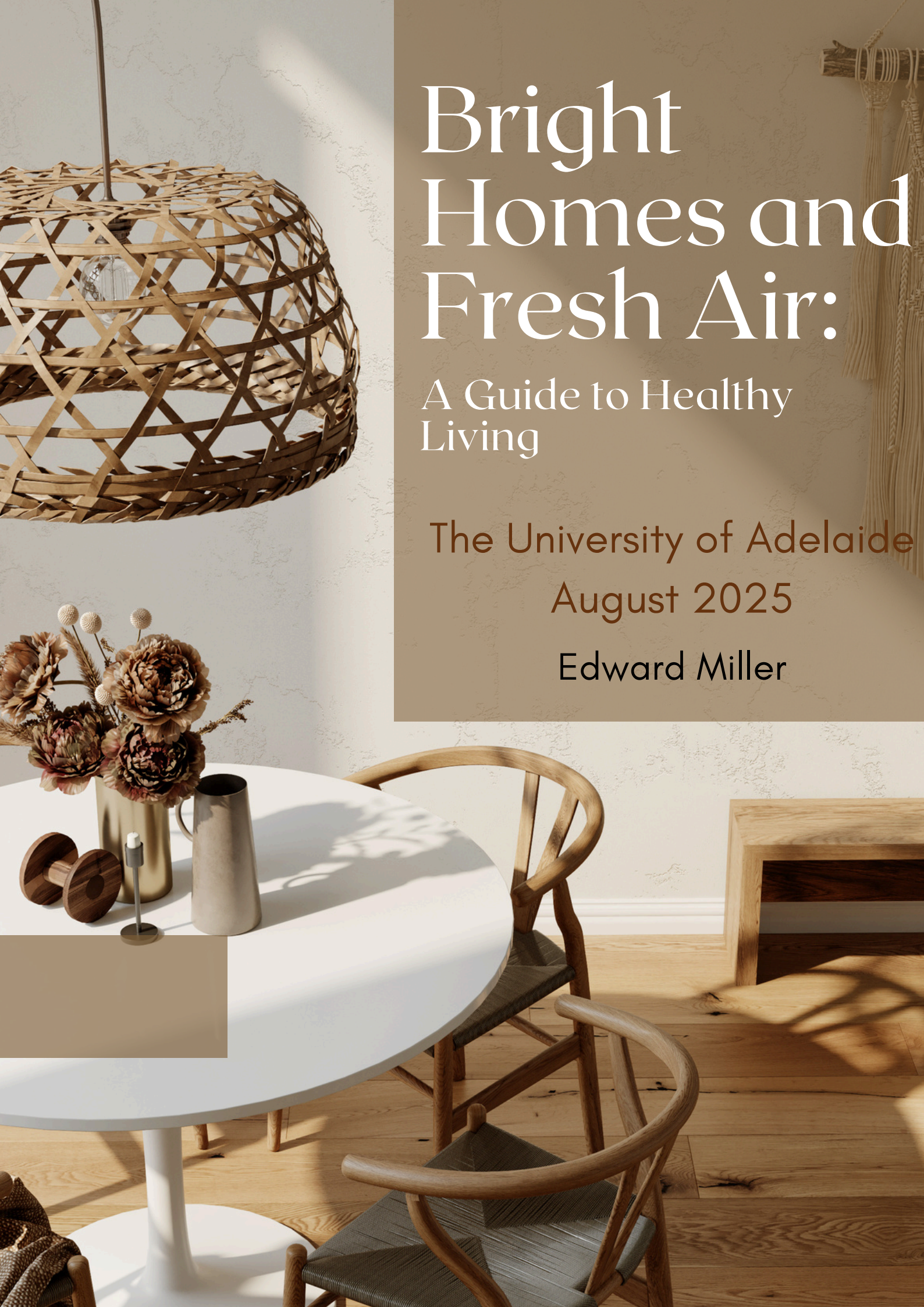

Bright Homes and Fresh Air:

