



VOCs: what can I do to reduce VOCs?

The steps you can take to lower VOCs in your household



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Ventilation: one of the easiest solutions you can do to lower VOC levels is having proper ventilation. While using cleaning products, adhesives, or other VOCs, it's always a good idea to open a window or door to increase ventilation to increase airflow and reduce VOCs. There are other items that can constantly give off VOCs such as new furniture, carpet, or flooring. Ventilating every now and then is a good idea even when you're not actively using products or doing activities that produce VOCs.

Storage: simply keeping household cleaners, paint, or other materials that give off VOCs should be stored away from your living and working areas. Heavy VOC contributors such as paint or fuel should be stored outside or in a garage.

Moderation: using items that give off perfumes like candles, essential oils, cleaning products, or other VOCs every so often is not a bad thing. However, the heavy use of these products for any extended time can lead to VOC pollution.

VOCs will always be prevalent in your household. However, by making the right choices on storage, ventilation, and frequency of use, you can drastically lower VOCs in the air and improve your indoor air quality.

Chemical TVOC Class	Chemical Examples	Source Examples
Alkanes	n-Butane, n-Pentane, n-Hexane, n-Heptane, n-Octane, Cyclohexane	Aerosol spray products for some paints, cosmetics, automotive exhaust products, leather treatments, paint thinner, oil based paints, spot removers, aerosol/liquid insect pest products, mineral spirits, furniture polishes
Alkenes	Isobutylene, Ethylene	Solvents, fruit ripening, pest control, rubber production
Aromatics	BTEX (Benzene, Toluene, Ethylbenzene, Xylene), Dichlorobenzene, Naphthalene, Styrene	Tobacco smoke, moth balls, moth flakes, deodorizers, air fresheners, automotive exhaust products, paint thinner, oil based paints, aerosol/liquid insect pest products, mineral spirits, furniture polishes, rigid foam products, contact cement, model cement, tar board, plasticizer
Halocarbons	Methylene Chloride, PERC, TCE, 1,1,1-Trichloroethane, Carbon Tetrachloride, Dichlorodifluoromethane (R12), Difluoromethane (R32), Pentafluoroethane (R125), R-410A	Dry cleaned clothes, spot removers, fabric/ leather cleaners, degreasers, aerosol penetrating oils, brake cleaner, carburetor cleaner, commercial solvents, electronics cleaners, spray lubricants, refrigerant from air conditioners, freezers, refrigerators, dehumidifiers, urinal deodorizer block
Alcohols	Ethyl Alcohol (Ethanol), Methyl Alcohol (Methanol), 2-Propanol (Isopropyl Alcohol)	Cleaning agent, personal care products: nail polish, nail polish remover, colognes, perfumes, rubbing alcohol, hair spray
Terpene	α-Pinene (pine odor), D-Limonene (citrus odor)	Cosmetics, citrus (orange) oil, pine oil cleaners, fragrance additive, wood
Aldehyde	Formaldehyde, Hexanal	Disinfectants, upholstered furniture, carpets, plywood, pressed wood products, linoleum decomposition, oil-based paint
Ketones	Acetone, Methyl Ethyl Ketone (MEK), Methyl Isobutyl Ketone (MIBK)	PVC cement and primer, various adhesives, contact cement, model cement, UV processed varnishes
Ether	Methyl Tert-Butyl Ether (MTBE)	Automotive additive, medical solvent, plasticizer
Siloxane	Octamethylcyclotetrasiloxane (D4), Decamethylcyclopentasiloxane (D5)	Cosmetics, soaps, defoamer, silicone oil, detergent, antiperspirants