

# Get a Plant

Houseplants can help clean the air. Many common houseplants act as an air filter, removing toxins from the air we breathe. They also produce oxygen from CO<sub>2</sub>. In 2008, NASA recommended the use of 15-18 houseplants to improve air quality in an average 1,800 square foot house. Listed below are plants great for reducing toxins from the air:

1. English Ivy
2. Spider Plant
3. Heartleaf Philodendron
4. Peace Lily
5. Weeping Fig Tree (Ficus)
6. Bamboo Palm
7. Aloe Vera
8. Chinese Evergreen
9. Elephant ear Philodendron

For more information go to:

<http://new.softpedia.com>



Is the air in your  
home healthy?



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# How Healthy is your indoor air quality?

With spring just around the corner, airborne allergens and pollutants can aggravate people who suffer from breathing problems such as asthma and seasonal allergies. On days when lots of pollen is in the air, it is a good idea to stay indoors.

However, is the air indoors healthier than the air outdoors? The air inside your home may be up to 10 times worse than outdoor air pollution. Indoor air pollution is a combination of pollutants and a lack of adequate air supply and exchange.

According to the National Safety Council we spend an average of 90% of our time indoors, and indoor pollutants can aggravate allergies and asthma. Newer homes are designed to be well insulated and energy efficient, allowing for few air exchanges between indoor and outdoor air. With the doors and windows of our homes tightly shut, another problem begins to brew inside: **air pollution**.

With the constant exposure to the toxic chemicals like benzene and formaldehyde in everyday cleaning supplies, carpets, and furniture, indoor air pollution affects us worse than outdoor pollution.

Everything we bring into our homes has the potential to be harmful to our health. Building materials, furniture, and the paint on the walls have toxins that can cause us harm. Indoor and outdoor sources such as chemical cleaning supplies, insecticides, carbon monoxide, mold, dirt, and dust can all contribute to poor indoor and outdoor air quality.

The World Health Organization states indoor air pollution is a “major killer,” rating it one of the top 10 health risk factors worldwide. Indoor air pollution can lead to diseases such as asthma, emphysema, bronchitis, and pneumonia.

A major indoor pollutant is tobacco smoke. Second-hand smoke from cigarettes contain more than 4,000 chemicals, at least 250 of which are harmful, with 50 causing cancer, according to the National Cancer Institute. Children exposed to secondhand tobacco smoke are at increased risk for ear and respiratory infections, asthma, cancer, and sudden infant death syndrome (SIDS).



## You can improve your indoor air quality

- Don't allow smoking in your home
- Change the filter on your furnace every three months.
- Keep your home dry
- Vacuum your carpets regularly
- Ditch the air fresheners. They may cover odors, but they are horrible for your lungs.
- Use environmentally friendly cleansers like 1/2 cup of vinegar with 2 liters of water.
- Keep your house clean
- When painting, choose a low volatile organic compound (VOC) paint
- Take your shoes off at the door, this will keep outside toxins off your floors
- Test for Radon. It comes from a natural breakdown of uranium in the soil and can seep into your home through cracks in your foundation or around plumbing pipes.