A Guide to Healthy Living

The University of Adelaide

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Abstract

Our homes play a vital role in shaping our wellbeing. From the quality of the air we breathe to the amount of natural light that flows through our windows, the indoor environment has a direct impact on our health, mood, and productivity. Bright Homes and Fresh Air: A Guide to Healthy Living explores the essential relationship between healthy living spaces and overall wellness. Drawing on Australian government guidance, environmental reports, and health research, this guide highlights practical strategies to improve ventilation, enhance natural light, reduce pollutants, and create cleaner, brighter, and healthier homes. Whether you are a tenant preparing for a move, a homeowner seeking better living conditions, or simply someone who values fresh air and sunlight, this resource provides actionable insights to help transform everyday spaces into healthy, vibrant environments.

Getting Started

The concept of a “healthy home” extends far beyond tidy rooms and freshly swept floors. In Australia, where weather extremes, bushfire smoke, and humidity can significantly influence indoor conditions, creating a space that supports wellbeing requires both awareness and practical action. Brightness and airflow are two of the most overlooked yet powerful contributors to healthier living. A well lit home not only uplifts mood and productivity but also reduces reliance on artificial lighting, saving energy and costs. Likewise, good ventilation removes pollutants, prevents mould, and introduces oxygen rich fresh air into daily life.

This guide begins by examining why light and air matter so deeply to human health. From there, we explore how to optimise your home environment through design choices, cleaning practices, seasonal habits, and eco friendly strategies. Along the way, we draw on insights from Australian government health and environmental resources to ensure recommendations are both practical and evidence based. By the time you finish, you’ll be equipped with the knowledge to make small yet powerful changes that add up to a brighter, fresher, and healthier way of living.

Understanding indoor air quality

Most of us spend a large percentage of our lives indoors, so it is worth thinking about air quality in our homes. Poor indoor air quality may produce a range of health effects, from mild and generally non-specific symptoms such as headaches, tiredness or lethargy, to more severe effects such as sensitisation to allergens and aggravation of asthma and allergic responses. Poor indoor air quality in your home may exacerbate pre-existing conditions or cause new health issues.

Whether a source of air pollutants causes an indoor air quality problem or not depends on:

- the type of air pollutant
- the amount and rate at which it is released from its source
- the degree of ventilation available in the home to remove it from indoors
- the leakiness of your home, if the pollution source is outside

- the sensitivity of the person and any pre-existing conditions.

Some groups of people in the community are more vulnerable to pollutants than others, or are likely to spend more time indoors than the general population. These people include:

- the very young
- the very old
- those with pre-existing respiratory or cardiovascular disease
- those who are sensitised to specific substances.

Generally, the greater the amount of pollutant (exposure), the greater the health impact. The duration of exposure is also important – if low-level exposure occurs over a long period of time (perhaps many years) the total dose may be large.

Indoor air quality

Australians spend most of our time indoors. The air quality within these spaces affects our health. Learn about how you can improve indoor air quality.

Indoor air quality is affected by many things, including:

- outside air pollution coming inside, such as emissions from vehicles and industry and smoke from bushfires and wood heaters
- particulate matter from sources in the home, such as wood heaters
- volatile organic compounds, such as formaldehyde, emitted from building materials and furnishings
- microorganisms like viruses, bacteria and fungi (including moulds) which can be transmitted through the air
- gases like carbon dioxide, carbon monoxide and nitrogen dioxide from sources such as gas heaters, cooktops and stoves
- tobacco smoke and vape aerosols

Indoor air can have much higher concentrations of some pollutants and different health risks than outdoor air.

Dander and dust mites

Pet dander and dust mites can aggravate hay fever, asthma, nasal inflammation and eczema. Dander and dust mites are generally present in soft furnishings, including carpet, bedding and furniture.

To reduce the amount of dander and dust mites in your home, install hard flooring or vacuum often with a high-quality vacuum cleaner. Wash bedding and other soft furnishings frequently, and replace pillows and cushions regularly.

