

## PRESS MONITOR

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### Clean air warriors

Do air purifiers work? And how effective are they?  
Abhik Sen tries out three models to find out

If you live in one of the most polluted cities on this planet, like I do, chances are you've already taken steps to protect yourself when outside. But even the air we breathe in at home carries harmful particulate matter.

The past year has seen the launch of HEPA (high efficiency particulate air)-based air purifiers. HEPA filters catch and trap indoor particles like PM 2.5 particulates, pollen and allergens, making the air healthier. Since I'm allergic to dust, these purifiers could be a godsend.

But as I tested them, I realised two things. One, the air blowing out of a purifier (especially one with a higher cooling capacity) also cools the room. I was trembling in December while using a purifier at night and I was trembling in March when using a purifier with the AC on. Two, it takes lesser time to clean the air when the AC is on — or at least that's what these purifiers indicated.

#### KENT AURA AIR PURIFIER

The Aura is a smart-looking device and supports rooms up to 270 sq ft and features a three-stage filtration process — a pre-filter to trap bigger particles like dust, a HEPA filter with anti-bacterial coating and the activated carbon filter to absorb bad odour.

More than the purifier, I was more interested in the device to measure air pollution, which kept thoughtfully alert me during the review process (and isn't for sale). I installed the Aura in my 12th floor flat, pollution levels were alarming. It brought them down in 15 minutes flat.

The Aura can be programmed to run silently at night and it bundles two important features: an indicator that shows when to replace the filter and a child lock.

Try this if you want a no-nonsense portable air purifier for small- to medium-sized rooms.  
Price: ₹15,000



#### MOONBOW AIR PURIFIER 8608

The Moonbow line of air purifiers is sanitarianware major HSL's foray into the segment. This line of air-purifiers employ a five-stage filtration process: a pre-filter, the HEPA filter, the activated carbon filter, an ultra-violet lamp to destroy microorganisms such as germs, viruses, bacteria and fungi, and an ioniser to generate negative ions, which in turn would free the air of pollen and the like. The 8608 can service rooms up to 500 sq ft. I placed it in the hall, which is 12ft by 20 ft.

The purifier packs in a plethora of functions. What I liked most were three: a dust sensor that automatically turns the purifier on; a timer to control the speed between two and eight hours and an LED indicator that turns from red to blue as the air is cleaned. Except when the fan was at the highest speed, the 8608 ran silently and was also able to sterilise the air. Stepping out after spending about five hours in this room made me feel a bit uneasy. In fact, having been in the near-sterilised environment, when I stepped out I started sneezing.

Price: ₹24,990



#### ATLANTA HEALTHCARE UNIVERSAL 450

This purifier looks futuristic with its LEDs and is suitable for rooms up to 450 sq ft. It boasts of a seven-stage filtration and monitoring mechanism, which basically means it does all that the 8608 does, plus it has a water compartment that helps increase humidity in the room, if the environment turns dry.

There's a band of light which flashes red, then amber and finally green when the air has been cleaned. It runs silently (in fact, it's the quietest of all the three air purifiers I tested), and switches off once the job is done.

If you stay somewhere where dry conditions prevail, or you can't afford the Moonbow 8608, but want its functions, go for this one.  
Price: ₹26,950



#### CAMBRIDGE MASKS

Out on the road, we need a lot more protection than an ordinary mask. Here are some that are named after famous English characters: Sherlock Holmes, Lady Macbeth or Prince George. I tested Lady Macbeth and all

was well and clean till until it became warmer. Then, while the mask kept the impurities about it did leave the face sweaty and uncomfortable. The bottomline: this mask works for short trips outdoors.

Price: Not known yet

