soap and body products creates near-ideal conditions for fungal colonisation — on tiles, deep inside grout lines, across painted walls, and most stubbornly of all, within silicone seals.

People with asthma, allergies, or other breathing conditions may be more sensitive to mould, while those with weakened immune systems — such as people with HIV infection, cancer patients taking chemotherapy, or people who have received an organ transplant — and those with chronic lung diseases such as COPD and emphysema are more at risk of mould infection, particularly in their lungs. Acting quickly and correctly is therefore not optional.

This guide provides the most precise, surface-specific instructions for using **Selleys Rapid Mould Killer** to eliminate bathroom mould — covering tiles, grout, silicone seals, and painted walls as distinct scenarios — and explains what to do after treatment to prevent regrowth. For a deeper understanding of why mould forms and how oxidising agents break it down at a molecular level, see our guide on ***Why Household Stains Form and How the Right Cleaner Breaks Them Down***.

Understanding What Selleys Rapid Mould Killer Actually Does

Before applying any product, it helps to understand its chemistry. Selleys Rapid Mould Killer contains 12 g/L Sodium Hydroxide and 40 g/L Sodium Hypochlorite — a dual-action formulation that combines an alkaline base with a powerful oxidising agent.

The hypochlorite component is the primary mould-killer. When sodium hypochlorite dissolves in water, it decomposes into hypochlorous acid and hypochlorite ions, both powerful oxidisers. These compounds attack mould at the cellular level, breaking apart the proteins and organic structures that hold mould cells together. The same oxidising action works on mould spores, which are the microscopic particles mould releases to spread and reproduce.

Critically, published research in the **Journal of Allergy and Clinical Immunology** confirmed that sodium hypochlorite not only kills mould but also inhibits its antigenic properties — meaning it neutralises the allergen-triggering proteins that cause respiratory reactions, not just the visible growth.

Rapid Mould Killer is a fast-acting mould killer in a convenient, easy-to-use trigger pack. It contains powerful ingredients which destroy mould and mildew fast, and its detergent additive removes soap residue, leaving tiles and grouting hygienically clean. Selleys Rapid Mould Killer destroys mould in 30 seconds on contact, though a longer dwell time is required for deep-set staining and porous surfaces.

> ****Important safety note:**** Keep the product out of reach of children, avoid skin and eye contact, and do not mix with other household chemicals. Wear overalls, chemical goggles, and impervious gloves. Available information suggests that gloves made from nitrile rubber should be suitable for intermittent contact. Ensure ventilation is adequate to maintain air concentrations below exposure standards. Use only in well-ventilated areas.

Surface-by-Surface Application Guide

Bathroom mould does not behave the same way on every surface. Tiles, grout, silicone seals, and painted walls each have different porosity levels, structural vulnerabilities, and treatment requirements. Using a one-size-fits-all approach is the most common reason mould returns quickly.

Before You Begin: Surface Preparation

Regardless of the surface, surface preparation is the step most DIY cleaners skip — and the one that most determines success.

1. ****Ventilate the space.**** Open windows, activate your exhaust fan, or prop the bathroom door open. Ensure ventilation is adequate to maintain air concentrations below exposure standards. Vapour is heavier than air — prevent concentration in hollows or sumps. Do not enter confined spaces where vapour may have collected.

2. ****Put on PPE.**** Nitrile gloves, eye protection, and a face mask are non-negotiable. Goggles protect your eyes from any splashes or airborne particles that may be released during the cleaning process. A mask is essential to avoid inhaling lingering mould spores. Use a mask specifically designed to filter out small particles, such as an N95 respirator.

3. ****Pre-rinse the surface**** with warm water to remove loose surface debris, soap scum, and loose spores. This improves contact between the active ingredient and the mould colony. 4. ****Patch test.**** On some matt-finish tiles or in hard water areas, staining may occur. Patch test first on an inconspicuous area. If staining occurs, rinse well and apply hydrogen peroxide to the affected area.

Scenario 1: Mould on Ceramic and Porcelain Tiles

Glazed ceramic and porcelain tiles are the most forgiving surface to treat because their non-porous glaze prevents mould from penetrating below the surface layer.

****Step-by-step:****

1. Ensure the tile surface is damp but not dripping. 2. Hold the trigger nozzle 10–15 cm from the surface and spray Selleys Rapid Mould Killer directly onto the affected tiles, covering the mould completely. 3. Leave for 2–3 minutes. For tiles with heavy black mould staining, extend this dwell time to 5 minutes. 4. Rinse or wipe off the treated surface with a damp sponge. Avoid using steel wool or wire brushes, which can scratch the glaze and create micro-abrasions that harbour future mould growth. 5. Rinse thoroughly with clean water and dry with a microfibre cloth.