Mould

Mould produces tiny particles called spores that become airborne. When inhaled by people who are sensitive or allergic to them, they can cause irritation of the nose, eyes and skin, aggravate asthma and other respiratory diseases, and occasionally cause more severe health issues. Mould can grow indoors in damp areas, including bathrooms, damp rooms, windowsills, indoor plants and poorly ventilated areas. Strategies to prevent mould include:

- install insulation and building membranes correctly to reduce condensation risk

- install the correct waterproofing to bathrooms and wet areas
- fix rising damp in existing buildings and improve subfloor ventilation
- fix sources of moisture such as leaks in plumbing or roofing
- reduce humidity inside the home by venting sources of moisture to the outside (for example, use exhaust fans in kitchens and bathrooms)

Smoke and combustion products

Combustion products include smoke (small soot particles), ash and gases (including nitrogen dioxide and carbon monoxide) that can get inside your home from fireplaces and heaters burning wood, coal, gas or kerosene, gas cooking appliances, fumes from cooking (especially frying), tobacco smoking, bushfires, exhaust from cars in adjoining garages, and hobbies such as welding and soldering.

To maintain good air quality when you have combustion sources inside the home:

- ensure plenty of fresh outdoor air is coming into the room

- vent pollutants to the outdoors (via a flue, chimney, exhaust fan or range hood)
- keep flues and chimneys clean, and make sure any permanent ventilation openings are not blocked
- service heating or cooking appliances regularly to ensure they are working properly and are not leaking gases into your home, and never use an appliance if it is damaged or not working properly

Health impacts of poor indoor air quality

Health impacts from air pollution in indoor environments include:

- carbon monoxide poisoning from using wood or gas heaters without enough ventilation
- transmission of infectious diseases like influenza, RSV and COVID-19 by airborne viruses
- respiratory and cardiovascular impacts from particulate matter
- asthma from dust mite allergens.

High levels of carbon dioxide and particulate matter pollution can affect educational results in school classrooms and reduce workplace productivity.

Ways to improve indoor air quality

There are simple ways to improve indoor air quality and reduce health problems. You can:

- not smoke or vape
- increase outside air flow by opening windows (if the outside air is clean)
- wear a P2 or N95 respirator mask to reduce the spread of airborne viruses
- use high efficiency particulate air (HEPA) filters suitable for the size of the indoor space
- when cooking, use a high-efficiency exhaust fan vented outside to remove emissions and cooking odours

- use an exhaust fan to remove steam and moist air
- ensure any mechanical ventilation systems are well-maintained, and have a high-grade filter, to bring clean outside air indoors
- where possible, choose an alternative method than a wood heater to heat your home

Make sure you have sufficient ventilation, even when sealing draughts to save money on heating and cooling costs.

What to do if the outside air is polluted

Keep inside air as clean as possible from outdoor air pollutants such as smoke, vehicle fumes and industrial pollution. You can:

- close windows and doors during short episodes of outside air pollution and open them when air quality improves
- use a reverse cycle air conditioner or set other types of air conditioners to recirculate indoor air during short episodes of outside air pollution
- avoid using evaporative coolers during short episodes of outside air pollution, as they bring outside air inside

If you or anyone in your care has trouble breathing, chest pain or discomfort call 000 for an ambulance.

People who are sensitive to smoke should actively monitor symptoms and follow their health management plan recommended by their doctor.

9 best air purifiers in Australia for smoke, dust and allergies

These products are hand-picked by our team to help make shopping easier. We may receive payments from third parties for sharing this content and when you purchase through links in this article. Product prices and offer details are not assured, and should be confirmed independently with the retailer.

Designed to remove potentially harmful particles and pollutants as well as improve the overall air quality at home, air purifiers are a simple way to breathe a little easier - even if they expose the sometimes disgusting reality of what's lurking in our houses.

They can even help ease symptoms for those with allergies or asthma by reducing the amount of dust and pet dander (although anyone with serious health concerns should still seek professional treatment from a general practitioner).

To get a better insight on the benefits of using an air purifier, we had a chat with well-known doctor and author Dr Ginni Mansberg.

