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Air Filter MERV Ratings

Remember to Look for the MERV Rating for your Air Filter

MERV here stands for Minimum Efficiency Reporting Value, a value that indicates the size of particles an air filter is designed to grab. Higher MERV ratings are more effective at capturing smaller particles. That’s why hospitals tend to use MERV 16 or higher, to capture the most pollutants possible.

Although lower MERV rated filters are less efficient overall, they permit more air to go through the filter, which can improve the operation of the HVAC system. It’s important to have the perfect mix of air filter and MERV rating for to meet your home’s needs and your system. Call Service Experts Heating & Air Conditioning in North America today to let us help determine which MERV rating is ideal for your home and family.

The American Society of Heating, Refrigerating and Air Conditioning Engineers (ASHRAE), which designed the MERV rating, advises filters with minimum MERV ratings of 6. The U.S. Department of Energy recommends a minimum of MERV 13. For the best overall solution for most homeowners, acquire an Air Purification System, which comes with a MERV 16 media filter, and you’ll be in good shape for years.

Here’s how Air Filter MERV Ratings stack up:

- MERV 1 to 4— <20% of large particles (3 to 10 microns) are captured
- 5 to 7—Between 20% and 69% of large particles are captured
- 8 to 10—Approximately 85% of large particles and 50% of small particles (1.0 to 3.0 microns) are captured
- 11 to 16—More than 90% of large particles and between 70% and 90% of small particles are captured
- 17 to 20—Even the smallest particles (< 0.3 microns) are captured

The right MERV rating on the right filter could really impact your indoor air quality, your health and your lifestyle. So picking the right air filter matters. Call Service Experts today at 866-397-3787. We offer a full range of air filtration choices, knowledge and expert service—and we’re here 24 hours a day for North America.

MERV Rating Chart

MERV Rating	Dust Spot Efficiency	Arrestance	Typical Controlled Containment	Typical Applications	Air Filter/Cleaner Type
20	N/A	N/A	< 0.30 pm particle size	Clean rooms	>99.999% eff. On 10-20 pm Particles
19	N/A	N/A	Virus (unattached)	Radioactive Materials	Particles
18	N/A	N/A	Carbon Dust	Pharmaceutical Man.	Particulates
17	N/A	N/A	All Combustion smoke	Carcinogenetic Materials	>99.97% eff. On 30 pm Particles
16	N/A	N/A	0.3-1.0 pm Particle Size	General Surgery	Bag filter - Non-supported microfine fiberglass or synthetic media, 12-36 in. deep, 6-12 pockets Box filter - Rigid Style CartridgeFilters 6 to 12" deep may use lofted or paper media
15	> 95%	N/A	All Bacteria	Hospital Inpatient Care	
14	90% - 95%	> 98%	Most Tobacco Smoke	Smoking Lounge	
13	89% - 90%	> 98%	Proplet Nuclei (Sneeze)	Superior Commercial Buildings	
12	70% - 75%	> 95%	1.0 - 3.0 pm Particle Size Legionella	Superior Residential	Bag filter - Non-supported microfine fiberglass or synthetic media, 12-36 in. deep, 6-12 pockets Box filter - Rigid Style CartridgeFilters 6 to 12" deep may use lofted or paper media
11	60% - 65%	> 95%	Humidifier Dust Lead Dust	Better Commercial Buildings	
10	50% - 55%	> 95%	Milled Flour Auto Emissions	Hospital Laboratories	
9	40% - 45%	> 90%	Welding Fumes		
8	30% - 35%	> 90%	3.0 - 10.0 pm Particle Size	Commercial Buildings	Pleated Filters - Disposable, extended surface area, thick with cotton-polyester blend media, cardboard frame Cartridge Filters - Grated density viscous coated cube or pocket filters, synthetic media Throwaway - Disposable synthetic panel liner
7	25% - 30%	> 90%	Mold Spores Hair Spray	Better Residential	
6	< 20%	85%-90%	Fabric Protector Dusting Aids	Industrial Workplace	
5	< 20%	85%-90%	Cement Dust	Paint Booth Inlet	
4	< 20%	75%-80%	> 10.0 pm Particle Size Pollen	Minimal Filtration	Throwaway - Disposable synthetic panel liner Washable - Aluminum Mesh Electrostatic - Self-charging woven panel filter
3	< 20%	70%-75%	Dust Mites Sanding Dust	Residential	
2	< 20%	65%-70%	Spray Paint Dust		
1	< 20%	< 65%	Textile Fibers Carpet Fibers	Window A/C Units	
					< U.S. Military "Standards"

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