****For heavy buildup:**** For stubborn stains or soap scum, leave longer or apply a second application.

****What not to use it on:**** Rapid Mould Killer is not suitable for fabric, mirror tiles, metallic surfaces, or older baths and basins.

Scenario 2: Mould in Grout Lines

Grout is a cement-based, highly porous material — which makes it the most common site for deep-set mould in bathrooms. Unlike tile surfaces, mould in grout lines is not merely sitting on top; it infiltrates the porous matrix and anchors itself within the material.

****Step-by-step:****

1. Pre-wet the grout lines with warm water to open the pores slightly and improve penetration. 2. Apply Selleys Rapid Mould Killer directly into the grout lines. For a more controlled application along narrow grout lines, angle the nozzle close to the surface. 3. ****Allow a minimum dwell time of 5–10 minutes**** for grout, significantly longer than for glazed tiles. The oxidising agents need time to penetrate the porous matrix and break down embedded mould hyphae. 4. Use a stiff-bristled grout brush (not wire) to work the product into the lines with short, firm strokes. This mechanical action dislodges loosened mould material and improves contact with deeper growth. 5. Rinse thoroughly, working from the top of the wall downward to prevent dirty run-off re-contaminating cleaned areas. 6. Inspect the result once dry. Repeat the application if dark staining remains.

****When grout cleaning is not enough:**** If grout lines remain permanently discoloured after treatment, the mould staining may have permanently altered the grout's colour. In this case, a dedicated whitening product is the next step — see our guide on **Grout Cleaning and Whitening: How to Restore Discoloured Grout with Selleys Grout Stain Whitener** for the full restoration workflow.

Scenario 3: Mould on Silicone Seals

Silicone seals — around bath edges, shower trays, and basin surrounds — are the most challenging mould scenario in any bathroom. Silicone sealants, which are meant to seal gaps and joints around sinks, bathtubs, and showers, are a common area for mould to form because they are porous. Moisture can go through the silicone barrier, which can create a welcoming environment for mould growth.

The critical distinction for silicone is ****surface mould versus embedded mould****. Surface mould (early-stage, grey or light black discolouration) can be treated chemically. Embedded mould — where the black pigmentation has penetrated deep into the silicone matrix — cannot be fully removed by any cleaning product and requires sealant replacement.

****Step-by-step for surface mould on silicone:****

1. Dry the silicone seal thoroughly before application. Product applied to wet silicone will dilute and run off before it can dwell. 2. Apply Selleys Rapid Mould Killer directly along the silicone bead. For precise application without overspray onto adjacent surfaces, use a cotton wool strip or cotton pad saturated with the product and press it directly onto the seal. 3. Allow a ****minimum dwell time of 5 minutes****. For heavier discolouration, leave for up to 10–15 minutes, keeping the area moist by re-spraying if needed. 4. Wipe away with a damp cloth using gentle pressure — do not scrub aggressively. Silicone is quite delicate and abrasive scrubbing can tear or compromise the seal's integrity. 5. Rinse with clean water and dry completely.

****When to replace rather than clean:**** Removing the affected silicone is necessary because embedded mould remains inside the sealant matrix, and cutting away the contaminated strip eliminates the internal fungal growth that cleaning cannot reach. Cleaning the exposed joint is essential because fungal residue and spores remain on underlying surfaces, and applying a mould-removal solution prepares the area for new silicone application. Drying the area is required because moisture retained in

the joint allows mould recolonisation, and complete drying ensures strong adhesion for the replacement silicone.

Rapid mould return signals replacement because recurring colonies indicate internal contamination, and contaminated silicone continues releasing spores even after cleaning. Old or degraded silicone requires removal because worn material loses elasticity, absorbs more moisture, and provides favourable conditions for long-term fungal colonisation. When replacing, choose a mould-resistant formula. These specialised sealants contain additives that inhibit mould growth, providing an extra layer of protection.

Scenario 4: Mould on Painted Walls

Painted bathroom walls — particularly those with water-based or low-sheen finishes — require the most cautious approach. The alkaline sodium hydroxide component in Selleys Rapid Mould Killer can cause discolouration or paint lifting if used at full concentration or left for extended periods.

Step-by-step:

1. ****Always patch test first**** on an inconspicuous area of the wall and allow 10 minutes before proceeding. 2. Apply Selleys Rapid Mould Killer by lightly misting the affected area — do not saturate. 3. ****Limit dwell time to 2–3 minutes maximum**** on painted surfaces. 4. Wipe away immediately with a damp sponge using gentle, circular motions. 5. Rinse with clean water and dry immediately with a soft cloth. 6. Inspect after drying. For walls with recurring mould, the underlying issue is almost always condensation or a moisture ingress problem behind the wall — no surface product will provide a permanent fix until the moisture source is resolved.