BEST BUDGET AIR PURIFIER

Arovec H13 True HEPA Air Purifier, $119.89 (down from $189.99) at Amazon Australia

What You Need To Know

Finding an inexpensive air purifier that works well isn't easy, but that doesn't mean there aren't any affordable alternatives. This fairly compact Arovec model is a great example and includes an activated carbon filter to help remove household odours like cigarette smoke, cooking smells and paint fumes. It also uses a high-grade HEPA filter to trap fine particles including dust, pollen particles, pet dander and mold spores.

You can choose from three fan speed settings, with the lowest operating at just 28dB so it don't need to worry about it negatively impacting your sleep quality. There are also two soft light settings to pick from, allowing you to pop it into your child’s room and have it double as a night light.

BEST AMAZON AIR PURIFIER

Afloia Air Purifier, $136.97 at Amazon Australia

What You Need To Know

If you're after an affordable yet powerful air purifier, the Alfoia Air Purifier comes highly-rated from more than 4000 reviews on Amazon Australia. This gadget even doubles as an aroma diffuser to help manage odours.

It offers a three-in-one HEPA filtration system that's made up of a pre-filter, a true HEPA filter and a high-efficiency activated carbon filter.

BEST AIR PURIFIER FOR PETS

Dreamegg True 8150 HEPA Air Purifier (TR-8150), $199.99 at Amazon Australia

Tried and Tested by Harriet Amurao, news.com.au checkout Shopping Writer

Air purifiers were something I never thought I'd need - however, with two dogs and insane allergies I finally bit the bullet and snapped up the True 8150 Air Purifier by Dreamegg. And boy am I SO glad I did.

This Dreamegg Air Purifier not only looks way more aesthetically pleasing than most air purifiers out on the market but it's very easy to use and navigate. It has a clean air delivery rate (CADR) of 340m³/h and can purify a 380ft² room in a matter of a few minutes, making it ideal for a medium to large room size. Plus, it's said that this air purifier performs air purification twice as efficiently as other models in the current Australian Market. Impressive, right?

BEST AIR PURIFIER FOR ODOURS

Philips Series 3000i Air Purifier (AC3033/73), $699 at Amazon Australia

What You Need To Know

This smart air purifier from Philips makes things easy to understand any changes in air quality in real time, thanks to a numerical display and colour coding for different levels (e.g good, fair and very unhealthy). It uses a three layer HEPA filtration system containing a pre filter to capture dust and hair, an activated carbon charcoal filter to remove potentially harmful air pollutants, and the brand's NanoProtect HEPA filter to catch ultra-fine airborne particles.

“The Phillips 3000i is very effective at removing smells from the room. We found it eliminated cooking odours from the kitchen within 15 minutes. We also tried it in the bedroom at night and were surprised at the difference it made to removing pollen etc from the air,” a shopper praised.

“The Wi-Fi connectivity is a bit clunky, but persevere and it eventually connects.”

BEST AIR PURIFIER FOR SMALL ROOMS

Winix Compact 4 Stage Air Purifier (AUS-0850AAPU), $224.99 (down from $299) at Amazon Australia

What You Need To Know

This Winix air purifier weighs just 3.1kg, has a clean air delivery rate of 250m³/h and can purify rooms up to 59m². It includes a smart sensor, smart air quality display and is said to be six times more energy efficient than a typical 60W light bulb.

Boasting three fan speeds, this portable unit contains a 360-degree all-in-one filtration system consisting of four purification stages. That includes a fine mesh pre-filter, activated carbon filter that captures VOCs and odours from cooking, pets and smoke, a true HEPA filter that to capture airborne pollutants and PlasmaWave Technology for helping neutralise airborne pollutants including odours, bacteria, viruses, chemical vapours and harmful gases.

BEST AIR PURIFIER FOR LARGE ROOMS

Winix Zero+ Pro 5 Stage Air Purifier (AUS-1250AZPU), $375 (down from $499) at Amazon Australia

What You Need To Know

For living rooms frequented by at least one fluffy canine (or feline), this Winix air purifier is a pet-owner approved option worth checking out. It boasts a five-stage filtration system which includes a dedicated pet filter to help deal with odours, allergens and airborne pollutants like dust, smoke, pollen, pet dander, mould, bacteria, viruses and VOCs.

