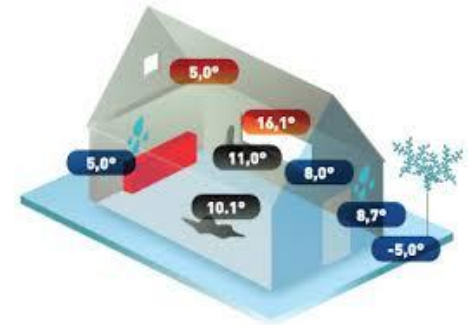
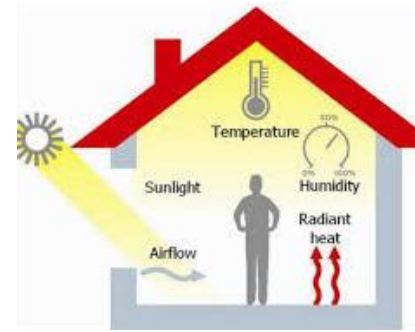


# CIVIL 212

## Indoor Climate

Fall 2025



# Thermodynamic processes in HVAC

9 October, 2025



Human-Oriented Built Environment Lab

Website: [hobel.epfl.ch](http://hobel.epfl.ch)

Twitter: [@licinadusan](https://twitter.com/licinadusan)



# EPFL

**Assoc. Prof. Dusan Licina, Ph.D.**

School of Architecture, Civil and

Environmental Engineering

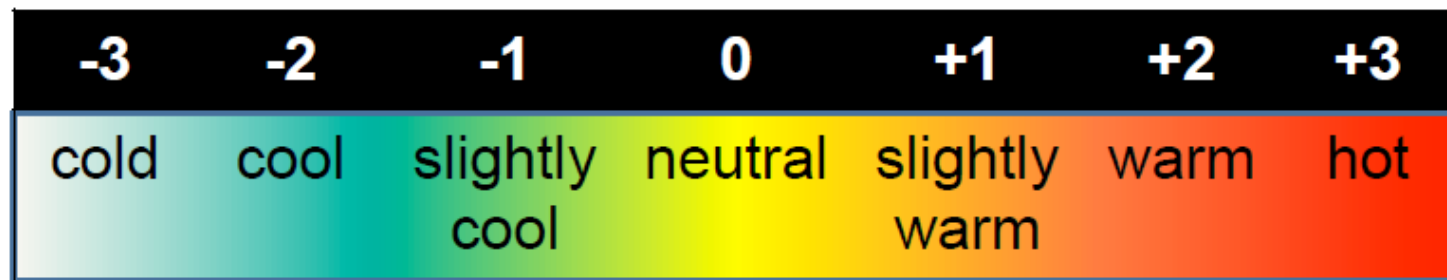
École polytechnique fédérale de Lausanne

[dusan.licina@epfl.ch](mailto:dusan.licina@epfl.ch)

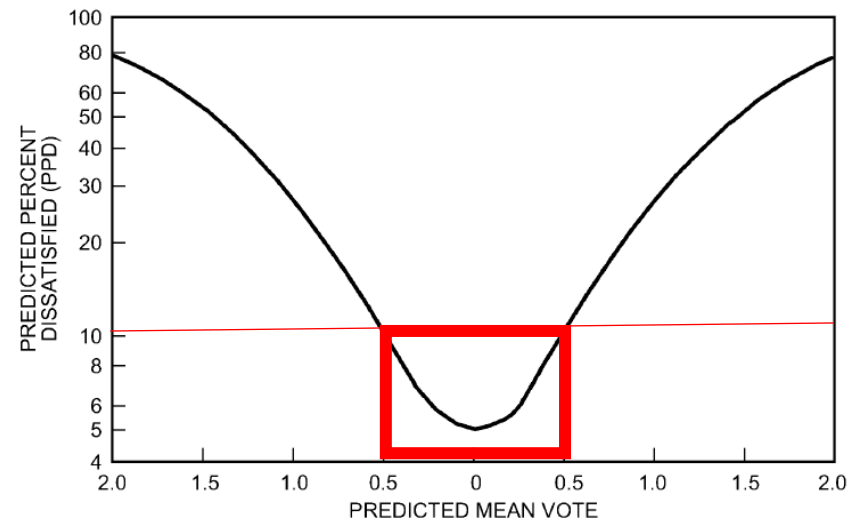
# Last time we covered...

We can assess thermal comfort in two ways:

- **Actual thermal comfort** (through Actual Mean Vote)
- **Predicted thermal comfort** (through Predicted Mean Vote)



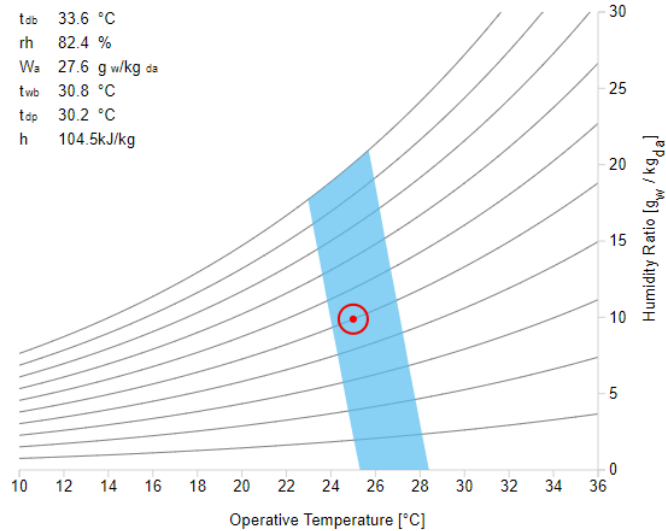
$-0.5 < PMV < +0.5$   
↓  
PPD < 10 %



# To predict thermal comfort, we can use:

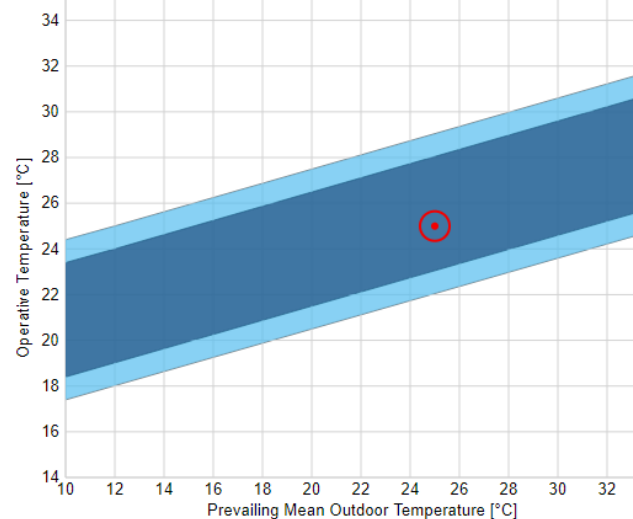
- **PMV/PPD (Static) model:**

- steady-state
- 4 environmental factors
- 2 personal factors



- **Adaptive model:**

- Behavioral adaptation
- Physiological adaptation
- Psychological adaptation



# Homework, exercise #5

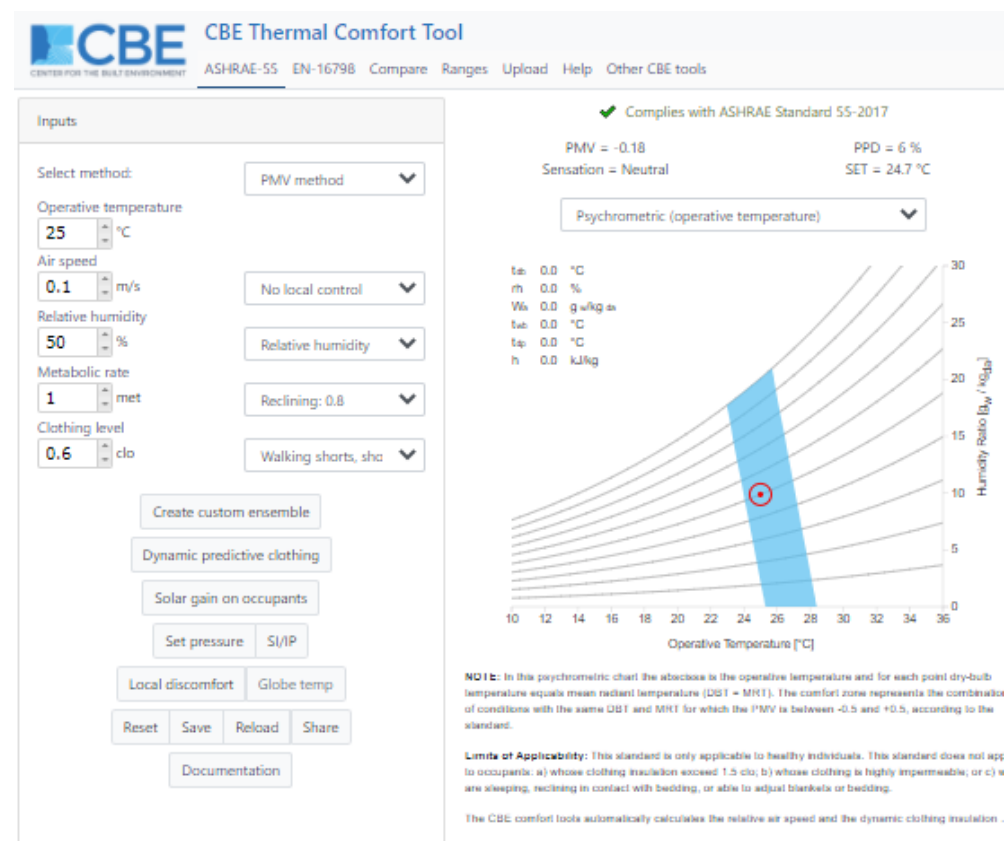
During the average summer month, indoor operative temperature is 24.5 °C, while outdoor temperature is 27.5 °C.

Q.1. According to ASHRAE, what is the needed range of operative temperature in order to preserve 90% acceptability limits?

**Solution:** 90% acceptability limits = Operative temperature: 23.8 to 28.8 °C

Q.2. According to ASHRAE, which category of compliance is met?

**Solution:** ASHRAE has no categories (in EN-16798 it would be the second category)



# Update on the midterm exam – What to study?

---

- If you understand the lecture notes, you will do well.
- The exam questions will be a combination of:
  - A few **quiz questions** with multiple choice answers based on theory. This will count for less points compared to other questions.
  - **Calculations** (be sure that you fully understand all the calculation examples from the classes, including general psychrometrics and psychrometrics of HVAC processes, unit conversion, CBE thermal comfort tool for prediction of thermal comfort, sensible and latent heat gains and losses through intentional and unintentional ventilation).
  - **Open-ended questions** (those you cannot answer with a simple “yes” or “no”, and instead require to critically think and to elaborate on your point). These question won’t necessarily have a single correct answer but will rather examine your perspective described in your own words.

# Update on the midterm exam – Info & Tips

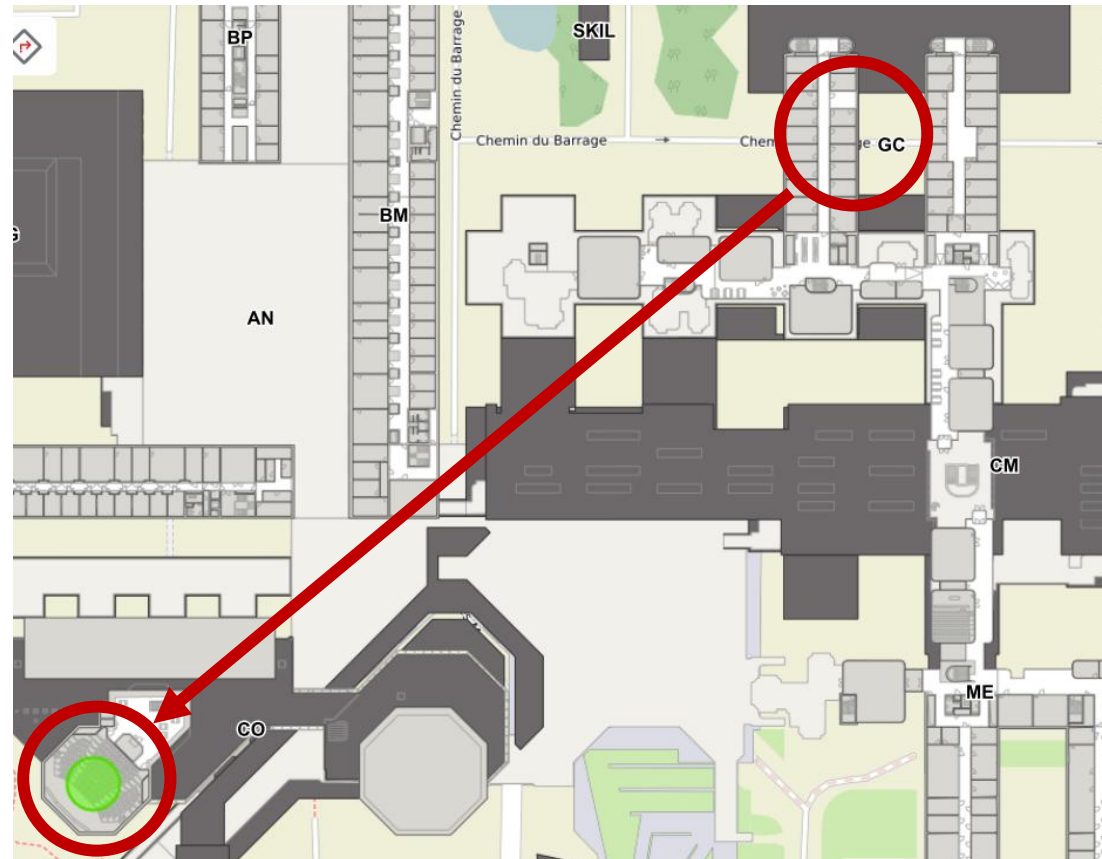
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- This will be an open book exam. You are free to use the lecture materials, but you must work on your own.
- Make sure that your calculators and psychometric charts are ready. You will also need a laptop to use CBE thermal comfort tool (make sure it's charged). The use of internet beyond the CBE tool is not allowed.
- Please be sure to show as much work as possible. I may give partial credit for it (in case your end result is incorrect).
- Some of open-ended questions won't have necessarily a single correct answer. For some of these questions how you set up the problem is just as important as whether or not you ultimately get the right answer.
- Please use English language only.
- If you have any questions about the wording of the questions, please raise hand. If your question is relevant to the entire group, I will repeat it outloud.

