

WHY USE A HEPA AIR PURIFIER?

What is a HEPA air purifier?

A HEPA air purifier is a stand-alone, plug-in device that passes air over a dense HEPA air filter. HEPA air filters trap at least 99.97% of dust, pollen, mold, bacteria, and other airborne particles. HEPA stands for "High Efficiency Particulate Air."

Why is air quality important?

The World Health Organization estimates that air pollution contributes to seven million premature deaths each year. Air pollution can cause or worsen the heart and lung diseases that combined are the number one killers globally. Exposures to very tiny particles in the air are also linked to a variety of health problems including breast cancer, prostate cancer, pre-term birth, and dementia.



Choose an air purifier based on the size of your space. Look for units that are AHAM verified.

Why use HEPA air purifiers in schools?

Clean air in schools is important because airborne contaminants can have neurodevelopmental affects and worsen academic performance.

Indoor air quality varies from much worse to much better than outdoor air quality depending on factors such as building age, maintenance, furnishings, temperature, humidity, and moisture, among other things.

Using HEPA air filters in classrooms is one way to increase equity across schools by providing all students with the best possible air quality despite differences in pollution among neighborhoods.



For more information visit:

Healthy Air, Healthy Schools Page:
deohs.washington.edu/healthy_schools



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MAINTAINING YOUR AIR PURIFIER



Your Air Purification Program

Using a HEPA air purifier to clean your indoor air goes beyond buying a unit and plugging it in. You need to know how to use and maintain your air purifier in order to make sure it keeps cleaning your air effectively. This includes cleaning the filters regularly.

You can think of this as your overall air purification program.

Air Purifier Selection, Placement, and Operation

Look for air purifiers with the correct Clean Air Delivery Rate (CADR) for the size of your space. Prioritize units that have been AHAM certified, meaning that independent labs have verified that they clean air as well as the manufacturer claims they do. Also look for CARB-certified air cleaners that have been certified to not release high levels of ozone that would harm asthmatics.

A HEPA air purifier needs to be placed away from walls in order to allow for proper air circulation. If the unit must be near the edge of a room, make sure it's at least the length of an average cell phone away from the wall. Ideally the unit would sit as close to the breathing space of the people in the room as possible. Most air purifiers have a limited ability to move air, so placing a fan in the room can increase their efficiency.

If possible, turn the unit on an hour before the classroom will be used. Turn it off overnight and if noise becomes disruptive. It's best to keep windows and doors closed while the air purifier is on.



*Find out more about AHAM certified air purifiers here:
<https://ahamverifide.org/>*

Filter Cleaning and Replacement

Over time, HEPA filters clog, requiring cleaning and eventual replacement. The exact timing of cleaning and replacement depends on the brand of the unit, how heavy its use, and the environmental conditions under which it has been operating.

Check the manufacturer's guidelines to find out how often to clean and replace your filters. In general, expect to vacuum the filter and wipe down the exterior with antibacterial wipes as often as every two weeks. Filters will likely need to be replaced every three to 12 months.

If possible, consider training staff to perform regular filter maintenance and replacement, and establish a routine schedule with calendar reminders to ensure that filters are changed as needed.