

Indoor Plants for Healthy Air

Bamboo Palm
(*Chamaedorea seifrizii*)



Very easy to look after. Has a consistently high rating for the removal of benzene, trichloroethylene and formaldehyde. Needs plenty of water in summer and must be kept moist in winter. Wash the leaves periodically to prevent spider mites. Safe for pets.

Chinese Evergreen
(*Aglaonema modestum*)



Very easy to care for and only needs low light. It emits more oxygen than most other plants.

Dracaena (Dragon Tree)
(*Dracaena* sp.)



Will tolerate dimly-lit areas and fairly cool temperatures. *Dracaena glauca* 'Janet Craig' is a popular variety, and is one of the best at removing chemical toxins. If well looked after, it will live for decades. (Image shows *Dracaena Marginata*)

English Ivy
(*Hedera helix*)



A great air scrubber and humidifier. Very easy to care for, just water regularly. You can use ivy in hanging baskets, as ground cover for indoor planting beds or it can be trained to stand upright around a frame. Keep its growth in check, though!

Ficus sp.
e.g. Rubber plant below left or Weeping Fig (*Ficus benjamina*) below right



The Rubber plant is bred for toughness and is the plant to choose if the room doesn't have a lot of natural light. Its architectural form makes it a designer's favourite and its simple, large leaves look good in most places. Good at removing formaldehyde.

The Weeping fig helps remove formaldehyde, benzene and tichloroethylene. It is best when grown in bright, indirect light away from draughts. May drop its leaves if its is moved around.

Gerbera Daisy
(*Gerbera jamesonii*)



For rooms with long periods of direct sunlight. Its long-lasting flowers will bloom throughout winter. In early Nasa trials, it proved to be extremely effective at removing chemical vapours in the air. The one thing it doesn't like is to be over-watered. Safe for pets.

Golden Pothos
(*Epipremnum aureum*)



For rooms that don't get much direct light. Heart-shaped leaves with splashes of gold or cream. It has a good rate of chemical removal and is a wise choice for newcomers to houseplants, as it is very hard to kill.

Peace Lily
(*Spathiphyllum* sp.)



Strong dark green leaves and tall elegant white flowers. Easy to care for and high-scoring for air moisture, toxin removal and insect resistance.

Boston fern
(*Nephrolepis exaltata* 'Bostoniensis')



Prefers indirect light or darker rooms. Keep this plant in the bathroom, or spray it daily, and it will thank you by getting rid of formaldehyde in the air. Safe for pets.

Mother in law's tongue (Snake plant)
(*Sansevieria trifasciata* 'Laurentii')



Great for filtering out formaldehyde. Bright light with some sun is preferable, though it can withstand dark areas. It needs humidity so is good for bathrooms.

Other plants to consider

Aloe (*Aloe Vera*)

Everyone can grow an aloe vera, just place it in a sunny spot and watch it thrive. It will help to filter out toxins such as formaldehyde and benzene.

Azalea (*Rhododendron simsii*)

Another good plant in order to keep formaldehyde at bay is azalea. It has beautiful blooms that do best in cooler areas.

Chrysanthemum (*Chrysanthemum morifolium*)

The flowers from this plant help to combat the harmful toxins of benzene. This plant likes direct sun and a draught, so place near a sunny, open window.

Spider plant (*Chlorophytum comosum*)

This resilient plant is a good remover of benzene, formaldehyde, carbon monoxide and xylene. Safe for pets.

To be effective you should have at least two to three plants per 100 sq. ft. (10 sq. m.).

Plants should ideally be situated within your personal breathing zone, so put them near where you sit and next to the computer or bed.

Be aware that houseplants can be toxic to pets.