# Other information about the exam

---

- When will the exam take place?
  - 16 October 2025, at standard time 17:15 – 19:00h
  - Please try to come a bit earlier if possible (~17:00h)
- Where will the exam take place?
  - Amphitheatre CO 3



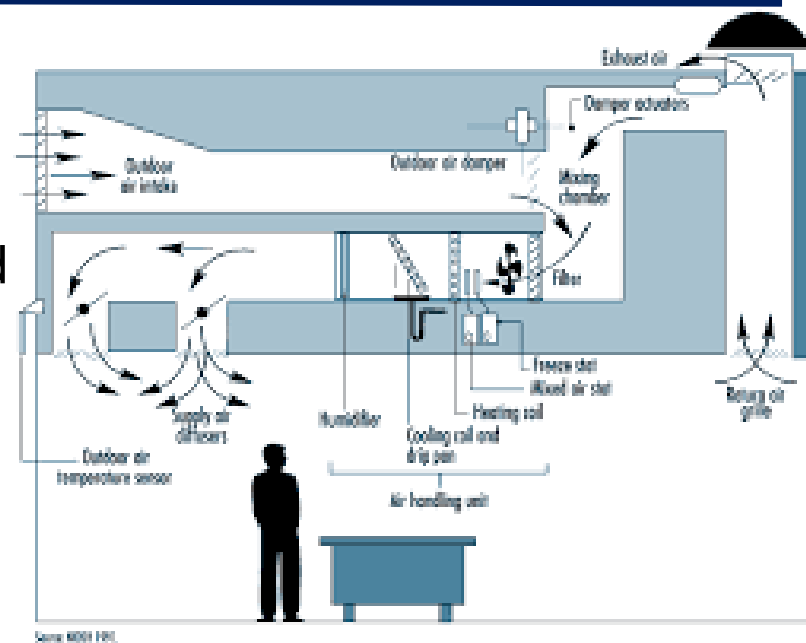
# Today's objectives

---

- Introduction to HVAC systems
  - Psychometric processes in HVAC systems
  - Examples & exercises

# Key functions of HVAC systems

- **Thermal comfort**
  - Heating or Cooling air
  - Dehumidification of warm and humid
  - Humidification of cold and dry air
- **Ventilation** (outdoor air)
- **Air pollution removal** (filtration)



**Indirect impact**  
on Indoor Climate

**HVAC systems**

**Direct impact**  
on Indoor  
Climate

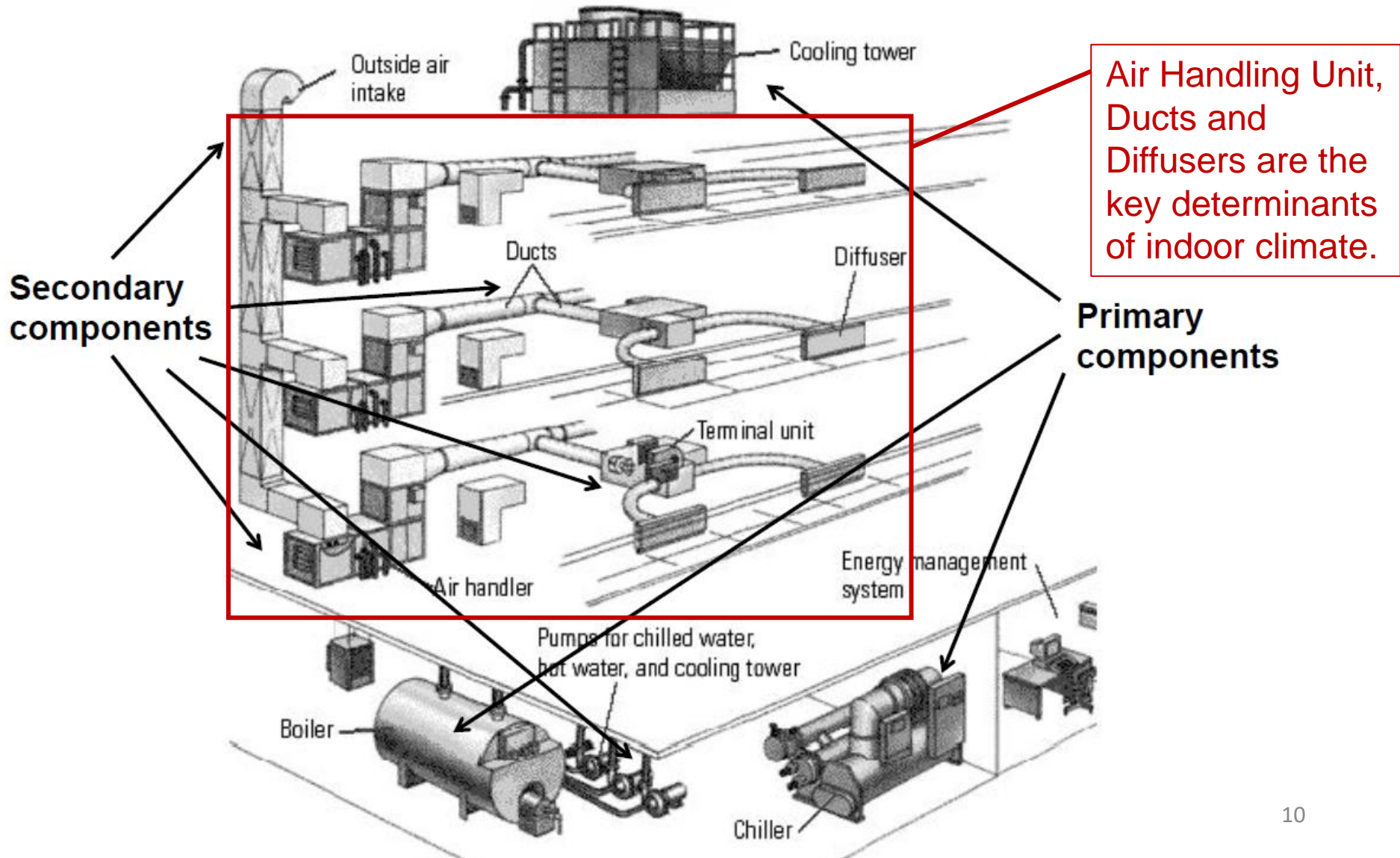
**First stage**

- Chillers and condenser units
- Cooling towers
- Evaporative coolers

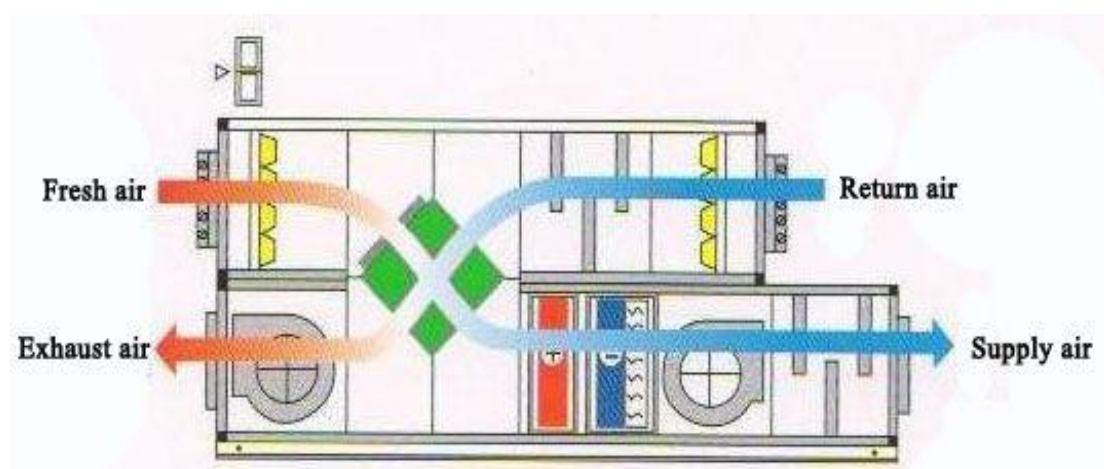
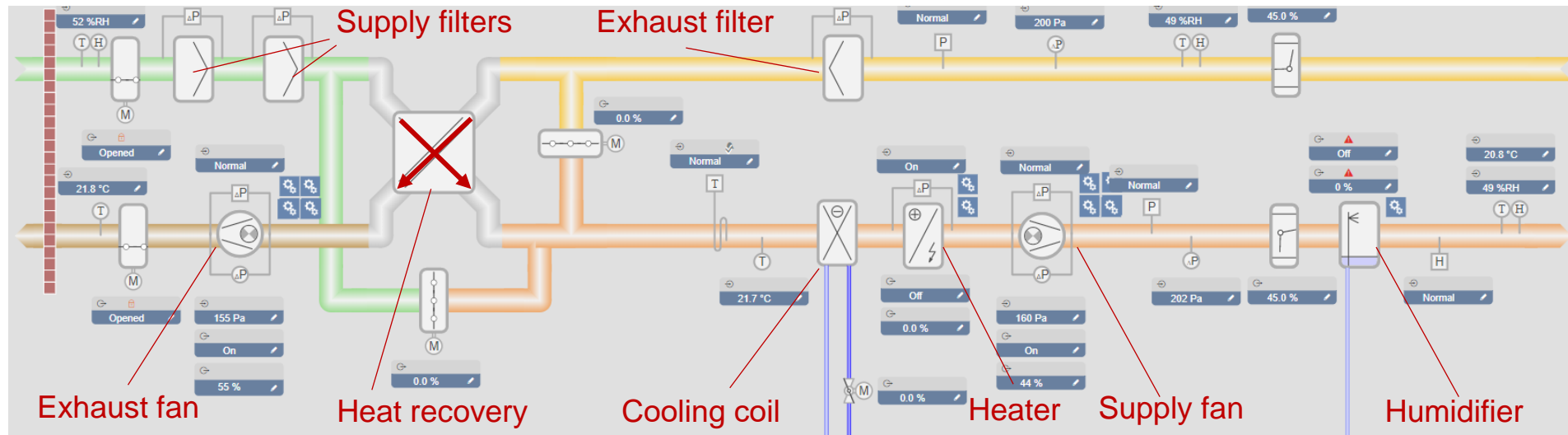
**Second stage**