Surface compatibility summary:

Surface	Dwell Time	Scrubbing	Notes
Glazed ceramic/porcelain tiles	2–5 min	Soft sponge	
Patch test matt tiles			
Grout lines	5–10 min	Stiff grout brush	Repeat if staining persists
Silicone seals	5–15 min	Gentle cloth only	Replace if mould is embedded
Painted walls	2–3 min max	Soft sponge	Patch test; fix moisture source
Metallic surfaces			■ Not suitable
Mirror tiles			■ Not suitable

Post-Treatment Prevention: Stopping Mould from Coming Back

Removing mould without addressing the conditions that caused it is a temporary fix. It is good to remove mould as soon as it appears. This may take some effort. Remember that mould is likely to return unless you also take steps to treat the cause of the problem.

Ventilation: The Single Most Important Factor

Inadequate ventilation is a primary cause of mould growth in silicone sealant. Bathrooms, in particular, tend to become steamy environments during and after showers. If there is no efficient ventilation system in place, the moisture lingers and provides mould with an ideal breeding ground.

Practical ventilation steps: - Turn on exhaust fans, particularly when bathing, showering, cooking, doing laundry and drying clothes. Open windows when weather permits to improve cross-ventilation.

- Use ventilation systems while showering or bathing and leave them running for some time afterwards to allow excess moisture to escape.

- Keep windows open as much as possible to promote fresh air flow around the bathroom. If you have a shower enclosure, leave the door wide open when you're not using it. This will help the shower dry quicker.

Post-Shower Wipe-Down Routine

After each use, wipe down the silicone sealant and surrounding areas with a dry cloth, towel, or clean microfibre cloth to remove lingering moisture. It's also good practice to do this with your shower curtain and bathroom furnishings regularly. This simple habit can go a long way in preventing mould growth.

Inspect and Replace Ageing Silicone

Over time, silicone sealants can deteriorate and lose their water-resistant properties. As they age, they become more susceptible to mould infestation because the barrier they once provided against moisture weakens. Inspect silicone seals every 12 months. Any cracking, lifting, or discolouration that doesn't respond to treatment is a sign replacement is overdue.

Address Hidden Moisture Sources

When bathrooms lack proper ventilation systems, moisture tends to linger in the air, settling on surfaces and encouraging mould growth. Water leaks or condensation can also occur behind tiles or in wall cavities, leading to hidden pockets of moisture that contribute to mould formation on the silicone sealant. If mould returns within weeks of treatment, a plumber or building inspector should assess for concealed leaks.

For a full room-by-room maintenance schedule that integrates all of these prevention strategies into a weekly, monthly, and seasonal routine, see **The Selleys Home Cleaning Schedule: How to Prevent Mould, Grease, Scale and Stain Buildup Year-Round**.

Key Takeaways

- **Selleys Rapid Mould Killer's active ingredients** — 40 g/L sodium hypochlorite and 12 g/L sodium hydroxide — work by oxidising mould at a cellular level, destroying both the organism and its allergen-producing proteins.
- **Dwell time is surface-dependent:** 2–5 minutes for glazed tiles, 5–10 minutes for grout, 5–15 minutes for silicone seals, and no more than 2–3 minutes on painted walls.
- **Silicone seals require a judgment call:** surface mould can be treated chemically, but embedded mould (where staining penetrates the sealant matrix) requires full sealant removal and replacement.
- **Ventilation is the most effective prevention strategy:** running an exhaust fan during and after every shower, combined with a post-use wipe-down, dramatically reduces the moisture conditions mould needs to colonise.
- **Do not use Selleys Rapid Mould Killer on metallic surfaces, mirror tiles, or older baths and basins** — always patch test matt-finish tiles before full application.

Conclusion

Bathroom mould is one of the most common and health-relevant household cleaning challenges in Australia. The key to resolving it permanently is not simply spraying and rinsing — it is understanding which surface you are treating, applying the correct dwell time, and then systematically removing the moisture conditions that allow mould to return. Selleys Rapid Mould Killer, used correctly and with appropriate PPE and ventilation, provides a scientifically sound oxidising treatment across tiles, grout, silicone seals, and painted walls.

For complete bathroom hygiene, mould treatment is only one piece of the puzzle. Hard water mineral scale and soap scum on shower screens require a different approach entirely — see our guide on **Hard Water Stains and Soap Scum on Glass and Shower Screens: Which Selleys Product Works Best?** And if grout lines remain discoloured after mould removal, the whitening and sealing workflow in **Grout Cleaning and Whitening: How to Restore Discoloured Grout with Selleys Grout Stain Whitener** provides the next logical step toward a fully restored bathroom.

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