The unit is also Sensitive Choice approved - which is handy for people with allergies - and designed for larger spaces such as bedrooms, open-plan rooms and offices.

“Incredibly easy to use, love the colour coding lights! It does exactly what it says it does. Filters are easy to replace, love the dedicated pet filter as a pet owner and that there are 12 in a pack. Value for money," raved a happy customer.

BEST PORTABLE AIR PURIFIER

Panasonic Nanoe X Generator (GPT01M), $316 at Amazon Australia

What You Need To Know

Weighing in at less than 0.4kg, Panasonic’s Nanoe X Generator is a truly portable unit that is made to purify rooms and smaller spaces. The coffee cup-like design can even fit into the cup holder of your car, so you can purify the air and rid your car of the smell of cigarette smoke or the takeaway you brought home the night before.

Due to its small size, this air purifier does have a very limited range but depending on your needs, it could still be worth a look.

BEST PREMIUM AIR PURIFIERS

Coway Airmega 400 Air Purifier, $999 at Amazon Australia

What You Need To Know

Coway’s flagship air purifier is designed to offer large coverage with minimal energy consumption. It has a clean air delivery rate of 677 m^3/h and effectively purifies areas of up to 176 m^2 - making it ideal for larger rooms such as open spaces and living rooms measuring 60m^2.

This air purifier includes five airflow levels, including Smart and Sleep modes, as well as dual-suction purification for cleaner air. Its filtration system is made up of a washable pre-filter and the brand’s Max2 Green

Filter (which consists of an activated carbon filter and a green HEPA filter).

One reviewer rated the air purifier five stars, hailing it a "great investment".

BEST AIR PURIFIER FAN

Dyson Purifier Cool Tower Fan (TP07), $497 (down from $949) at Dyson

What You Need To Know

Dyson’s Pure Cool Tower Fan serves a dual purpose – providing cooling in the summer months and air purification all year-round. With an adjustable oscillation angle from 45 to 350-degrees, you can also easily set the fan to purify or cool an entire room.

Designed with a bunch of key features, the air purifier can be navigated via remote control. It also detects and report on air quality levels in real time, which you can view both on the LCD screen and through the accompanying app. Meanwhile, its fully-sealed HEPA filters and

activated carbon filtration system traps harmful pollutants, airborne particles and removes gases and offensive allergens.

Ventilation for gas appliances

Natural and LPG gas need oxygen to burn. But not enough oxygen in a room or in a partially enclosed area with limited ventilation can cause other gases to build up and can be dangerous.

Good ventilation will pull fresh air in and can keep oxygen levels higher.

Indoor gas appliances

Gas appliances designed for indoor use are tested to make sure they are safe. This includes appliances that are:

power flued – a fan pushes the used air and other gases outside

natural draught flued – chimney draws other gases up and out

un-flued – expels the other gases and used air back into the room.

Rooms using a flued systems must have permanent ventilation to the outside. Gas instantaneous water heaters must not be installed in a bathroom or room with limited ventilation unless they are a ‘room sealed’ type.

Don’t use any un-flued and natural draught systems in:

- small rooms such as bathrooms
- rooms used for sleeping
- rooms with limited ventilation.

Flued appliances - safety checks

Ducts, piping or chimneys that vent used air and other gases outside can block up, have a fault or become damaged.

Signs of an unsafe flue can include:

- discoloured walls or appliances
- moisture forming on the inside of windows.

Contact a licensed gas fitter to inspect the appliance before you use it if you're concerned.

Unflued appliances - safety checks

Doors, windows, skylights or ventilation grilles should never be sealed while you are using an unflued gas appliance indoors.

By law, rooms with a unflued gas space heater must also have two permanent ventilation openings to outside at:

- ceiling level
- floor level.

Each opening must have a minimum area of 1,000 square millimetres per megajoules per hour (MJ/h), based on the maximum gas consumption level of the heater.