- Air Handling Units
- Distribution systems
  - both air (focus) and water

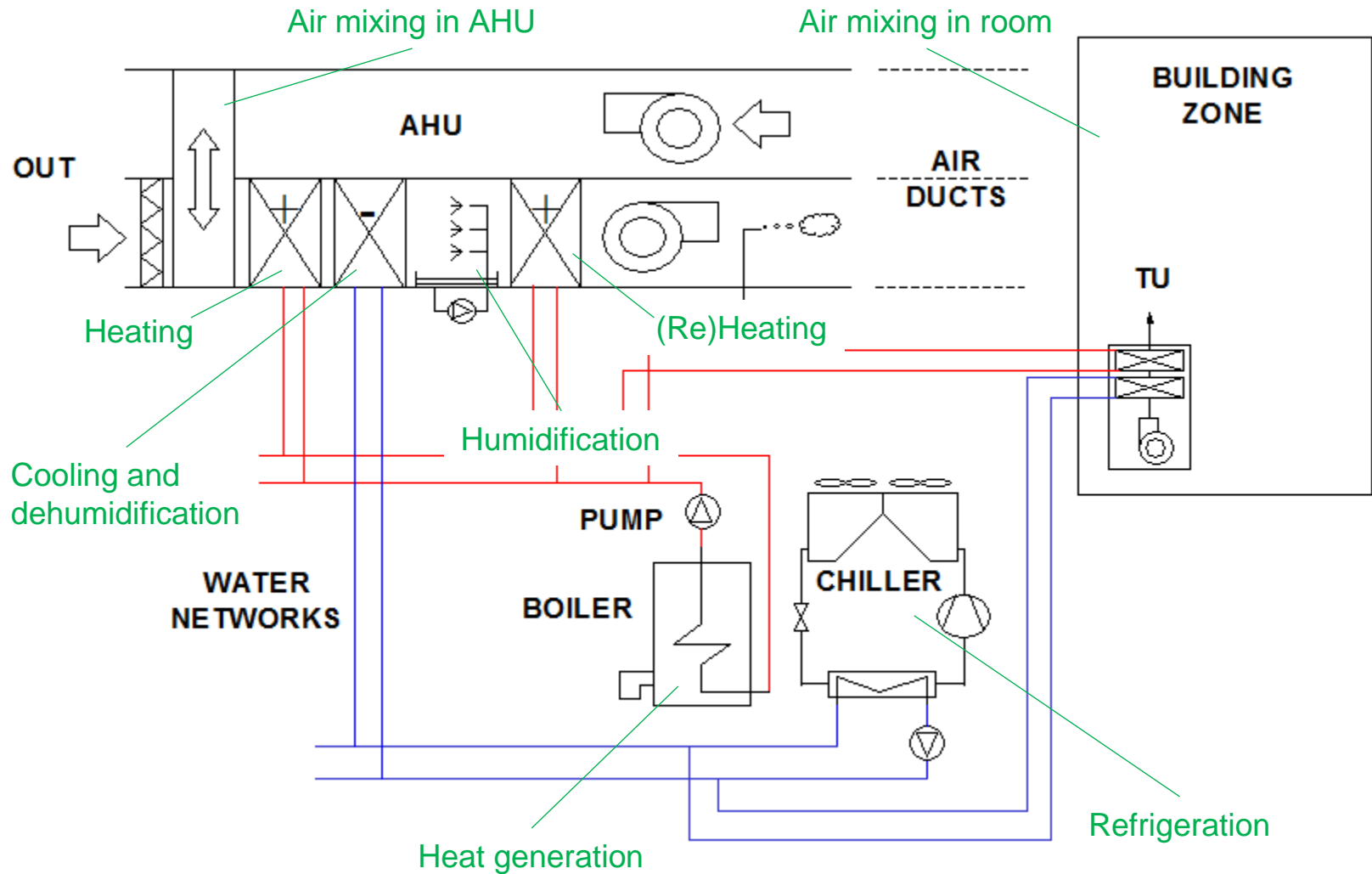
# Key components of an HVAC system



# Air Handling Unit (AHU) @ EPFL Fribourg

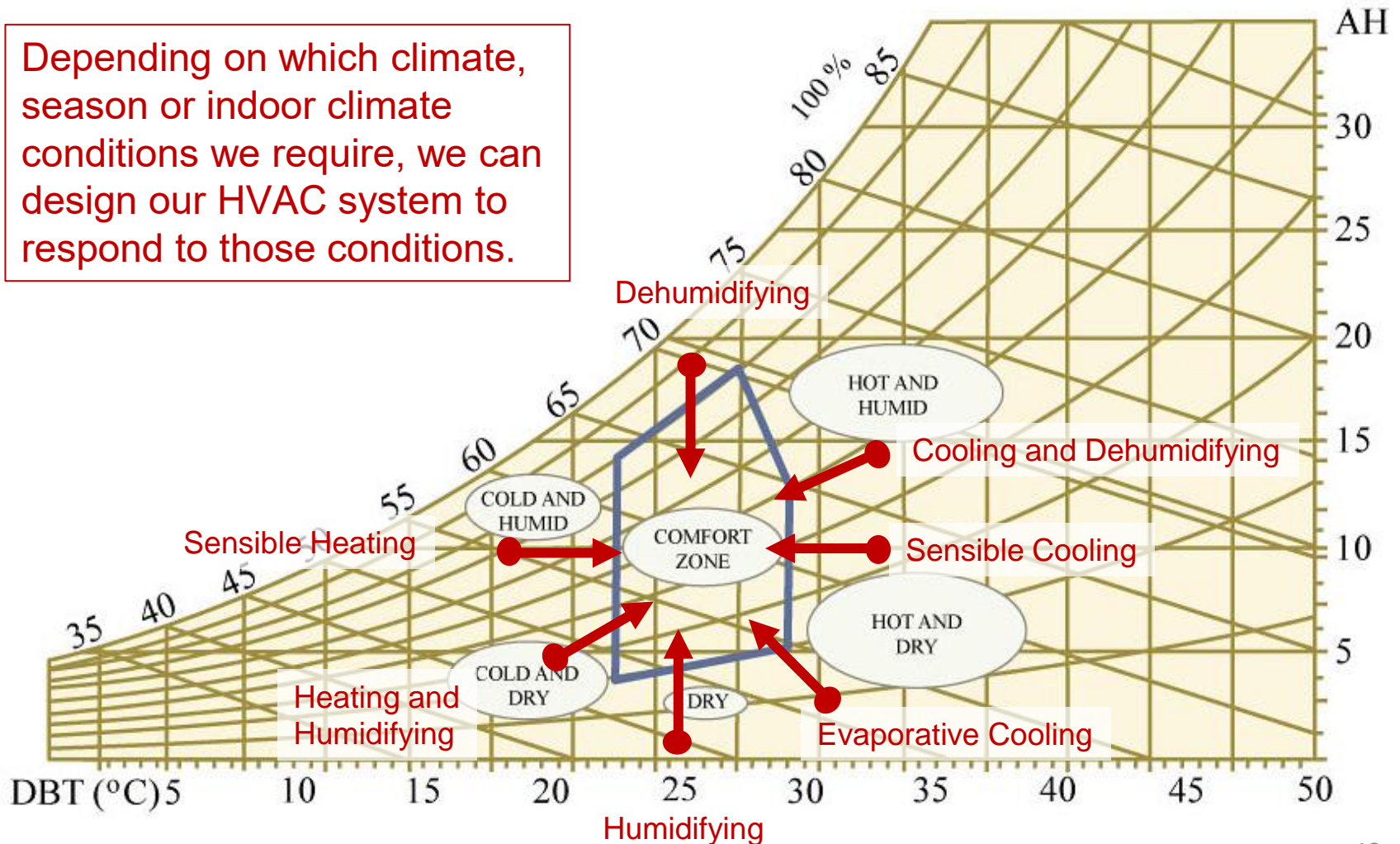


# What are the common psychrometric processes?



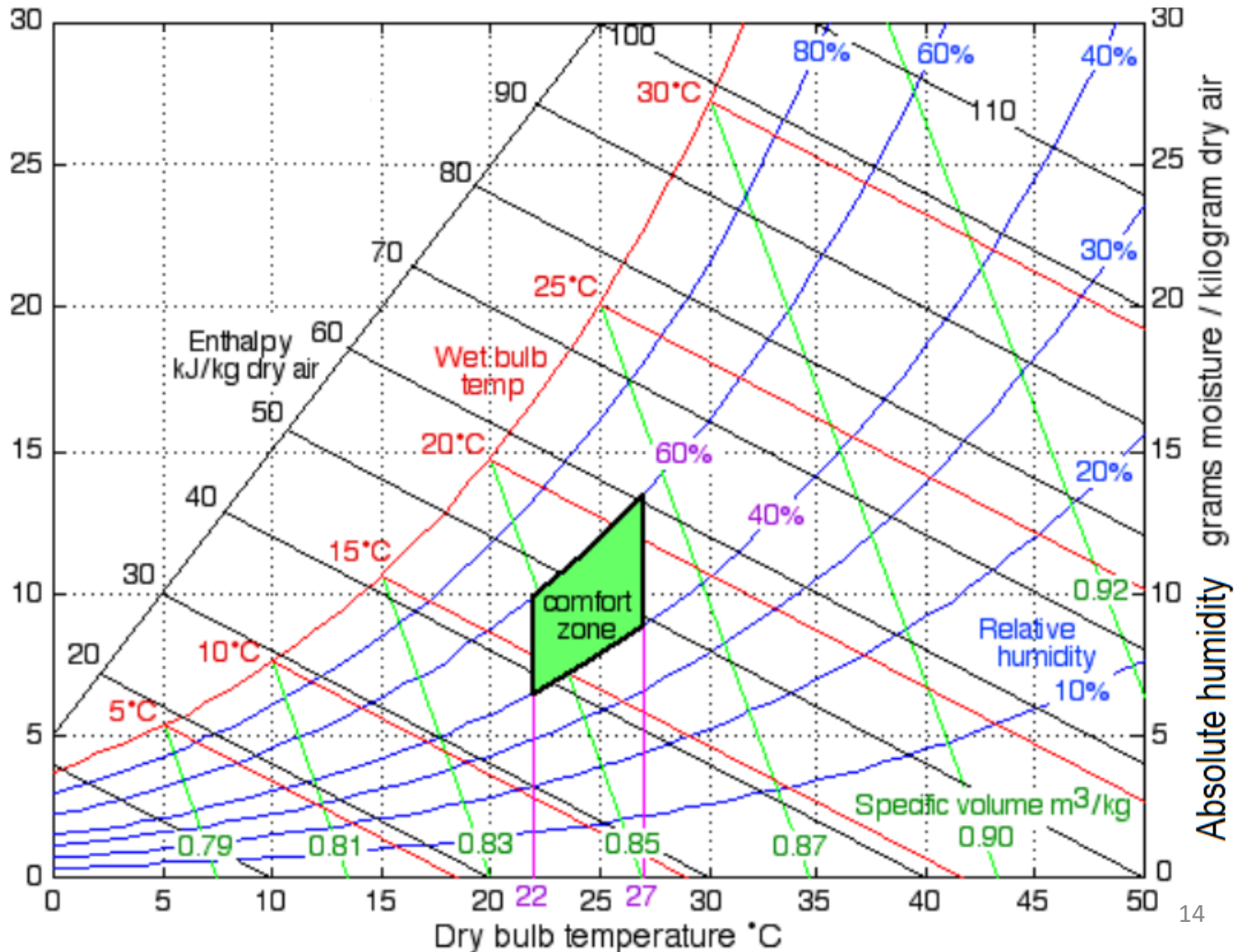
# How do we know which AHU components we need?

Depending on which climate, season or indoor climate conditions we require, we can design our HVAC system to respond to those conditions.



# The Psychrometric Chart and Air-Conditioning Processes

To refresh your knowledge on psychrometric chart  
revisit Lecture 2 and check out these YouTube videos:  
1. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=BCWnTNNcako>  
2. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=s7J6R9wECh8>





# Reminder: **Sensible** and **Latent** Heat basics

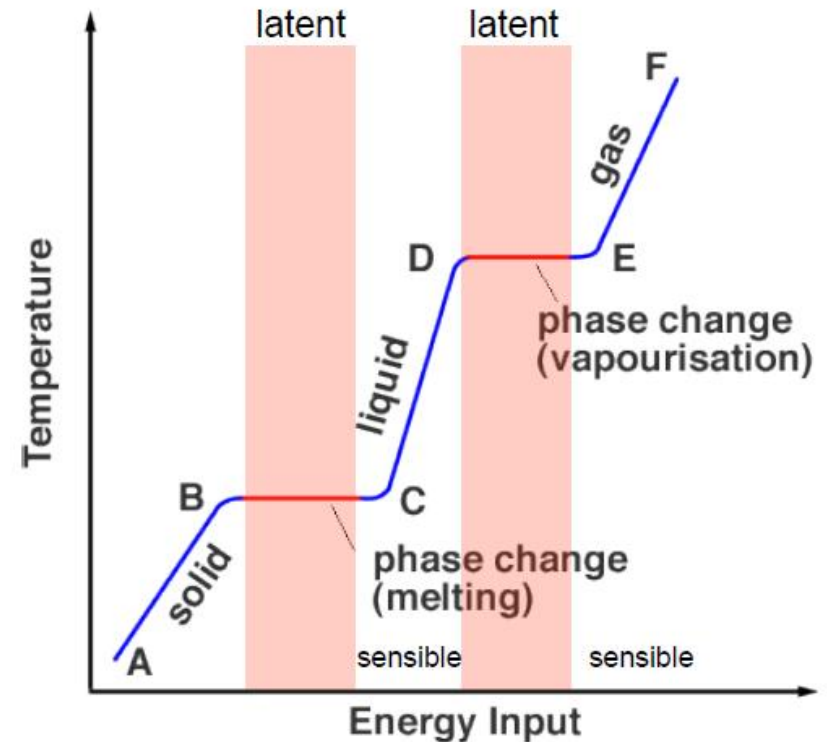
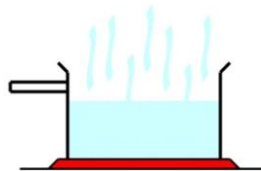
- **Sensible energy**

- Energy used to increase the velocity or vibrations of molecules (i.e., temperature)
- No phase change

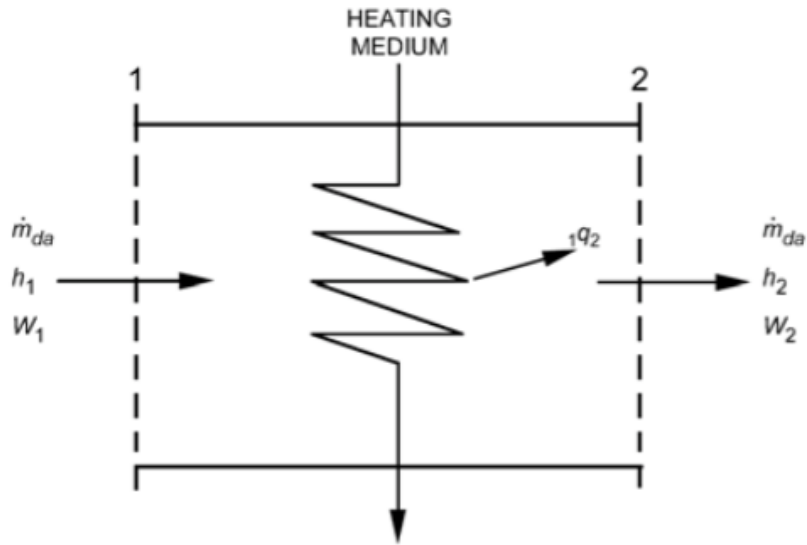


- **Latent energy**

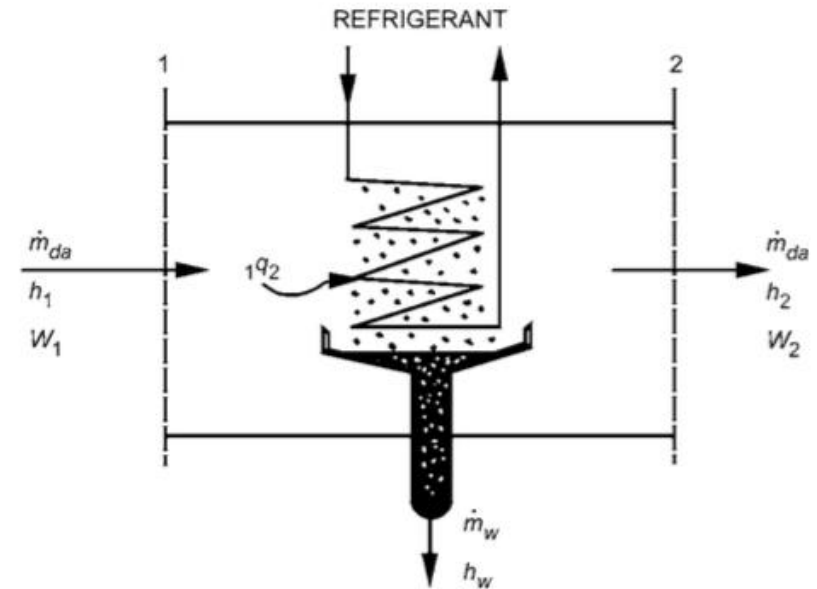
- The material-specific amount of energy given off (or taken up) during a state change
- Solid to liquid: heat of fusion
- Liquid to gas: heat of vaporization



# Generic equations for both heating and cooling processes



**Fig. 2 Schematic of Device for Heating Moist Air**



**Fig. 3 Schematic of Device for Cooling Moist Air**

$$Q_{1 \rightarrow 2} = \dot{m}_{da} (h_2 - h_1) \quad Q_{total} = \dot{m}_{da} (h_{exit} - h_{inlet})$$

$Q_{1-2}$  = total rate of heat transfer from state 1 to state 2 (W)

$\dot{m}_{da}$  = mass flow rate of dry air (kg<sub>da</sub>/s)

$h_{exit,2}$  = enthalpy at the exit (J/kg<sub>da</sub>)

$h_{inlet,1}$  = enthalpy at the inlet (J/kg<sub>da</sub>)

# Sensible and Latent heat transfer equations

$$Q_{sensible} = \dot{m}_{da} C_p (T_{exit} - T_{inlet}) = \rho_{da} \dot{V}_{da} C_p (T_{exit} - T_{inlet})$$

$Q_{sensible}$  = rate of sensible heat transfer (W)

$C_p$  = specific heat of air (J/kgK)

$\rho_{da}$  = dry air density (kg/m<sup>3</sup>)

$T_{inlet}$  = inlet temperature (K or °C)

$T_{exit}$  = exit temperature (K or °C)

