Mold in a humidifier — the two sides card

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The parts, and what the manual says to do about each

PART	DOES IT COME APART	WHAT THE MANUAL SAYS TO DO	DOCUMENT
Water tank	Yes - lifts off the base	Pour out, rinse, soak with vinegar for scale, wipe with a cloth and cotton swab, dry completely	Top-fill ultrasonic manual
Top cover	Yes	Remove and wash	Top-fill ultrasonic manual
Mist tube	Yes - press the tab and pull it out	Rinse, dry, and press it back until the tab clicks into place	Top-fill ultrasonic manual
Transducer	No - stays in the base	Clean with a cleaning brush and white vinegar; the manual names it in the troubleshooting table	Top-fill ultrasonic manual
Mist outlet	No - stays in the base	Wipe with a tissue or cloth, regularly; do not cover it while the unit runs	Top-fill ultrasonic manual
Water outlet valve assembly	No - stays in the base	Clean with vinegar; named as the fix when the outlet is blocked by mineral build-up	Top-fill ultrasonic manual
Base chamber	The tank comes off it; the base stays on the desk	Rinse with room-temperature water, soak for scale, dry with a cloth - never immerse it, never put it in a dishwasher	Top-fill ultrasonic manual
Sealing ring	No - it sits inside the tank	Check it is seated, and clean it if needed	Top-fill ultrasonic manual
Nebulizer	No	Clean with a damp cloth or cotton swab after soaking	Manufacturer support answers

The room, which is the other half of the job

ROOM FACTOR	WHAT THE SOURCE SAYS	DOCUMENT
Relative humidity	Keep below 60%, ideally between 30% and 50%	EPA mould course
Relative humidity	Do not exceed 50%	EPA humidifier care
Relative humidity	If the room is over 60%, use the low mist setting or turn the unit off	Top-fill ultrasonic manual
Drying window	Get wet material dry within 24 to 48 hours	EPA mould course
Cleaning interval	Clean portable humidifiers every third day; empty, wipe dry and refill daily	EPA humidifier care
Cleaning product	3% hydrogen peroxide where the maker specifies no product; rinse through with several changes of tap water	EPA humidifier care
Cleaning interval	Clean every week	Top-fill ultrasonic manual
Storage	If unused for a week or longer, do not leave water inside; dry it and store it	Top-fill ultrasonic manual

Two sides, not one job. The four rows marked in colour are the parts that do not come apart. The manuals give them the shortest methods of any: a brush, a cloth, a cotton swab. Nothing on this card tells you to soak them, and the base must never be immersed.

What no document says. No source we read gives an interval for how long mould takes to appear in a humidifier, and none establishes that a musty smell is mould. A smell is a reason to go and look at the parts above, not a diagnosis of what is growing.

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