

# The Complete Air Purifier Buying Guide

Everything you need to know before buying an air purifier in 2026

Choosing the right air purifier can be confusing. With hundreds of models on the market, how do you know which one is right for you? This guide breaks down everything you need to know.

## Step 1: Determine Your Room Size

The most important factor in choosing an air purifier is matching it to your room size. Measure your room's square footage (length x width) and choose a purifier rated for at least that size.

Room Size	Recommended CADR
Up to 200 sq ft	100+ cfm
200-400 sq ft	200+ cfm
400-600 sq ft	300+ cfm
600+ sq ft	400+ cfm

## Step 2: Understand Filtration Types

### HEPA Filters (Essential)

HEPA (High Efficiency Particulate Air) filters capture 99.97% of particles  $\geq 0.3$  microns. This includes dust, pollen, pet dander, mold spores, and some bacteria. HEPA is the gold standard for air purification.

### Activated Carbon (For Odors)

Carbon filters absorb gases, VOCs, and odors. If you need to remove cooking smells, paint fumes, or chemical odors, look for a purifier with a substantial carbon filter bed (not just a thin coating).

### Ionizers (Optional)

Ionizers charge particles so they stick to surfaces. They can produce trace ozone, which may irritate lungs. We recommend avoiding ionizers for daily use.

## Step 3: Set Your Budget

Budget	What You Get
Under \$150	Basic HEPA, small rooms, manual controls
\$150-300	HEPA + carbon, medium rooms, auto mode
\$300-500	Premium HEPA, large rooms, smart features
\$500+	Best filtration, whole-room, app control

## Step 4: Consider Noise Level

If you plan to use the purifier in a bedroom, noise matters. Look for models with a dedicated sleep mode that runs at 20-25 dB (quieter than a whisper).

## Step 5: Calculate Ongoing Costs

Don't forget about filter replacement costs. HEPA filters typically last 6-12 months (\$30-70). Carbon filters last 3-6 months (\$15-40). Budget \$50-100 per year for replacements.

## Our Top Picks

For detailed reviews and comparisons of our recommended air purifiers, visit [blank2done.com/categories/air-purifiers/](https://blank2done.com/categories/air-purifiers/)

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