Before choosing and installing an unflued gas space heater, speak to a licensed gas fitter to ensure the heater is appropriate for the size and type of room, and there is enough ventilation.

The types of unflued indoor gas space heaters that can be installed in South Australia is restricted and safety checks are in place.

Outdoor gas appliances

If you intend to use an outdoor gas appliance in an area that is partially enclosed, such as a verandah or courtyard, the area must have either:

- no roof
- at least two of the sides completely open - these open sides must be at least half of the total wall area
- one side is open and 30% of the remaining area is unrestricted, for example large, permanently open windows.

For an area that isn’t a rectangle, use the same principle so at least half of the wall space around the structure is open.

Treating mould in your home

What is Mould?

Mould is a type of fungus that lives in warm, moist conditions. It grows in damp, dark and poorly ventilated areas at home like bathrooms and kitchens, or cluttered storage or basement areas.

Mould can be black, grey, green or white. Mould often looks like a stain or smudge and may smell musty.

Mould can grow in and on materials such as food, furniture, fabrics, carpets, walls, paper, timber and plumbing. Mould can also grow in decaying leaves, stale damp soil and compost.

How do I remove mould?

Mould should be removed as soon as it appears. Completely eliminating mould and its causes can take some persistence.
Small areas of mould can be cleaned by using a bleach mixture (1 part bleach to 3 parts water) or a suitable commercial product (follow the manufacturer's instructions).

Wear rubber gloves, take care not to splash the cleaning solution and make sure the area is well ventilated.

Don’t dry-brush mouldy areas as this can flick mould spores into the air which may cause health problems.

If mould returns, there may be an underlying problem. If mould contamination is extensive then a professional cleaner should be consulted.

Ways to reduce mould growth

Keep windows and walls dry inside the home by:

- ventilating rooms with open windows or doors or using extractor fans
- wiping away condensation
- heating rooms with dry heat

Family/Lounge room

Reduce air moisture by:

- opening curtains and blinds during the day
- opening windows and doors when possible

- switching to an electric or flued gas heater

Kitchen

Reduce moisture/humidity levels by:

- using an exhaust fan or opening a window when cooking
- using lids on pots and saucepans
- checking plumbing for leaks

Bathroom

- open a window or door or use an exhaust fan when having a shower or bath to
  control air moisture
- clean and dry surfaces that get wet regularly

Laundry

Reduce air moisture by:

- hanging wet clothes outdoors
- opening a window when using a clothes drier or venting the drier outside
- opening a window or door when using hot water

Cupboards and bedrooms

- open blinds and curtains to warm rooms with sunlight
- ensure clothes and shoes are dry before being put away
- keep cupboards and bedrooms uncluttered and well ventilated

Storage space

- dispose of any wet, badly damaged or musty smelling items
- store dry items in sealed plastic containers
- maintain good air movement in storage areas

Ventilation

Moisture and humidity levels are required to support mould growth.

The cheapest and easiest way of reducing moisture and humidity levels is by ventilating a room by opening a window or door. All areas of the house should be continuously ventilated where possible.

The most effective method of reducing moisture is to use exhaust fans in areas where water vapour is created. There must be enough ventilation for an adequate intake of fresh air to replace the moist air.

Reporting to Maintenance

To assist in reducing mould, contact Maintenance when:

- an exhaust fan stops working
- an unexplained water leak is found

Contact SA Housing Trust

SA Housing Trust Maintenance
Phone: 131 288
Umuwa office: 8954 8188

SA Housing Trust
Phone: 131 299

Email: housingcustomers@sa.gov.au
www.sa.gov.au/housing

How To Clean Windows Inside And Outside

Neglecting windows for too long can make them look dull and dingy and also affect the overall curb appeal of your home. The exterior part of your windows takes a lot due to extreme weather, birds dropping, dust and humidity. This can prevent the sunlight and fresh air flow into your home, leading to stagnant air and poor ventilation.

If you want to make your living space energy-efficient, make sure you regularly clean your windows inside and outside. However, the process can be challenging and time-consuming, especially if they are located at a certain height. So, here is a complete guide to help you deep clean windows without a hint of stress. Ensure you arrange all the necessary

supplies in advance and use only eco-friendly products to achieve streak-free results.