For heating:  $Q_{sensible} > 0$

For cooling:  $Q_{sensible} < 0$

$$Q_{latent} = \dot{m}_{da} h_{fg} (W_{exit} - W_{inlet}) = \rho_{da} \dot{V}_{da} h_{fg} (W_{exit} - W_{inlet})$$

$Q_{latent}$  = rate of latent heat transfer (W)

$h_{fg}$  = enthalpy, or latent heat, of vaporization (J/kg)

\*  $h_{fg}$  = 2260 kJ/kg for water

$W_{inlet}$  = inlet humidity ratio (kg<sub>w</sub>/kg<sub>da</sub>)

$W_{exit}$  = exit humidity ratio (kg<sub>w</sub>/kg<sub>da</sub>)

For humidification:

$Q_{latent} > 0$

For dehumidification:

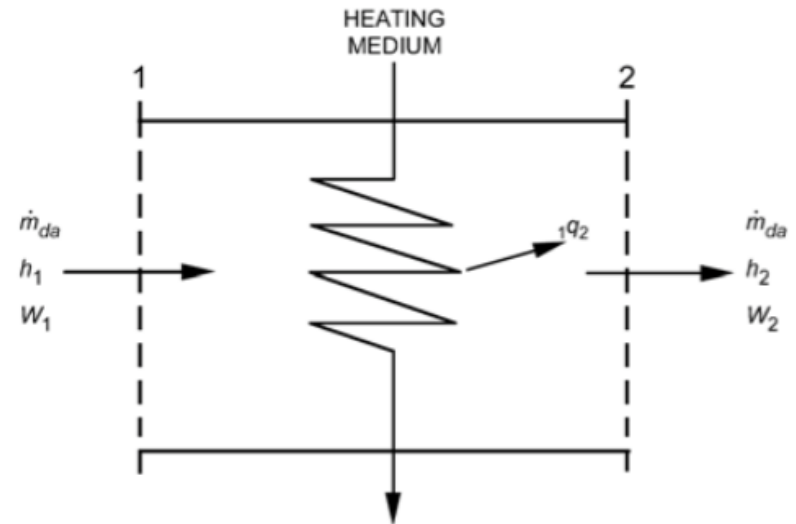
$Q_{latent} < 0$

## Example: Sensible heating (*or cooling*)

---

Air, saturated at 3 °C, enters a heating coil at a rate of 7'000 kg/s and air leaves the coil at 32 °C

- What is the added enthalpy?
- What is the rate of heat addition (Q)?



**Fig. 2** Schematic of Device for Heating Moist Air

# Sensible heating of warm & humid air

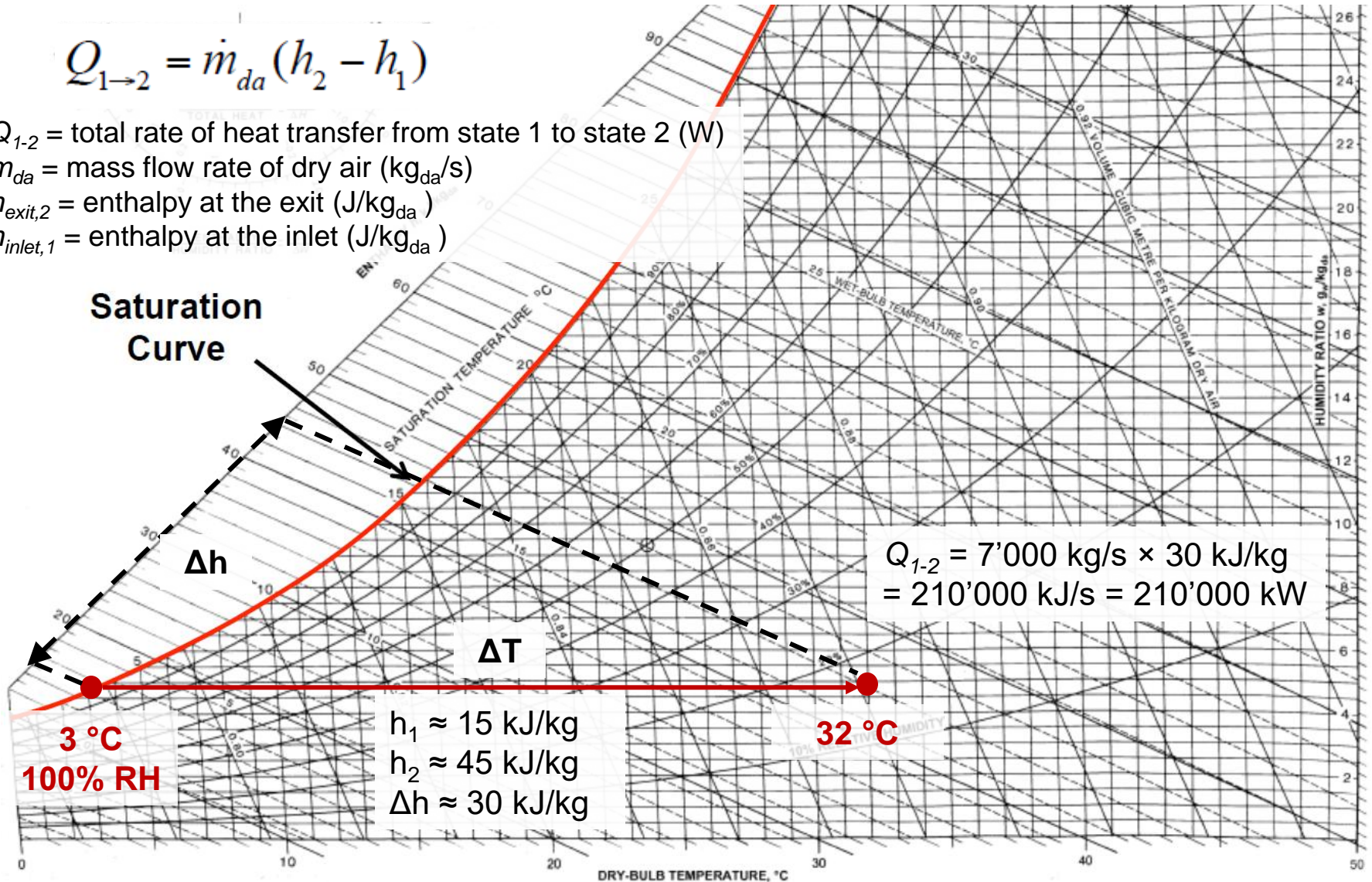
$$Q_{1 \rightarrow 2} = \dot{m}_{da} (h_2 - h_1)$$

$Q_{1-2}$  = total rate of heat transfer from state 1 to state 2 (W)

$\dot{m}_{da}$  = mass flow rate of dry air (kg<sub>da</sub>/s)

$h_{exit,2}$  = enthalpy at the exit (J/kg<sub>da</sub>)

$h_{inlet,1}$  = enthalpy at the inlet (J/kg<sub>da</sub>)



# Humidity: Why we must control it?

## Human health & comfort

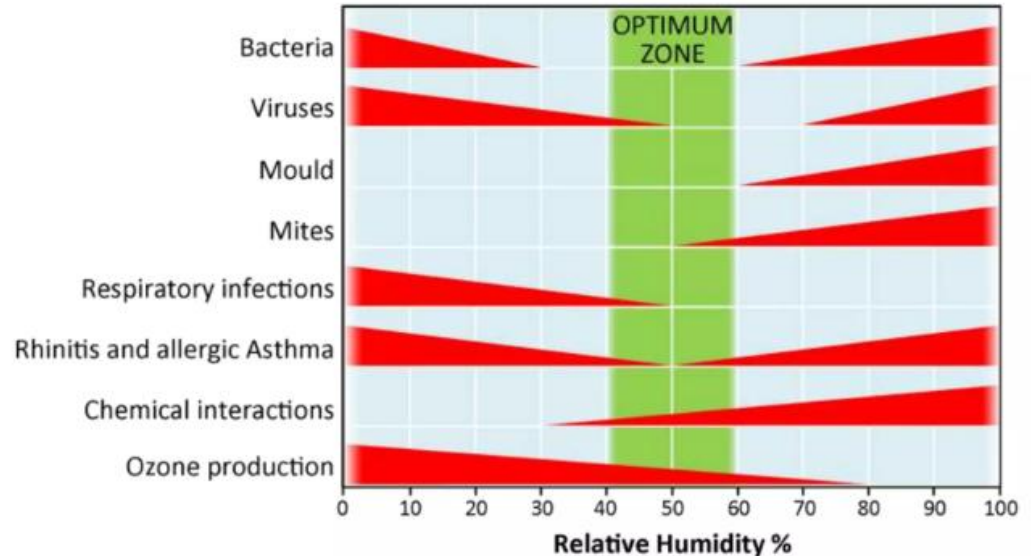
- 40–60% RH reduces airborne virus survival and transmission
- Too low → dry eyes, skin irritation, respiratory discomfort
- Too high → mold, dust mites, musty odors, sweating.

## Building & materials

- Hygroscopic materials (wood, paper, artworks) expand/contract → damage
- Condensation → corrosion, rot, and finish deterioration

## Safety & technology

- Low RH → electrostatic discharges (electronics, labs, cleanrooms)
- High RH → accelerates chemical reactions, metal corrosion



Source: Arundel, A.V., Sterling, E.M., Biggin, J.H., Sterling, T.D., *Environmental Health Perspectives* (1986)



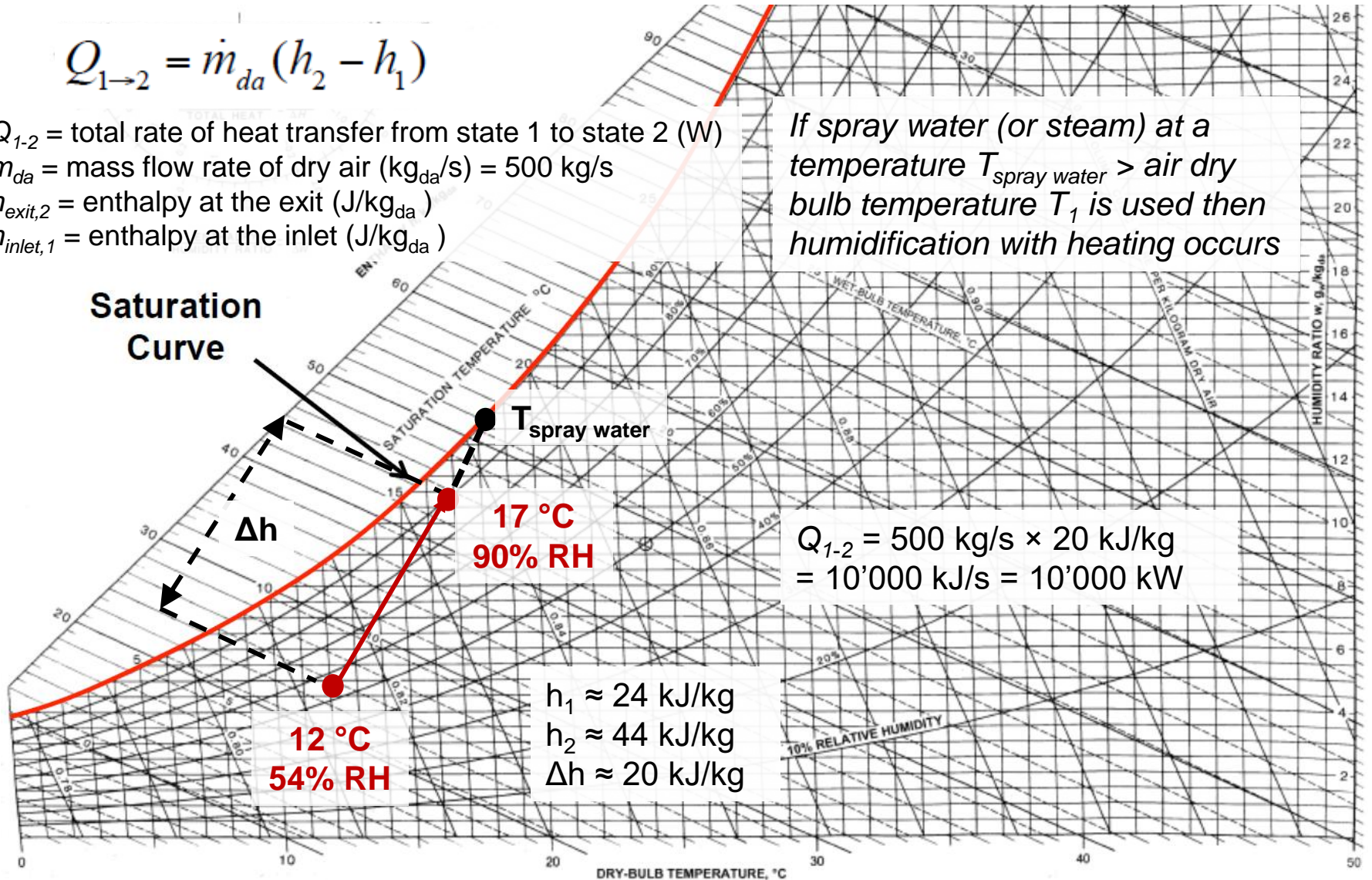
Mona Lisa  
Leonardo da Vinci

# Example: Humidification with heating

$$Q_{1 \rightarrow 2} = \dot{m}_{da} (h_2 - h_1)$$

$Q_{1-2}$  = total rate of heat transfer from state 1 to state 2 (W)  
 $\dot{m}_{da}$  = mass flow rate of dry air ( $\text{kg}_{da}/\text{s}$ ) = 500 kg/s  
 $h_{exit,2}$  = enthalpy at the exit ( $\text{J}/\text{kg}_{da}$ )  
 $h_{inlet,1}$  = enthalpy at the inlet ( $\text{J}/\text{kg}_{da}$ )

If spray water (or steam) at a temperature  $T_{\text{spray water}} >$  air dry bulb temperature  $T_1$  is used then humidification with heating occurs

