

# Ideal Humidity for Indoor Tomato Plants

Growing your tomato plants indoors is a practical way to control the surrounding temperature for the best fruiting and overall growth. Plants kept between 70 and 80 degrees Fahrenheit during the day have the best chances at growing strong. Your humidity levels also play a significant role in determining successful tomato growth. Specific moisture levels must be maintained to prevent stunted growth and disease.



Humidity meters placed near tomato plants help you monitor moisture levels 24-hours a day.

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## Humidity Range

Daytime ideal humidity levels range between 80 percent and 90 percent for indoor tomato plants. In contrast, nighttime moisture levels range slightly lower, between 65 percent and 75 percent. Because the majority of the tomato fruit is made of water, the plant must use water to nourish its stems and leaves, along with bolstering its fruit cultivation. Transpiration occurs along the leaves to transfer water molecules between the moist air and the plant for optimal water nourishment; the roots alone cannot supply enough water to the plant for a plentiful fruit set.

## Excessive Moisture

Humidity levels that exceed the ideal range essentially suffocate the tomato plant. Transpiration processes cannot function or evaporate as effectively since the surrounding air is saturated with water molecules; tomato plants overheat from lack of evaporative cooling. Fruit and plant growth becomes stunted, and stressed plants become more vulnerable to pests and pathogens, especially if raised in a greenhouse with other plants. Careful observation of your indoor environment allows you to pinpoint when moisture levels are too high. Obvious condensation across leaves and other nearby surfaces is a warning that the environment needs a humidity-level reduction.

## Dry Conditions

Although you may have the correct indoor temperature, any long periods of dry air around the tomato plants make them susceptible to flower drop. Blossoms break away from the plant before they even have a chance to open completely. Using a humidity meter near your tomato plants helps you maintain the correct moisture levels. Keeping the air moist prevents the blossom drop, as well as retaining a normal fruit set. Any change to the climate reflects directly in the plant's growth; once the temperature and moisture levels change for the better, the plant appears with larger fruits and vigorous growth.

## Staking and Cage Consideration

Tomatoes must be kept off of the soil to prevent fruit rot and disease infiltration. Most gardeners use mesh cages or stakes to support growing tomato vines in containers. Not only does this prevent fruit problems, but the vines have more air circulation surrounding their leaves for optimal transpiration. Because you need to arrange the vines on the support so

that you can comfortably grab ripe fruits, this spacing allows for the best evaporative cooling within an ideal humidity range.

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