



Simply Green

Live well, tread gently

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According to a study by the EPA, indoor air is often 2-5 times more polluted than outdoor air, and during the winter, we spend up to 90% more time in than out. Gasses from recent remodeling projects, new furniture, cleaning products, pesticides, art projects, etc., can remain in the home long after the activity is completed. Breathe well indoors this winter by following these simple tips*:

- Open windows 15 minutes daily to air out your home.
- Switch to natural cleaners, free of perfumes & dyes. Some brands we recommend are Seventh Generation (available at Whole Foods, gaiam.com, Target), Shaklee (Shaklee.com), Mrs. Meyers Clean Day (mrsmeayers.com).
- Use low or no VOC (Volatile Organic Compound) paints. VOCs are emitted as gasses and have been linked with symptoms from headaches and minor throat irritations to suspected cancer. Low/no VOC paints are now widely available (try Benjamin Moore Pristine Eco-Spec or Sherwin Williams' Harmony line. For a more extensive list, visit: http://www.earteasy.com/live_nontoxic_paints.htm).
- Include spider plants, golden pothos and philodendrons in your home. They are experts at converting carbon dioxide to oxygen.
- To avoid the chemicals used in dry cleaning, take your clothes out of the bags while you're outside and throw the bags away. Then, let your clothes air out for at least a day before wearing them.
- 'Can' the artificial sprays, gels, and plug-ins. Scientists now say many air fresheners can aggravate asthma and pose other health risks, including developmental problems in babies. Most fragrance products contain dangerous chemicals such as benzene, formaldehyde, and phthalates. Healthier ideas:
 - Burn pure beeswax or soy candles, with cotton wicks
 - Make potpourri out of dried flowers, cinnamon sticks, and essential oils.
 - Bundle sage or lavender and dry it, then hang it in any room or in the kitchen pantry.
 - Collect fallen pine bows and pine cones and use as a tabletop "scenterpiece."

*For more indoor air quality info, tips & ideas, visit www.epa.gov/iaq

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