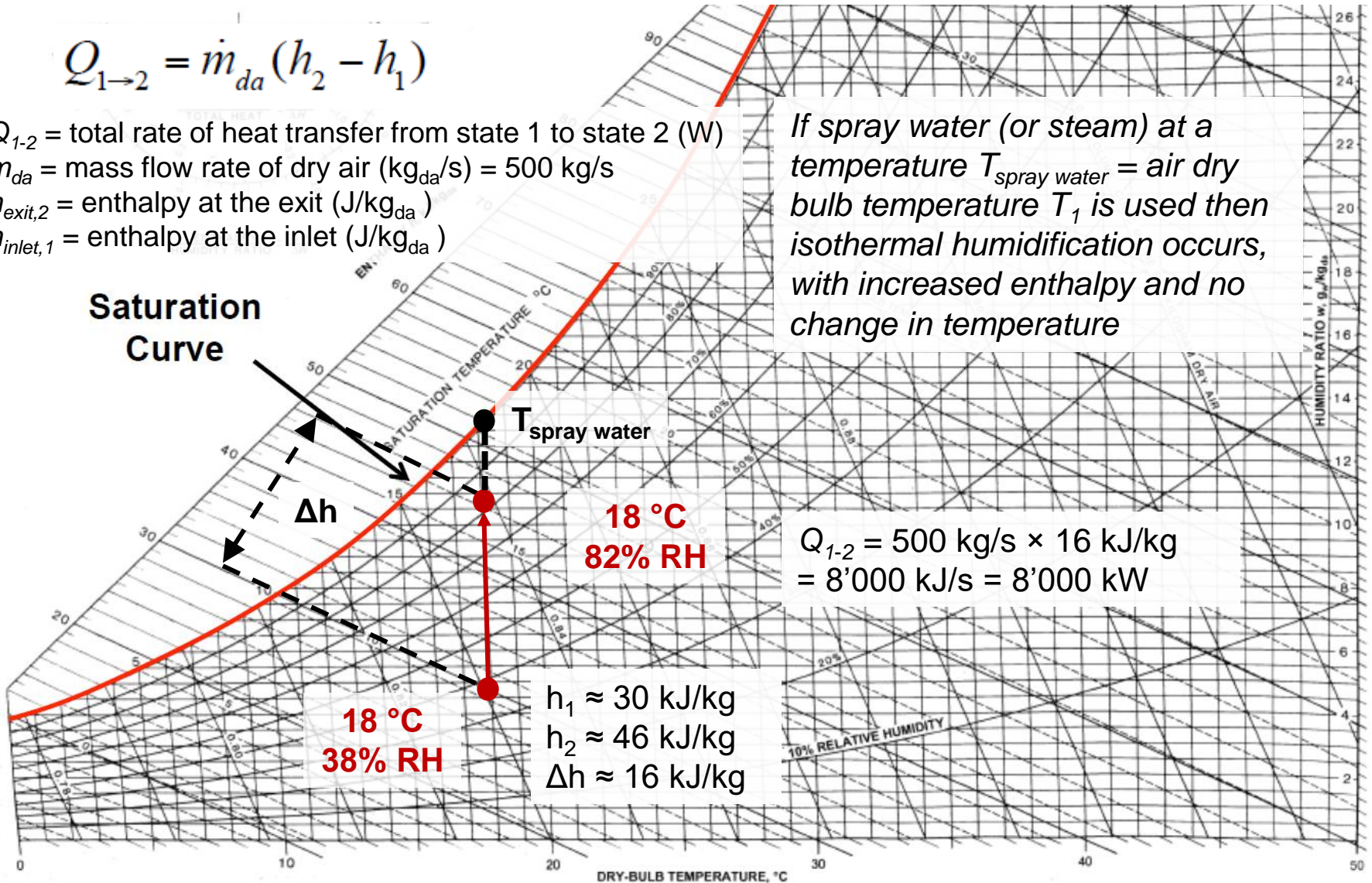


# Example: Isothermal humidification

$$Q_{1 \rightarrow 2} = \dot{m}_{da} (h_2 - h_1)$$

$Q_{1-2}$  = total rate of heat transfer from state 1 to state 2 (W)  
 $\dot{m}_{da}$  = mass flow rate of dry air ( $\text{kg}_{da}/\text{s}$ ) = 500 kg/s  
 $h_{exit,2}$  = enthalpy at the exit ( $\text{J}/\text{kg}_{da}$ )  
 $h_{inlet,1}$  = enthalpy at the inlet ( $\text{J}/\text{kg}_{da}$ )

If spray water (or steam) at a temperature  $T_{\text{spray water}} = \text{air dry bulb temperature } T_1$  is used then isothermal humidification occurs, with increased enthalpy and no change in temperature

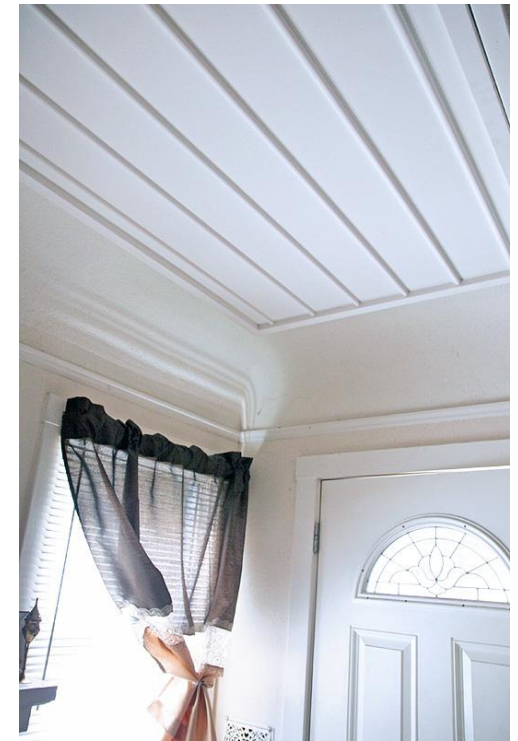
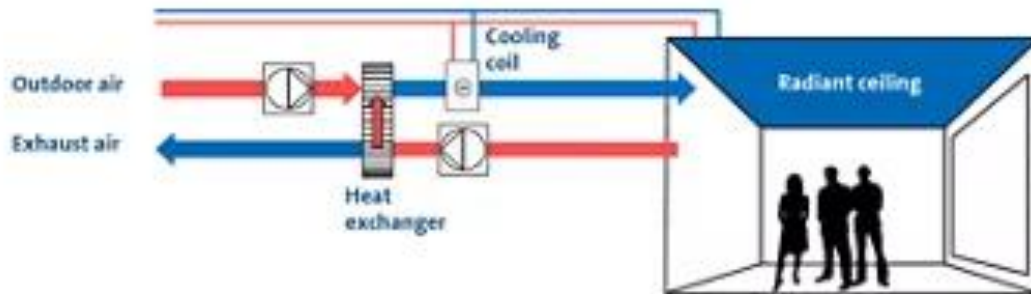


# Example: Sensible cooling

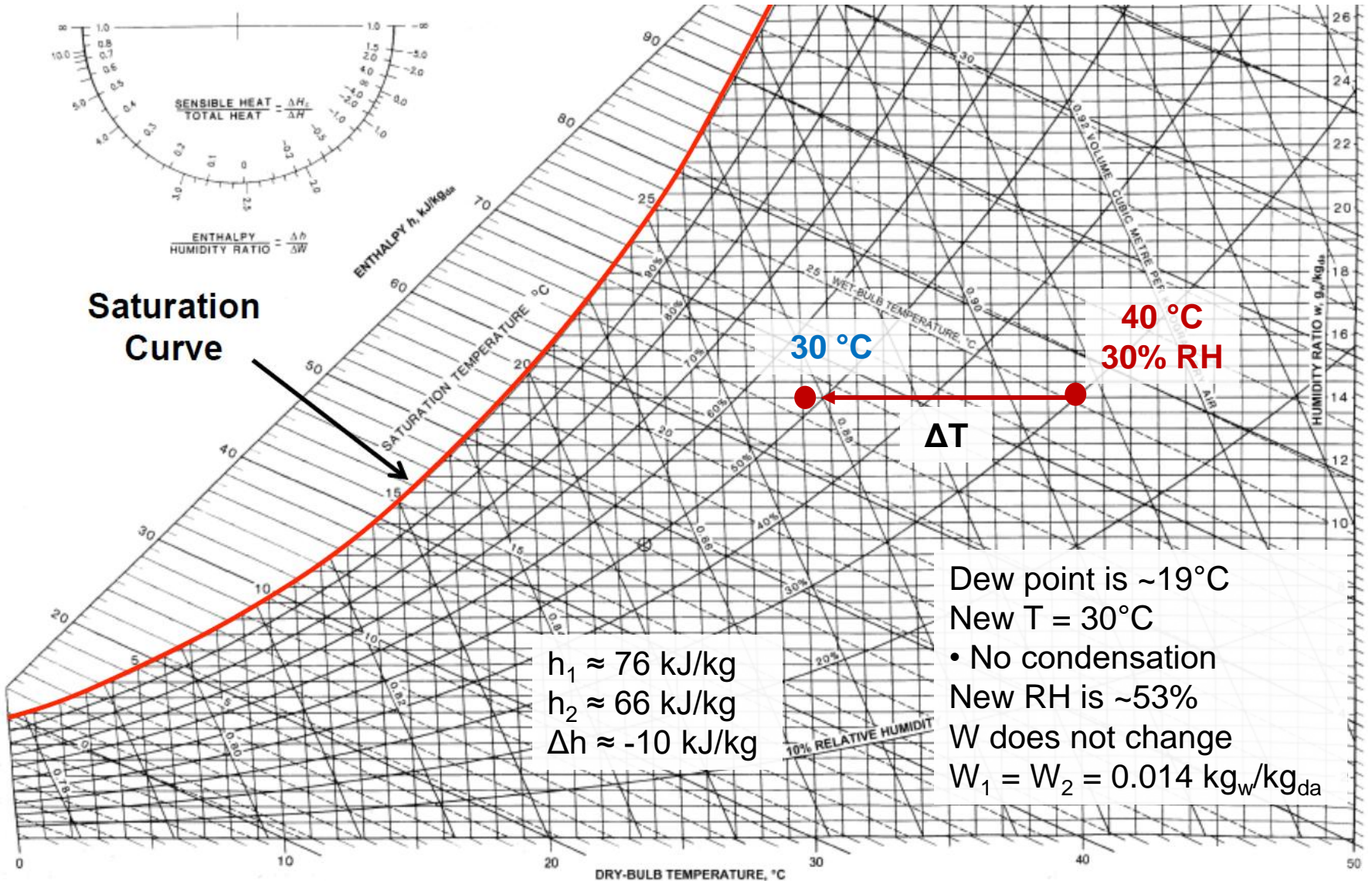
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Radiant ceiling panes cool the moist air from 40°C and 30% RH to 30°C without condensation

– What is the RH at W at the process end point?



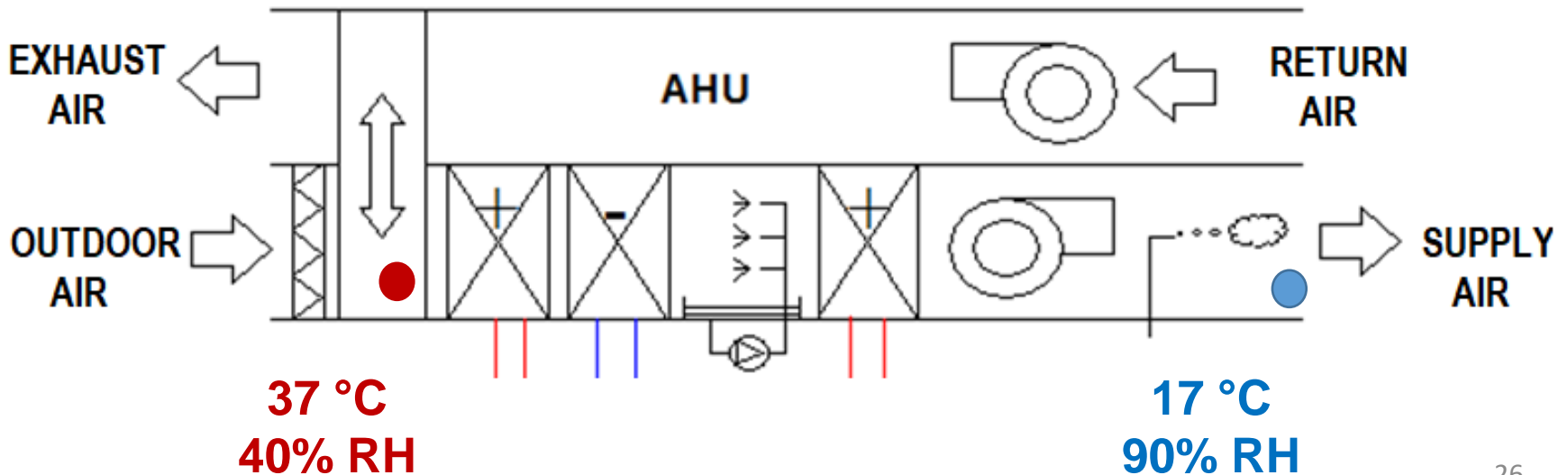
# Cooling and dehumidification of warm & humid air