1. Stock up on All the Necessary Supplies

Arrange cleaning products and tools that can help you efficiently remove dirt, grime and stains from nooks, crannies and sills. Instead of using chemically-laden products, use sustainable and green options, including:

- White vinegar
- Hydrogen peroxide
- Mild dishwashing soap
- Warm water
- A handheld vacuum cleaner with a brush attachment
- An old toothbrush
- A sponge
- Microfiber cloth
- Rubber Squeegee
- Ladder or step stool if needed

2. Remove Loose Dust and Debris

Grab a microfiber cloth to remove dust, dirt, and debris from the window frames, sills, and ledges. You can also vacuum your blinds and shades to remove accumulated dust.

Use a vacuum cleaner with a brush attachment to clean the nooks and crannies, including tracks and sills. Removing loose dirt and debris inside and outside your windows when preparing your rental property can help you impress fussy landlord with ease.

3. Remove Stains from Window Frames and Panes

Prepare a DIY cleaning solution by mixing equal parts of white vinegar and soapy water. Next, use a sponge or a cloth and wet your window glass. Try to focus on spots and stains for sparkling results. It is good to work in an “S” pattern- from top to bottom or left to right to keep your windows smudge-free.

Avoid drenching windows with a cleaning solution, as this will leave streaks behind. Instead, leave the product for a few minutes and scrub using a sponge. Cover nooks and crannies for the best outcomes.

4. Clean the Window Tracks With an Old Toothbrush

Removing stuck stains and grime from nooks and crannies can be challenging. However, professional end of lease cleaning Adelaide experts recommend using an old toothbrush to fetch stains and grime. It works wonders in cleaning nooks and crannies with perfection.

5. Remove Mould from Sliding Door Tracks

If you notice mould spores between sliding door tracks, apply hydrogen peroxide solution and scrub the stains with a soft-bristled brush. Make sure you rinse and dry the surface to prevent moisture build-up. This is a crucial step that will help you maintain a clean and hygienic home.

6. Squeegee the Glass From Inside

To clean interior window glass and panes, ensure you run a rubber squeegee from top to bottom. This will help you remove soap residue and watermarks, leaving your windows streak-free and shiny.

Let your windows dry completely. You can also buff them dry with a clean, lint-free cloth to maintain their original glory.

7. Washing Windows Outside: Use Vinegar, Squeegee & Pressure Washer

When cleaning exterior windows, ensure you choose the right day. Never clean them on a sunny or hot day, as the sun heat dries the product as soon as you apply it, leaving streaks behind. Instead, choose early mornings, cloudy days, or evenings for sparkling results.

- **Apply the Cleaning Product:** Exterior windows are more prone to dirt and stains than interior ones. So, dip a sponge into a cleaning solution and gently wipe down your window frames, panes, and casings. Make sure you cover nooks and crannies for the best results.
- **Use a Pressure Washer:** You can also pressure wash the exterior parts of your windows to remove stubborn stains, dirt, and gunk. Set the pressure at low and carefully wash your windows.
- **Squeegee & Dry:** A rubber squeegee is a versatile tool to help you clean glass shower doors, mirrors, and tiles with perfection. Make sure you run a rubber squeegee from top to bottom, and cover nooks and crannies to avoid streaks. Next, dry the surface with a lint-free cloth (if required).

Tip: Hire professionals to access high-rise windows. They follow safety protocols and bring all the necessary tools to prevent injuries.

8. Regular Maintenance Matters

It is good to clean your windows inside and outside regularly. According to end of lease cleaning Adelaide professional, washing window twice every 6 months can maintain its original glory. In fact, regular dusting promotes quality indoor air, leading to proper ventilation and a positive environment.

10 tips to keep you and your house cool this summer

You can keep yourself and your house cool this summer and be kind to the environment at the same time. Here’s how.

For many people, summer means BBQs, beach cricket and dips in the pool.

