Humidifier not working — triage card

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STATE	THE CHECK	WHAT IT POINTS AT	THE ACTION	PRINTED IN
1. The light is off	Is the socket live, is there water in the tank, is the unit flat, is the intake on carpet	One of four printed causes	Check the four in that order; three of them are not electrical	Honeywell HUL535 table
2a. Runs, housing warm, no mist	Put your hand on the housing while it runs	The mist tube is not seated	Press the mist tube down until the tab clicks	Levoit Dual 100 table
2b. Runs, housing cool, no mist	Same touch, after a cleaning	Scale on the nebulizer, a low setting, or detergent residue	Soak the nebulizer in white vinegar, raise the setting, rinse until there is no foam	Honeywell; Levoit
2c. Runs, water above the mark in the base	Look at the level in the base	Too much water in the base	Pour the excess out and let the tank feed the base	Levoit Dual 100 table
3a. Water inside the base	Where is the water	Not a leak — overfilled	Pour the excess out	Levoit Dual 100 table
3b. Water under the machine	Where is the water	One of five assembly points	Cap tight; ring inside the cap seated; tank on its marks; float on its peg; mist tube seated	Honeywell; Levoit; Crane
3c. Water on walls, windows, housing	Where is the water	Condensation, not a leak	Turn the mist down, open the door, move it off the wall, aim the outlet away from the window	Honeywell; Levoit; EPA
3d. Water under the machine, tank dropped	Has the tank been dropped or knocked	A cracked tank	Replace the tank — one of only two causes needing a new part	Honeywell safety notice
Never worked since unboxing	Look for a loose part in the base	The float and its cap can detach in shipping	White washer onto the tall thin peg, cap pressed down until it snaps	Crane support page

Why the order matters. Four of the five kinds of cause cost nothing to rule out, and two of them need no tool. Cleaning is the step that takes longest, and detergent residue left behind is itself on the list of causes — so it comes last, and it ends with rinsing until there is no foam.

The ceiling. The EPA asks that indoor relative humidity not exceed 50 percent. One manufacturer manual gives a comfortable band of 40 to 60 percent. The part both support is 40 to 50 percent. If water condenses on windows or walls, the answer is to lower the output, not to replace a seal.

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