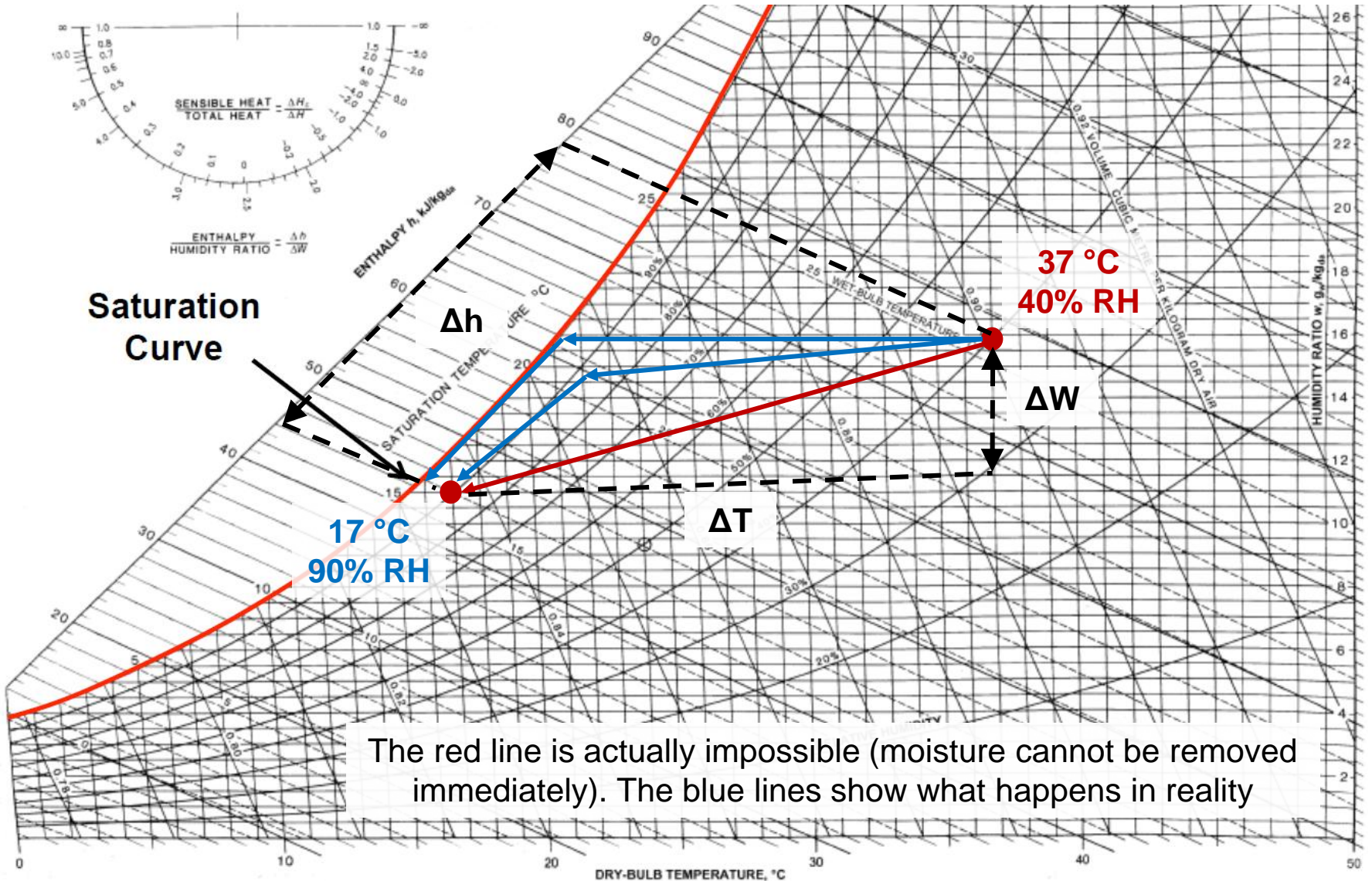
# Example 1: Cooling and dehumidification of warm & humid air

**Example:** Air flowing over a cooling coil

- Removing both moisture and heat
- Sensible + latent **cooling**



# Cooling and dehumidification of warm & humid air

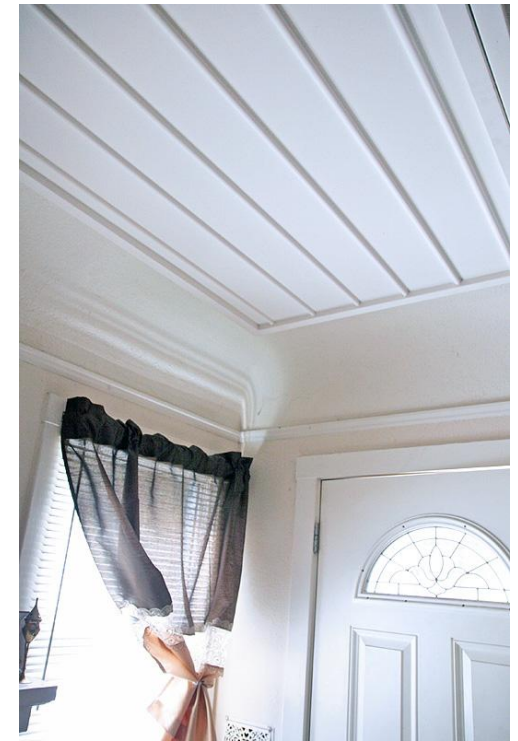
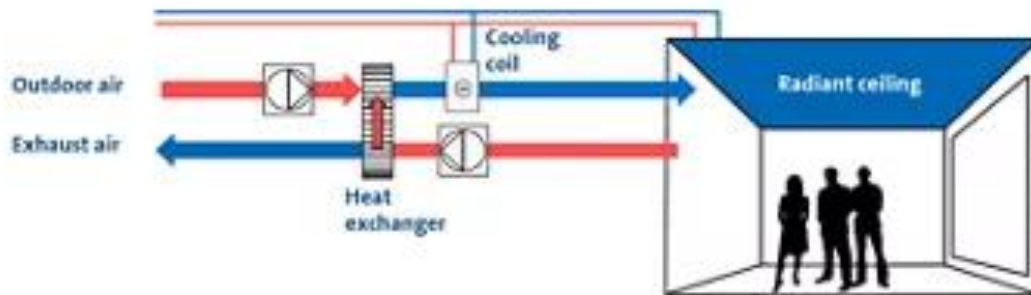


## Example 2: Sensible + latent cooling

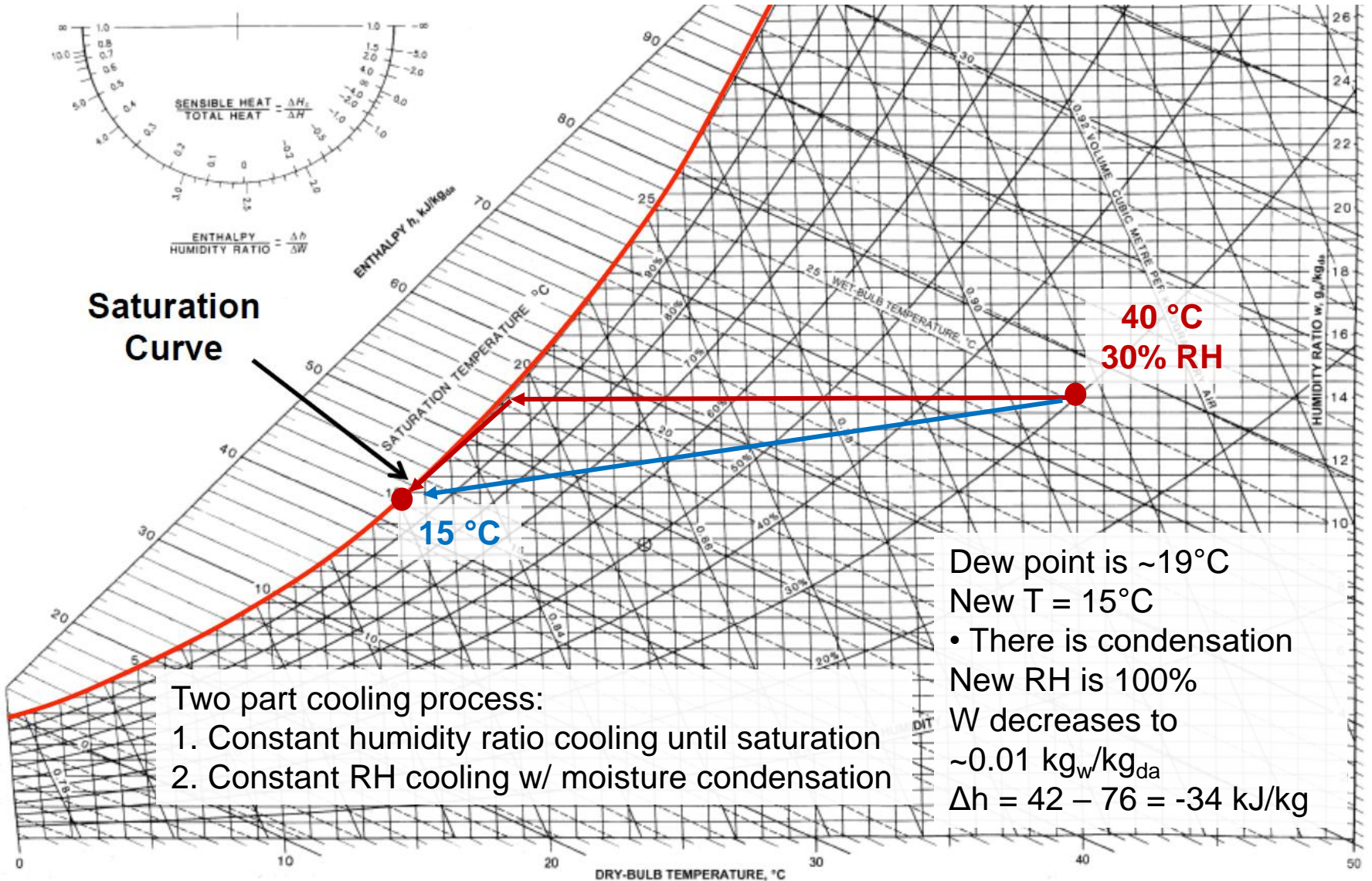
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Radiant ceiling panes cool the moist air from 40°C and 30% RH to 15°C.

- Does the water vapor condense?
- What is the RH at W at the process end point?



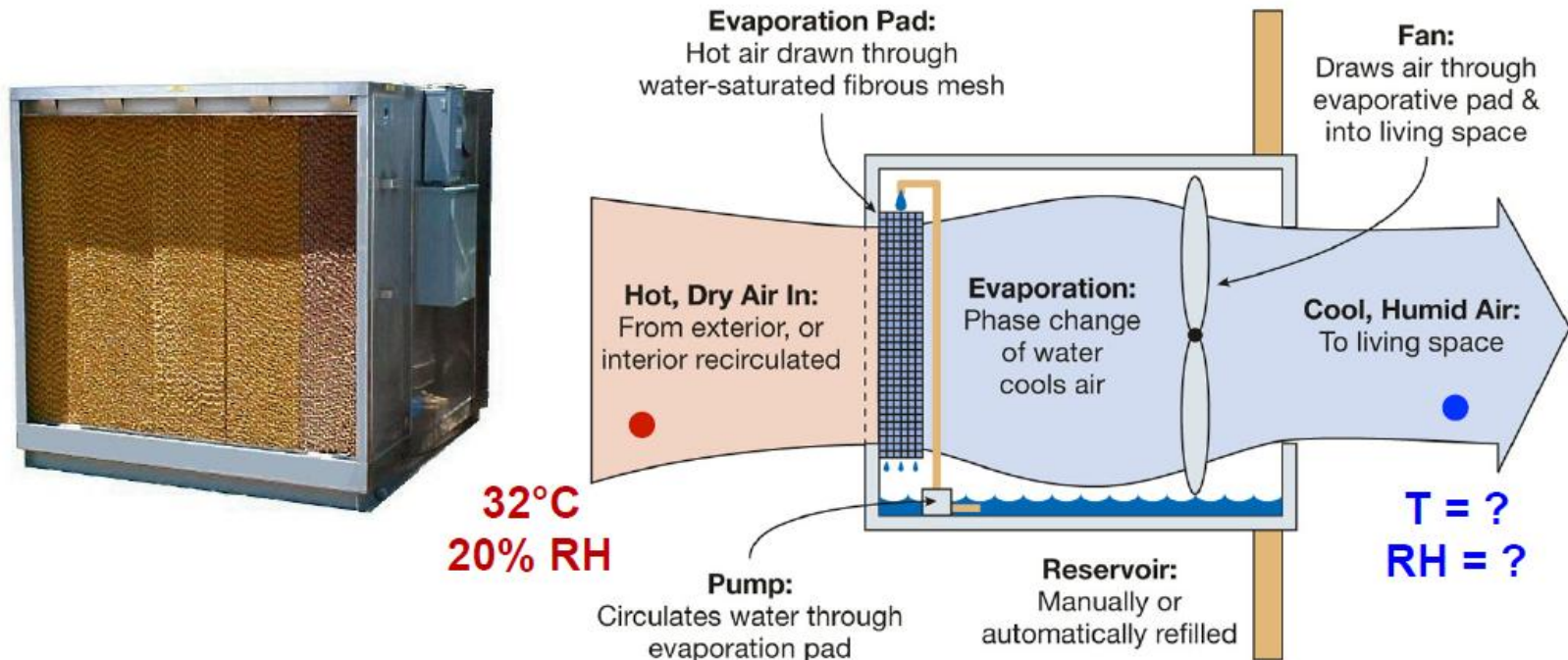
# Cooling and dehumidification of warm & humid air



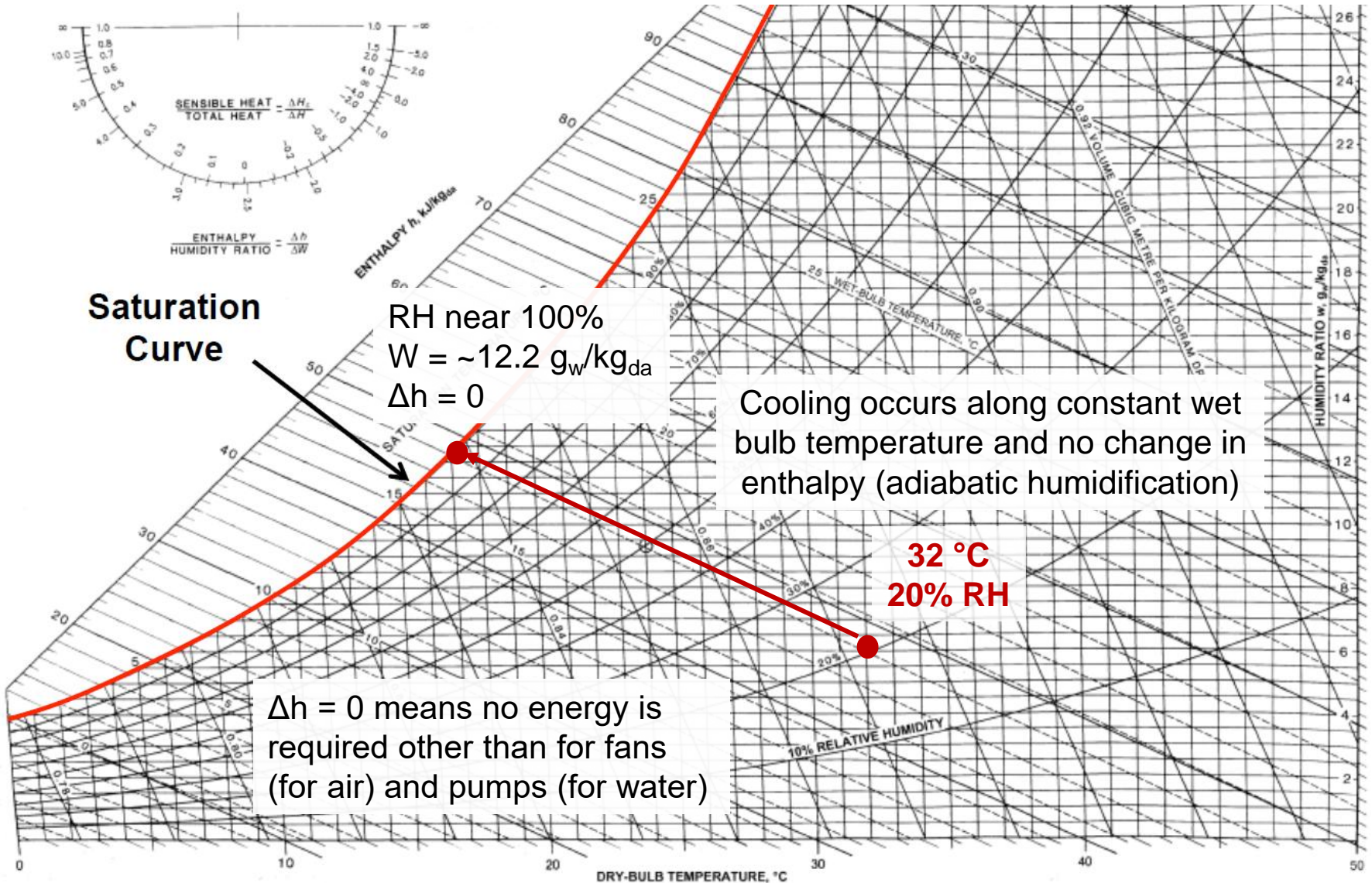
# Example: Evaporative cooling (adiabatic humidification)

Hot, dry outdoor air is cooled with an evaporative cooler, or “swamp cooler”

- What is the T, RH, and W of the supply air?
- Why would we choose this system?



