

Garden News

City People's
garden store + landscape

Breathe Better with Houseplants by Kyra Butzel

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www.citypeoples.com/gardenstore

The growing season is over, and with the shorter days and colder weather comes more time spent indoors. Not only does this mean less fresh air and ventilation, it also unfortunately means less clean air for most of us.

The Bad News

Our carpets, walls, cleaners, cosmetics, even our paper towels and facial tissues are all emitting volatile organic compounds (VOCs) into the air. With the increase of airtight windows and doors and sealed up office buildings has come the increase of allergies, asthma, headaches, fatigue and nervous system disorders.

The Good News

Houseplants can help! Beautiful and varied, houseplants are effective and inexpensive air purifiers. Place a few plants around the room and they will silently remove benzene, formaldehyde, acetone, and many other chemicals from the air. Indoor air pollution also comes from our own human emissions: carbon dioxide,

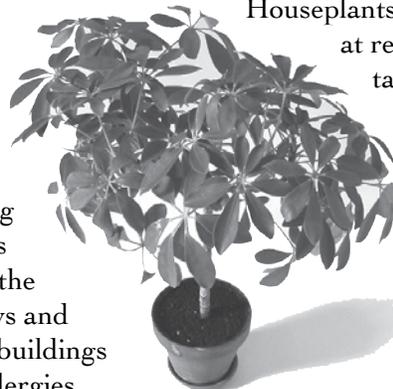
methane, hydrogen, alcohols and up to 150 volatile substances. Houseplants synthesize these, all while providing more oxygen for us to breathe.

Quiet Heroes

Houseplants are surprisingly adept at removing indoor air contaminants and they work without having to compromise efficiency of new airtight windows and doors. Through the natural process of photosynthesis, respiration, and transpiration, chemical vapors are taken in and filtered.

Microbes around plant roots break them down.

Houseplants also help regulate humidity in closed spaces. High humidity is associated with molds and mildews while low humidity (especially in winter when the heat is turned up) is associated with frequent colds, allergy attacks, and asthma. "Plants themselves are natural humidifiers" writes Dr. B.C. Wolverton, author of *How to Grow Fresh Air*, and as such are an important component to human health.

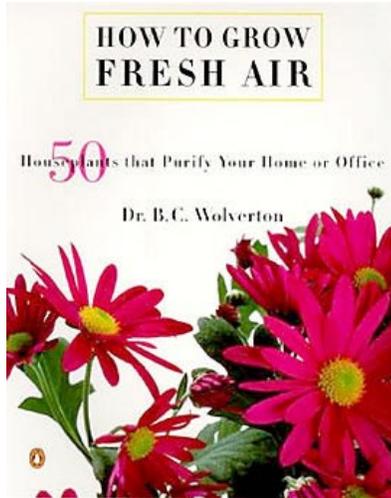


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Plenty of Choice

Most houseplants will help indoor air quality, but some much better than others. The Garden Store's houseplant section is filled with the top air cleaners. Buyer **Rachel Hanson** gets weekly deliveries of indoor plants including **Lady Palms**, **Janet Craig Dracaenas**, and **Peace Lilies**, three outstanding purifiers.



The top purifying plants come in many shapes and sizes with varied light requirements (see table, right.) Most are easy to care for as well. For an easy to follow book on the subject, visit City People's book section and look for *How to Grow Fresh Air: 50 Houseplants that Purify Your Home or Office* by Dr. B.C. Wolverton.

Plants enrich our lives through their beauty and living essence. When you pick out your plants to bring home and care for, know your efforts will be rewarded every day with cleaner air, more oxygen, and better health.

Top Air Purifying Plants

Full Sun to Part Sun

Lady palm	<i>Rhapis excelsa</i>
Bamboo palm	<i>Chamaedorea seifrizii</i>
Dwarf date palm	<i>Phoenix roebelenii</i>
Ficus 'Alii'	<i>Ficus macleilandii 'Alii'</i>
Gerbera daisy*	<i>Gerbera jamesonii</i>
Wax begonia*	<i>Begonia semperflorens</i>
Weeping fig	<i>Ficus benjamina</i>
Florist's mum*	<i>Chrysanthemum morifolium</i>

* available seasonally in our indoor nursery

Part Sun to Part Shade

Rubber plant	<i>Ficus robusta</i>
English ivy	<i>Hedera helix</i>
Kimberly queen	<i>Nephtrolepis oblitterata</i>
Peace lily	<i>Spathiphyllum</i> sp.
Prayer Plant	<i>Maranta leuconeura</i>

Part Shade to Shade

Corn plant	<i>Dracaena fragrans</i>
Golden Pothos	<i>Epipremnum aureum</i>
Dracaena 'Janet Craig'	<i>Dracaena deremensis</i>
Dracaena 'Warnecke'	<i>Dracaena</i> sp. 'Warnecke'
Dragon tree	<i>Dracaena marginata</i>
Parlor palm	<i>Chamaedorea elegans</i>
Schefflera	<i>Brassaia actinophylla</i>
Lacy tree philodendron	<i>Philodendron selloum</i>
Heart leaf philodendron	<i>Philodendron oxycardium</i>
Snake plant	<i>Sansevieria trifasciata</i>

From *How to Grow Fresh Air: 50 Houseplants that Purify Your Home or Office* by Dr. B.C. Wolverton
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Safe Indoor Plants For Pets



Many plants can be toxic to curious cats or dogs. The list of plants that can harm animals is especially long. Here are some houseplants we carry that are safe according to the **Cat Fancier's Association**. *

African violet	Hoya carnosa	Prayer Plant
Bamboo Palm	Kentia palm	Polka dot plant
Button fern	Lady palm	Parlor Palm
Calathea insignis	Lipstick plant	Spider Plant
Cast iron plant	Mother fern	Staghorn fern

* no incidents have been reported. Any plant material can cause indigestion and vomiting.