

# Understanding MERV Filters

## What is a MERV Filter?

MERV stands for Minimum Efficiency Reporting Value. These are filters that go into an HVAC system to capture unwanted particles from the air that flows through the system. MERV ratings range from 1 to 16, with higher ratings capturing smaller particles, like airborne viruses, more effectively.

The higher the MERV number, the more effectively particles are trapped by the filter. But the HVAC system may need to work harder to push air through the denser filters. Not all HVAC systems are built to handle the higher MERV filters due to the pressure they put on the system.

## The MERV-13 Filter

For health benefits, the [CDC recommends](#) using a MERV 13 filter. Going higher than MERV 13 has diminishing returns on health benefits and uses more energy. MERV-13 filters, unlike MERV filters of lower ratings, can more effectively capture smaller pollutants like mold, smoke, allergens, bacteria, and viruses.

## Affordability

The difference in cost between purchasing and operating MERV 8 and MERV 13 filters is relatively small, while the health benefits of using MERV 13 filters are significantly greater.

## How do I know if my HVAC system can handle it?

Many industrial HVAC systems are able to handle MERV 13 filters, but it is best to consult a specialist or check your system's specification.