# Evaporative cooling (adiabatic humidification)

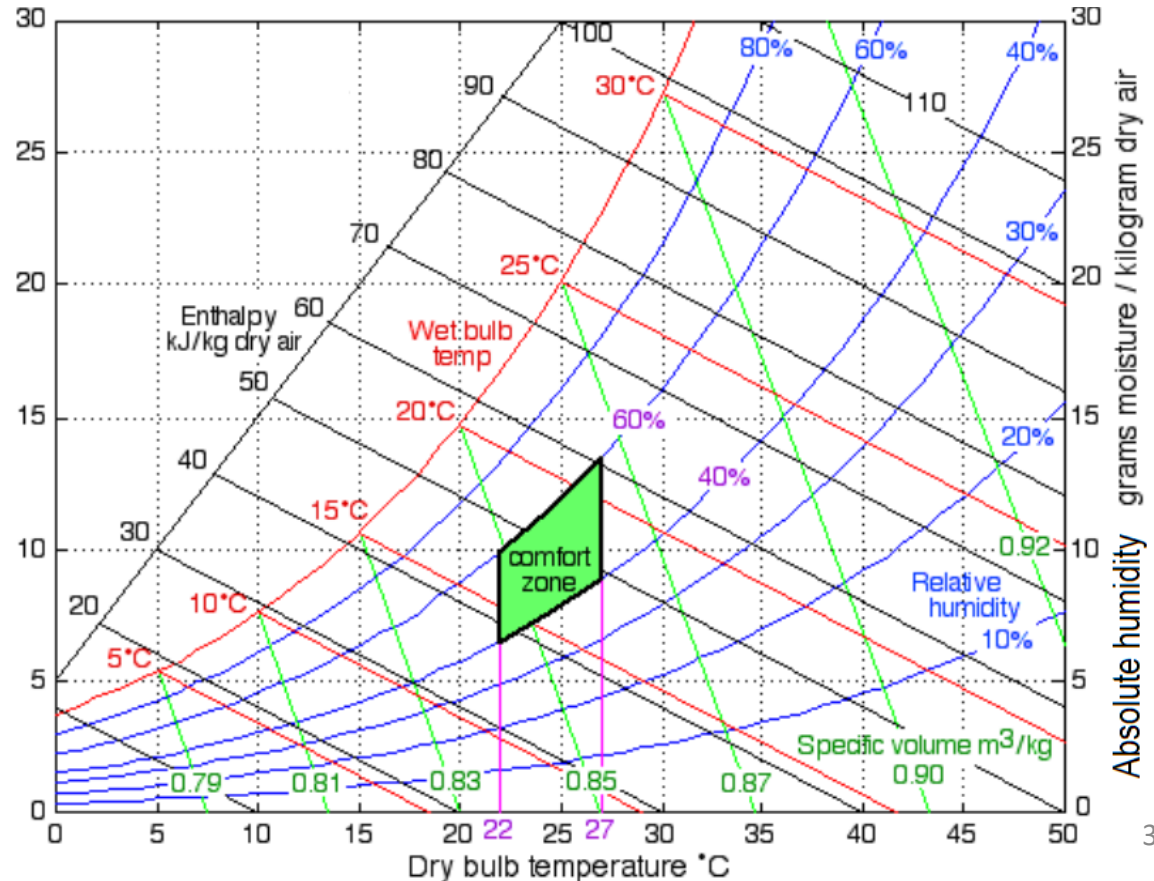


# In-class exercise #1

Assume that the outside air temperature is 32°C with a relative humidity is 60%. Use the psychrometric chart to determine the absolute humidity, the enthalpy  $h$ , the wet-bulb temperature  $T_{wb}$ , the dew-point temperature  $T_{dp}$ , and the specific volume of the dry air  $v$ . Indicate all the values determined on the chart.

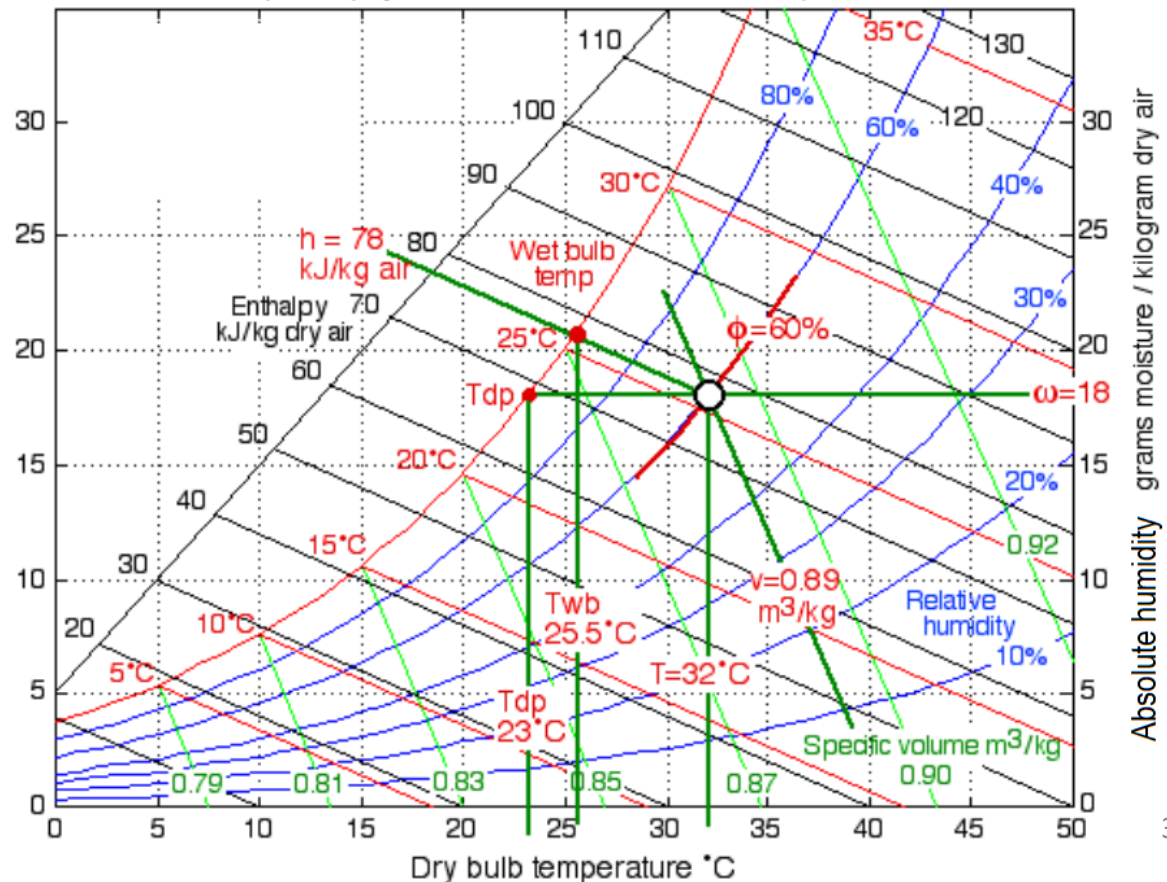
You can download the chart here:

<https://www.ashrae.org/File%20Library/Technical%20Resources/Bookstore/UP3/SI-1.pdf>



# In-class exercise #1: Solutions

Assume that the outside air temperature is  $32^{\circ}\text{C}$  with a relative humidity is 60%. Use the psychrometric chart to determine the absolute humidity [18 gram-moisture/kg-air], the enthalpy  $h$  [78 kJ/kg-air], the wet-bulb temperature  $T_{wb}$  [ $25.5^{\circ}\text{C}$ ], the dew-point temperature  $T_{dp}$  [ $23^{\circ}\text{C}$ ], and the specific volume of the dry air  $v$  [ $0.89 \text{ m}^3/\text{kg}$ ]. Indicate all the values determined on the chart.

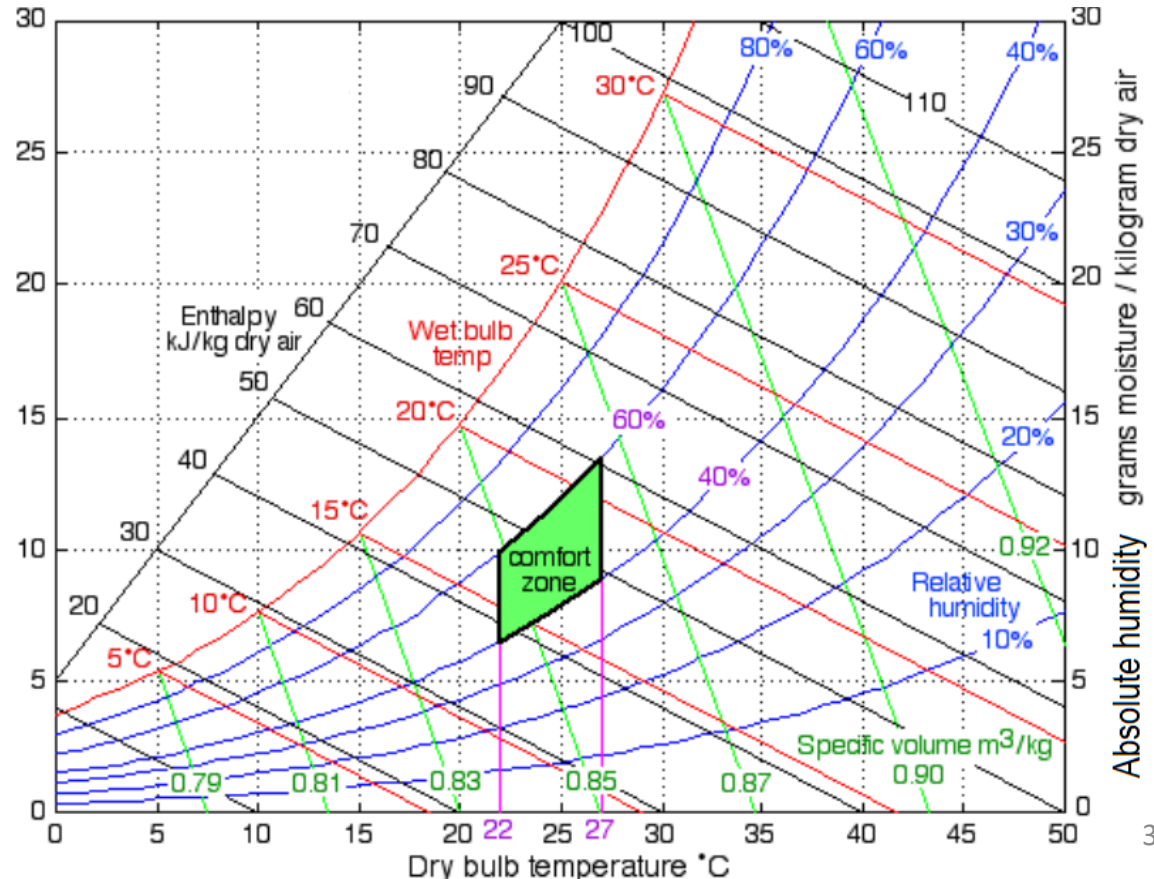


## In-class exercise #2

Assume that the outside air temperature is  $8^{\circ}\text{C}$ . If the air in a room is at  $25^{\circ}\text{C}$  with a relative humidity 40%. Use the psychrometric chart to determine if the windows of that room which are in contact with the outside will become foggy. Assume that window surface is at  $8^{\circ}\text{C}$ .

