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# Green Tips

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air fresheners or  
scented cleaning  
products.*

*Reduce indoor  
air pollution  
by providing  
one plant for  
every 100 square  
feet of your  
living space.*

## Air Quality

- When people think about pollution, they usually think water pollution, landfills, air pollution and the ozone layer. More recently they have begun to think about indoor air pollution. Indoor air can be just as dirty, even dirtier than outside air.
- Ironically, we often “dirty” the air intentionally with air fresheners and scented cleaning products. These chemicals can be harmful to people as we absorb them through the air we breathe, through our skin and the food we eat. They also pollute the environment when they are produced and disposed of. Even scents we associate positively, like the new car smell or new carpet or new shower curtains, are actually the off-gassing of toxic chemicals.
- Plants are a more natural and healthy air freshener, recycling carbon dioxide into oxygen and reducing the presence of harmful chemicals. Effective “air fresheners” include Chinese evergreen, peace lily, arrowhead vine, English ivy, devil’s ivy, corn plant, spider plants, chrysanthemums, and daisies.
- Aim for one plant for every 100 square feet of living space. Dust them with a damp cloth and keep their soil and root areas clean. Another healthy option is to boil water with cloves or other natural herbs. Alternatively, you can drop a few drops of essential oil or natural extracts on a light bulb.
- Rather than plug in an air freshener that uses energy to create heat, you can use the heat the bulb creates. Some oils and herbs also serve as natural deterrents to bugs and rodents. Peppermint is displeasing to mice and rats, flies don’t like basil, and ants avoid cinnamon and cayenne pepper. Roaches are harder to expel through natural means, but a combination of eucalyptus and pennyroyal will deter many insects.

These tips and others are available in *Green Clean* by Linda Mason.

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