

Portland House,
Oak Green,
Earl Road,
Stanley Green
Business Park,
Cheadle Hulme,
Manchester,
SK8 6QL

145 - 157 St John Street,
London,
EC1V 4PY

www.tace.co.uk

t: +44 (0)161 486 0429
f: +44 (0)161 486 0488

t: +44 (0) 207 608 5196

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Keeping Cool – Natural Ventilation
TACE003

KEEPING COOL IN HOT WEATHER

Introduction

Comfort is a very specific term and unfortunately we all have different perceptions of what a 'comfortable environment' can be. Naturally ventilated spaces, although perceived to be uncomfortable can be in cases far more effective than artificially created environments using air conditioning.

This small leaflet addresses some of the issues with these spaces and provides some useful tips on keeping your naturally ventilated space cool and comfortable.



KEEP YOUR WORKSPACE COOL

1

Turn off any unnecessary equipment, including lights, on or near your desk (turn off rather than to standby if possible) to reduce heat gains.

2

Try to keep direct sunlight off yourself and your workspace – use window blinds if provided. If you cannot keep out of the sun, ask if shading can be provided or if it is possible to work in a more shaded area.

3

Avoid leaving any equipment on standby, especially overnight.



KEEP YOURSELF COOL

4

Within the limits of acceptable office dress, try to wear lightweight, breathable, loose clothing where possible. You can ask the management if they will relax any requirement for formal office dress in hot conditions.

5

Drink plenty of fluids – warm or cool drinks help keep you cool better than very cold ones.

6

Take regular breaks in a cooler part of the building if possible.

7

If you can, schedule physically demanding tasks for cooler parts of the day, i.e. early morning or evening.

8

If flexible working hours and/or home-working are allowed, try to vary your traveling and working times to avoid traveling in the rush hour or working during the hottest part of the day. If they are not currently allowed, discuss their introduction with management.



KEEP THE WORKPLACE COOL

9

Check that the heating is switched off, especially during hot spells in the spring or autumn. Tell your facilities managers if it is still on.

10

If your workplace is not air conditioned, open windows can reduce the build up of humidity and increase air movement. You will get more air movement if you open windows on both sides of the building. In windy conditions it is better to have all the windows open a little rather than a few open a lot.

It is important in naturally ventilated spaces to optimize the use of openable windows.

11

On summer days, open windows as soon as you begin work, although it may be cool at the start of the day, the benefits will be felt towards the middle and later parts of the day.

12

If windows have trickle vents within them keep them open all day, this will provide much needed fresh air to increase concentration and overall well being.

13

Portable or desk fans help give increased air movement and a local cooling effect where there is no air conditioning but remember to switch them off when you leave.

14

Avoid or reduce the use of non-essential heat and moisture producing equipment in break/communal areas, such as ovens, microwaves, coffee machines etc.

15

Ask your facilities managers to provide an action list of the best ways to keep the building cool – e.g., to open blinds again in the evening before leaving for home, or open secure ventilators etc

16

When leaving the room for lunch leave doors open into corridor or unheated spaces this will provide boosted ventilation and coolth.



BENEFITS OF KEEPING COOL

Utilising natural sources within buildings can provide a comfortable environment in which we can all benefit. As naturally ventilated spaces have no electrical requirements, no energy is consumed, reducing the occupiers energy costs, reducing CO² emission which affect global warming and increasing the efficiency of the building.

Working in a natural environment which requires no adaptation and nominal energy costs, is much more preferable to everybody.



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