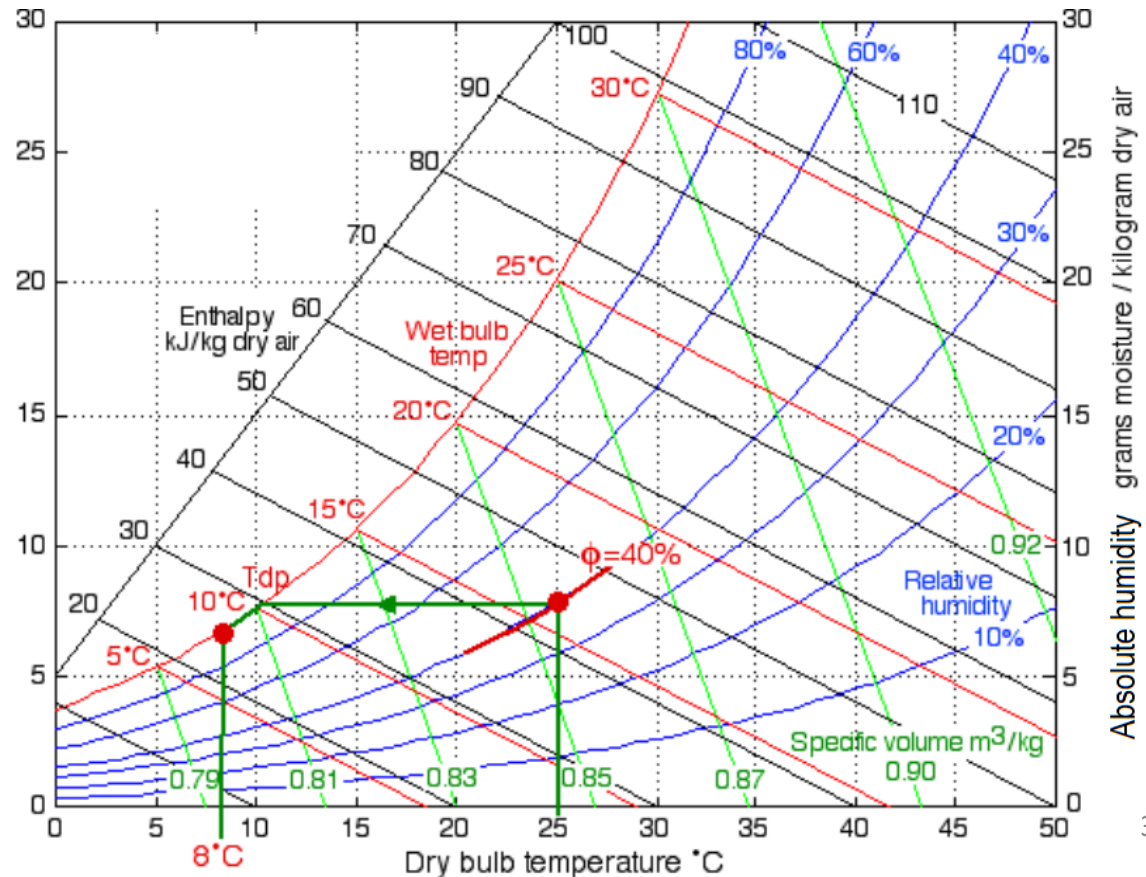
You can download the chart here:

<https://www.ashrae.org/File%20Library/Technical%20Resources/Bookstore/UP3/SI-1.pdf>



# In-class exercise #2: Solutions

The indoor air in contact with the windows will become colder until the dew point is reached. Notice that under the conditions of 25°C and 40% relative humidity the dew point temperature is slightly higher than 10°C. At that point the water vapor condenses as the temperature approaches 8°C along the saturation line, and the **windows will become foggy**.

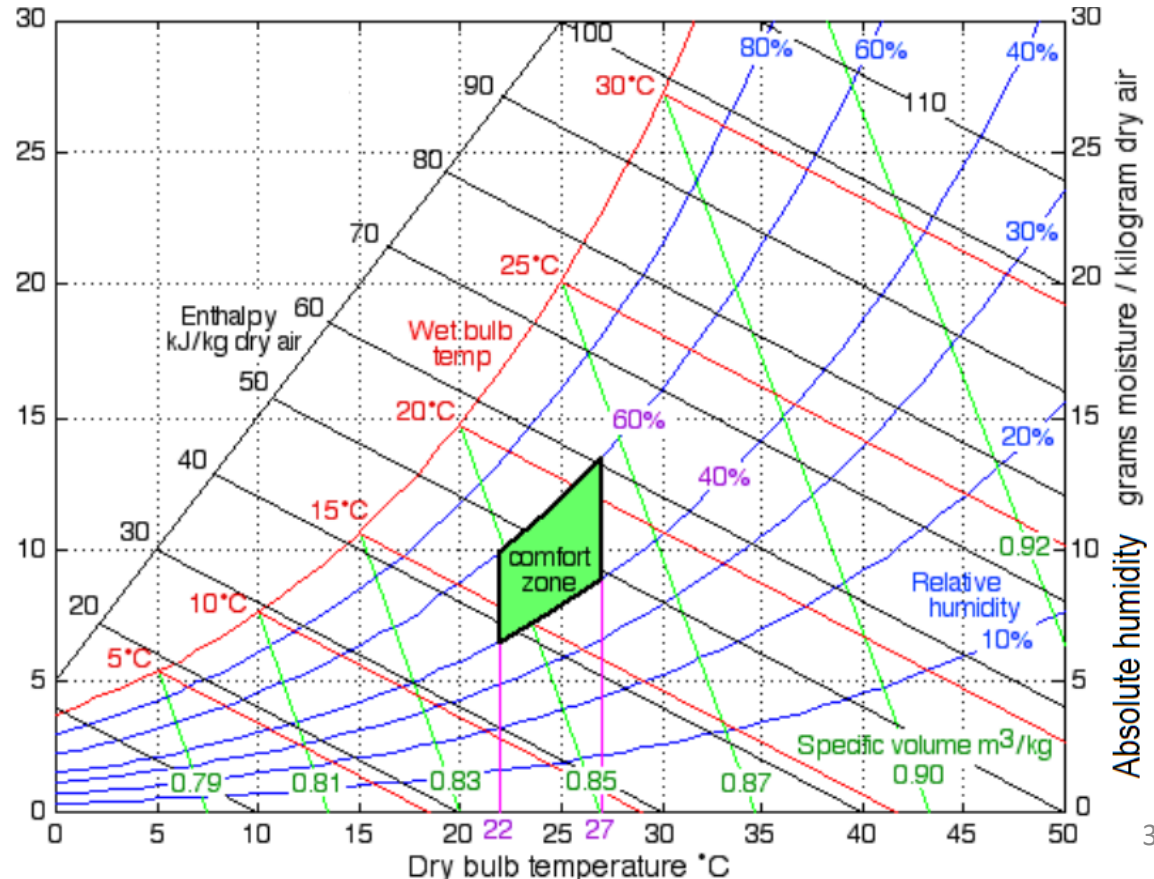


# In-class exercise #3

Outside air at 35°C and 60% relative humidity is to be conditioned by **cooling and heating** so as to bring the air to within the "comfort zone" (assume 25°C and 50%). Using the Psychrometric Chart plot the required air conditioning process and estimate (a) the amount of moisture removed, (b) the heat (enthalpy) removed, and (c) the amount of heat (enthalpy) added.

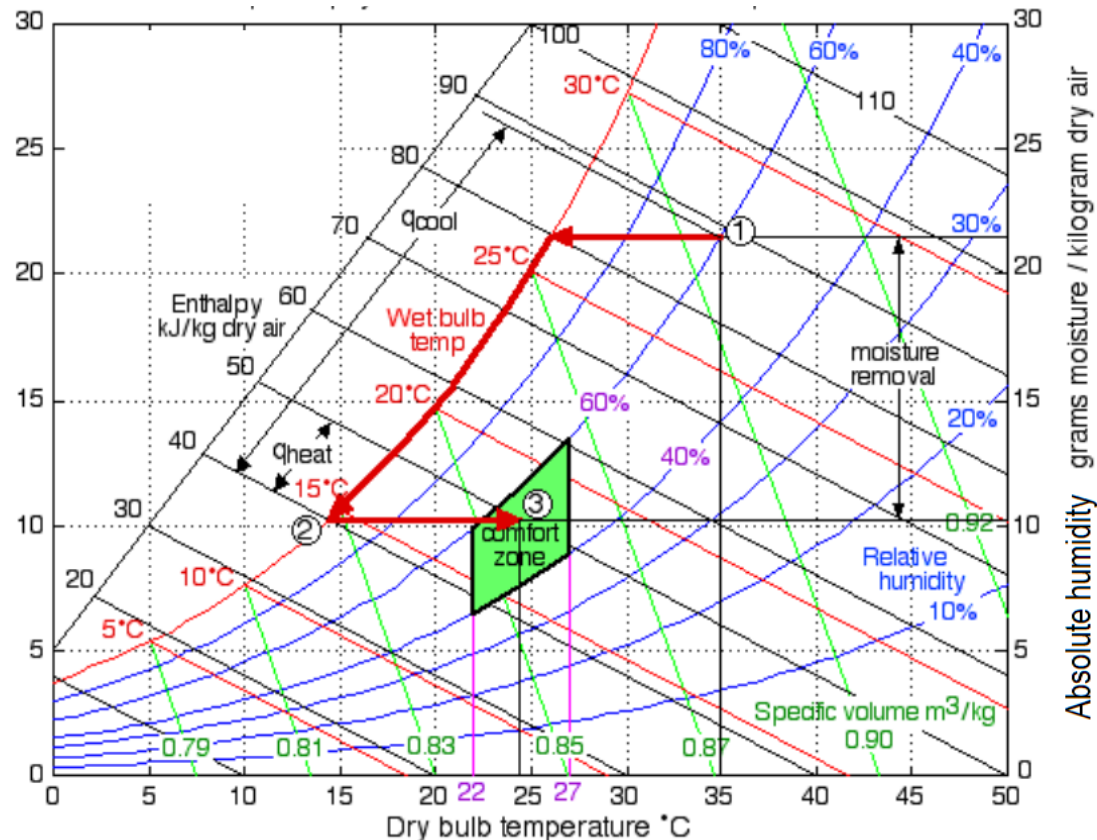
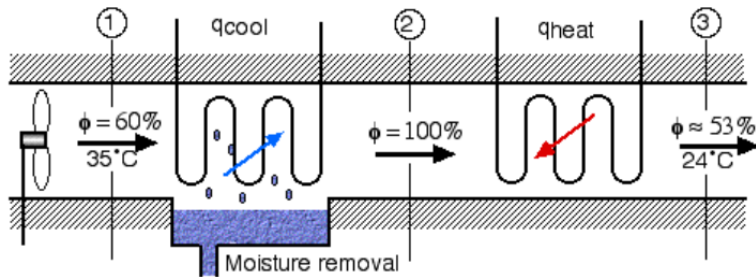
You can download the chart here:

<https://www.ashrae.org/File%20Library/Technical%20Resources/Bookstore/UP3/SI-1.pdf>



# In-class exercise #3: Solutions

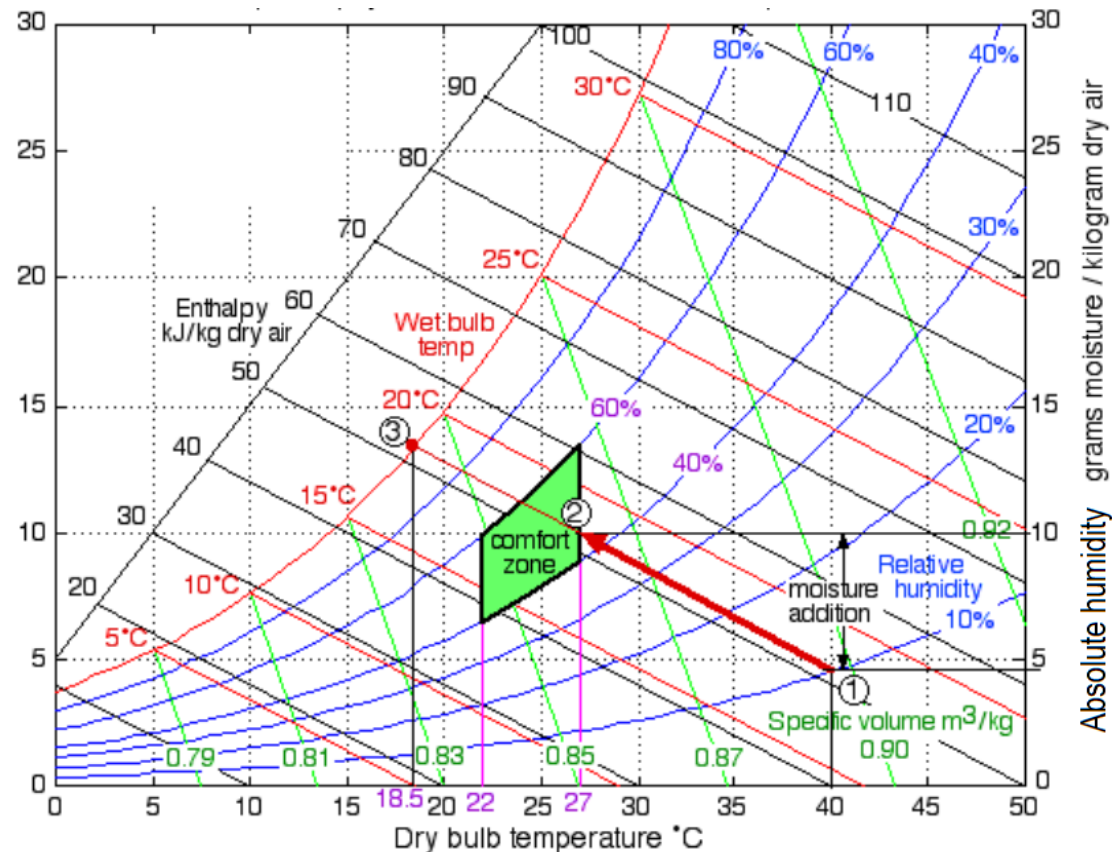
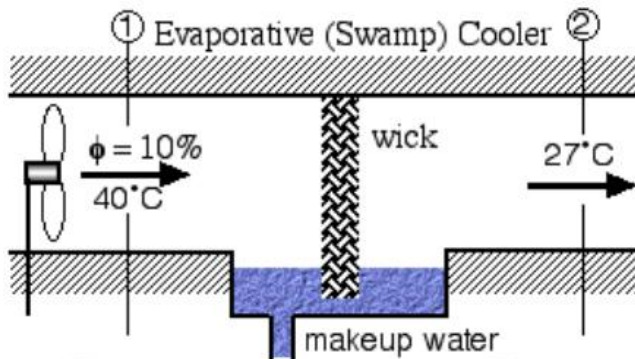
Outside air at 35°C and 60% relative humidity is to be conditioned by cooling and heating so as to bring the air to within the "comfort zone". Using the Psychrometric Chart neatly plot the required air conditioning process and estimate (a) the amount of moisture removed [11.5g-H<sub>2</sub>O/kg-dry-air], (b) the heat removed [(1)-(2),  $h_{cool} = 48\text{kJ/kg-dry-air}$ ], and (c) the amount of heat added [(2)-(3),  $h_{heat} = 10\text{kJ/kg-dry-air}$ ].





# In-class exercise #4: Solutions

Hot dry air at 40°C and 10% relative humidity passes through an evaporative cooler. Water is added as the air passes through a series of wicks and the mixture exits at 27°C. Using the psychrometric chart determine (a) the outlet relative humidity [45%], (b) the amount of water added [5.4g-H<sub>2</sub>O/kg-dry-air], and (c) the lowest temperature that could be realized [18.5°C].



Something to think about (on your own)...

---

Why buildings in hot and humid climate (e.g., in Singapore) are being overcooled?

E.g., Hot and humid outdoor air in Singapore is typically at 33°C and 18 g/kg absolute humidity.

# Next time...

---

- Midterm exam
  - Good luck and let me know if you have any questions (you should post them on Moodle Forum)
- In 2 weeks we start with Indoor Air Quality
  - Perceived air quality
  - Physical air quality