But there are days when that harsh summer sun isn’t quite so fun and cranking up the air-con at home seems like your only option.

But there are days when that harsh summer sun isn’t quite so fun and cranking up the air-con at home seems like your only option.

We’ve all been there – those times when you just want to turn your house into a freezer and forget about the energy bill next quarter. But it’s important to remember that high energy use associated with cooling houses in summer contributes to greenhouse gas emissions and global warming.

Check out these 10 tips that will keep you and your house cool, save you money, and help you be kind to the earth:

1. Close your blinds

Keep your blinds closed, especially on north and west-facing windows, to significantly cool your home. Better yet, invest in some block-out curtains to shield your home from that harsh summer sun.

2. Block the heat

Stopping heat getting into your house in the first place means spending less on cooling. Shade windows and walls using external coverings, like blinds, awnings or large potted plants. Plant deciduous trees that cast shade over your home in summer, but still let the sun shine through in winter. If you can, invest in window tinting and top up your ceiling insulation – it'll help keep the warmth in in winter, too.

3. Just 1°Cmore

If you must use your air-conditioner, set the thermostat to between 24-27°C, or as high as you feel comfortable with. Increasing your thermostat by just 1°C in warm weather can reduce the running cost of your appliance by about 10 per cent.

If you're looking to upgrade your air-conditioner, pick one with a high energy-star rating and do your research to ensure you choose the right type of air-conditioner for your home.

4. Adjust ceiling fans

Sometimes you might feel like ceiling fans just push the hot air around your home rather than cool it down. Well you're not wrong – fans that aren't rotating counter-clockwise may be doing just that!

Set your ceiling fans to rotate counter-clockwise in summer to push air straight down helping to create a cooling effect and clockwise in winter to pull cool air up. In warmer weather, set the fan speed high and in cooler weather it works best on low. Ceiling fans can also be used complement other cooling types, so checking they rotate in the correct direction can make a world of difference to the temperature of your home.

5. Close doors and seal gaps

Close doors to rooms you aren't using to keep cool air where you need it most. Seal gaps around doors and windows, and use draught excluders to ensure the cool air can't escape.

Note: evaporative air-conditioners will be more effective if you open some doors and windows to increase air flow through the home.

6. Hang out in the evening

Closing your windows and staying inside may be a great idea during the day, but when it gets cooler in the evening you may want to open your house up to cool your home naturally – just make sure you lock up overnight!

Cooking dinner in the backyard or at the park may be a cooler alternative to being in a steamy kitchen too, so make the most of a cool breeze when you can.

7. Chill out, not chill on

Sip icy-cold drinks, apply a damp cloth to your neck and other pressure points on your body, or have a cold shower to cool your body without needing to switch the air-conditioner on.

8. Hack a fan

No air-con? No worries! A cleverly-positioned bowl of ice is all you need to turn a fan into a cold mist machine. Place a shallow bowl or pan of ice in front of a fan for an icy-cool breeze that won't break the bank.

9. Choose cotton

Cotton fabrics are super breathable and help cool your body. Wear light, loose clothing made of breathable fabrics like cotton, and fit your bed with cotton sheets.

10. Change your lightbulbs

If you're having trouble cooling your home and can't work out why, lightbulbs might be to blame. Incandescent and halogen light bulbs are being phased out in Australia, but many homes still use them. They produce a lot of heat, so switching to energy-saving bulbs like LED lights can help cool your home and save heaps on energy costs – that's a win-win!

Conclusion

Creating a healthy home is not a single action but a combination of consistent habits, thoughtful design, and responsible maintenance. Clean indoor air, safe ventilation practices, control of mould, and efficient cooling all contribute to environments that support wellbeing. Brightness and airflow, enhanced through clean windows and natural light, complement these efforts by connecting the indoors with the outdoors. Modern solutions, such as air purifiers, also provide added protection against pollutants that may affect health. By understanding and applying

these principles, households can create spaces that are not only comfortable and inviting but also supportive of long-term physical and mental wellbeing. A bright home with fresh air is more than a living space; it is the foundation of a healthier lifestyle for every individual.

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