

Indoor Air Quality Checklist

People spend most of their time indoors and therefore some of the largest exposures to pollutants and allergens can occur indoors. For some pollutants with indoor sources, the indoor concentrations can be up to five times higher than levels found outdoors. Frequently, these exposures can go unnoticed, but these same exposures have been shown to be associated with a variety of negative health effects. There are many easy and affordable solutions to help improve indoor air quality. Use the checklist below to identify potential sources of indoor air pollutants and suggestions for ways to manage them.

Room	Potential Sources of Indoor Air Pollutants	Solutions
Kitchen	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Storage of products containing VOCs (e.g., household cleaners) 2. Moisture from cooking and cleaning can lead to mold growth 3. Leaks from water sources under cabinets can lead to mold growth 4. Generation of nitrogen dioxide, particulate matter and other pollutants from cooking 5. Inadequate venting of gas ranges and ovens can result in carbon monoxide in the home 6. Off-gassing of VOCs from pressed wood cabinets, paneling, and flooring 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Choose less toxic certified “green” products when possible. • Store only the minimum amount of products that are needed. Store other products outside of living area. • When using cleaning products containing VOCs, open windows or use exhaust fan to increase ventilation. • Check under sinks occasionally for leaks; fix leaks promptly and dry the wet areas thoroughly. • Use exhaust hood when cooking; ensure hood is vented to outdoors. • Use back burners first when using the range to best capture cooking related pollutants with the exhaust hood. • When purchasing cabinets, paneling, or flooring, ask about formaldehyde content and emissions. Some “green” products use other materials and do not release as much formaldehyde. • After installation, allow cabinets and flooring to off- gas and increase ventilation.
Bathroom	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Storage of products containing VOCs (e.g., household cleaners and personal care products) 2. Moisture from baths, showers, sinks, and toilets 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Choose less toxic certified “green” products when possible. • Store only the minimum amount of products that are needed. Store other products outside of living area. • When using cleaning products containing VOCs, open windows or use exhaust fan to increase ventilation. • Check under sinks and around tubs/showers occasionally for leaks; fix leaks promptly and dry wet areas thoroughly. • Use bathroom exhaust fan or open window when showering and using

		<p>products containing VOCs.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Keep shower doors/curtains open to allow drying.
Bedrooms	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Use of moth repellants release VOCs 2. Inadequate cleaning and lack of humidity control can lead to dust mites 3. Fresh dry cleaning can release VOCs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Avoid using chemical moth repellents if possible; if needed keep moth repellents in trunks or other containers and store away from living areas. • Use a “green” dry cleaner that does not use perchloroethylene; otherwise, air out dry cleaned clothes before returning them to your closet • Clean house and vacuum often; wash fabric throws and pillow and mattress covers in hot water to reduce dust mite levels.
All Rooms	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Off-gassing of VOCs from pressed wood furniture, cabinets, paneling and flooring • Off-gassing of VOCs from new carpeting and draperies • Secondhand smoke • Water-damaged carpets or building materials can lead to mold growth • Furry pets release allergens that remain airborne and are deposited on surfaces • Pets that go outdoors can track in pesticides and outdoor allergens 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • When purchasing cabinets or paneling, ask about formaldehyde content and emissions. Some “green” products use other materials and do not release as much formaldehyde. • Increase ventilation after installation of new carpets or draperies. • Do not allow smoking in the home. • Clean and dry water damaged materials promptly; remove water damaged materials • Use a dehumidifier to maintain 40-60% relative humidity • Use air purifiers to help reduce particulate, allergen, and VOC levels. • Use HEPA vacuum regularly to reduce dust and allergen levels on surfaces. • Keep pets clean. • Remove mold and mildew deposits promptly. • Increase ventilation or air circulation where moisture (mold) appears. • If mold appears on exterior walls, check for vapor barrier or for insulation problems and keep furniture away from wall to allow for air circulation.
Entry / Mudroom	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Tracked in dirt, pesticides and allergens 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Remove shoes when entering home to prevent tracking chemicals and allergens indoors.
Basement	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Storage of products containing VOCs (e.g., solvents, paints, strippers, fuel), pesticides, herbicides and other chemicals 2. Infiltration of radon gas 3. Inadequate venting of furnace, hot-water heater, clothes dryer, and other fuel fired 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Minimize storage of products containing VOCs by removing old products; contact municipality for proper procedures for disposal. • Store only the products containing VOCs that are needed; seal containers well. • Test for radon with do-it-yourself kit; follow manufacturer’s instructions if levels exceed 4 picocuries per liter.

	<p>appliances</p> <p>4. Damp air can lead to mold growth</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Keep basement dry by using fan(s) and dehumidifier in warmer months to reduce relative humidity to levels below 60%.
Garage	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Storage of products containing VOCs (e.g., solvents, paints, strippers, fuel), pesticides, herbicides and other chemicals 2. Vehicle emissions (carbon monoxide and combustion by-products) from idling car in attached garage 3. Storage and use of pesticides 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Store only the products containing VOCs that are needed; seal containers well. • Do not idle vehicles in garage; use weather stripping to minimize infiltration of air from attached garage into living space. • Do not mix or store pesticides indoors.
Attic	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Condensing water vapor leading to mold growth 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Properly seal around plumbing, spaces around chimneys and light fixtures. • Maintain vents in the attic to promote good air circulation. • Inspect for moisture annually; promptly remove damp insulation