

# Shopper's Guide to Avoiding PFAS

Per- and polyfluoroalkyl substances (PFAS) are a class of chemicals that make products stainproof, water-resistant, and oil and fat resistant. PFAS are used in over 200 industries. The chart below identifies just a few of the common uses of PFAS and some options for finding PFAS-free alternatives.

## Websites

<https://www.ewg.org/withoutintentionallyaddedpfaspfc> and <https://pfascentral.org/pfas-free-products/>

## Apps

**Detox Me.** Developed by scientists at Silent Spring Institute, helps identify toxics in personal care products, cleaners and households goods.

[silentspring.org/detoxme](https://silentspring.org/detoxme)




**Environmental Working Group's Healthy Living app.** [ewg.org/apps](https://www.ewg.org/apps)




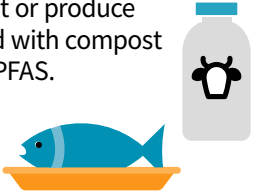

**Clearya.** Downloadable to phone or computer, identifies products with chemicals of concern, can be used when shopping online at:







Amazon, IHerb, Sephora, Target, or Walmart. [www.clearya.com](https://www.clearya.com)

## Other

Mind the Store is a campaign to get the 100 largest big box and chain stores/restaurants to stop using and selling products containing toxic chemicals, including PFAS. Find out more at [saferchemicals.org/mind-the-store](https://saferchemicals.org/mind-the-store)

ITEM	PFAS likely to be in:	Links for additional information and examples of PFAS-free brands
<b>Apparel</b>	Clothing that is “stain-resistant” or “waterproof” None of the “green” certifications for the clothing industry address PFAS, so you cannot rely on green certifications to avoid PFAS.	e.g. Benetton, H&M, Levi Strauss and Company, Prana, Uniqlo, Zara <a href="https://www.pрана.com/sustainability/preferred-fibers-and-materials/chemical-care.html">https://www.pрана.com/sustainability/preferred-fibers-and-materials/chemical-care.html</a> <a href="https://www.newmoa.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/05/PFAS_ClothingandTextiles.pdf">https://www.newmoa.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/05/PFAS_ClothingandTextiles.pdf</a> <b>Third party certification:</b> Oeko tex certified products do not have intentionally added PFAS.
<b>Outdoor apparel and gear</b>	Waterproof gear and clothing including shoes/boots may have PFAS 	<a href="https://sierraclub.org/sierra/outerwear-shield-you-rain-and-forever-chemicals">sierraclub.org/sierra/outerwear-shield-you-rain-and-forever-chemicals</a> <a href="https://sierraclub.org/sierra/outdoor-gear-ll-keep-you-snug-and-dry-sans-forever-chemicals">sierraclub.org/sierra/outdoor-gear-ll-keep-you-snug-and-dry-sans-forever-chemicals</a> <a href="https://mamavation.com/product-investigations/safest-nontoxic-jackets-raincoats-pfas-forever-chemicals.html">mamavation.com/product-investigations/safest-nontoxic-jackets-raincoats-pfas-forever-chemicals.html</a> <a href="https://www.newmoa.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/05/PFAS_OutdoorRecreation.pdf">https://www.newmoa.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/05/PFAS_OutdoorRecreation.pdf</a> e.g. Burberry, Marmot (some), Mammut
<b>Children's products</b>	Any product identified as “stain-resistant” or “water-proof” including apparel, mattresses, pillow covers, bibs, face masks 	e.g. Hanna Anderson <b>Third party certification:</b> Oeko tex certified products do not have intentionally added PFAS.
<b>Carpets/ rugs</b>	Stain-resistant and waterproof products are likely to have PFAS 	Many rug/carpet companies have stopped using PFAS. e.g. Shaws, rugs sold at Home Depot, Lowes

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<b>Furniture textiles</b>	Stain-resistant and waterproof textiles including indoor and outdoor furniture, drapes, tablecloths and awnings 	e.g. <i>IKEA</i>
<b>Personal care products</b>	Any product with “perfluor” in the ingredients list. Products identified as long-lasting or waterproof, especially lipstick, mascara, foundation <b>Many products do not have a full list of ingredients on labels.</b> 	<a href="https://ewg.org/skindeep">ewg.org/skindeep</a> <a href="https://ewg.org/skindeep/contents/is-teflon-in-your-cosmetics">ewg.org/skindeep/contents/is-teflon-in-your-cosmetics</a> <a href="https://pfascentral.org/pfas-free-products">pfascentral.org/pfas-free-products</a> has good list of PFAS-free dental floss. <a href="https://www.newmoa.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/05/PFAS_PersonalCareProducts.pdf">https://www.newmoa.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/05/PFAS_PersonalCareProducts.pdf</a>  e.g. <i>Credo, Burt’s Bees, personal care products at Whole Foods Market, H&amp;M, Clean at Sephora</i>
<b>Garden products</b>	Products made from residuals (treated human waste) <sup>2</sup> Food packaging with PFAS may contaminate compost 	Buy compost from composters that: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Do not accept compostable food packaging, or</li> <li>• Only accept Biodegradable Product Institute (BPI)-certified compostable food packaging.</li> </ul>
<b>Food</b>	PFAS may be in milk, meat or produce if farms have been treated with compost or fertilizer that contains PFAS. Fish, seafood may be contaminated by surface water with PFAS. 	Fresh, unprocessed food is generally healthier than fast food. Pay attention to any food advisories issued by your state. While bottled water may contain PFAS, Massachusetts requires bottled water companies to provide test results showing that their water has less than 20 parts per trillion of the 6 PFAS regulated in Massachusetts. Companies must provide test results quarterly and remain below 20 ppt in order to sell their water in Massachusetts.
<b>Food packaging</b>	PFAS may be in paper-based disposable food packaging, including paper plates, cups, wrappers, bakery bags, candy wrappers, and trays contain PFAS. PFAS in disposal food packaging gets into food. PFAS travels faster into hot, greasy food. All microwave popcorn bags have PFAS, so avoid using. PFAS can be added as a coating to disposable paper-based packaging. It can also be mixed with torn pieces of paper and dried on a mold. PFAS can also be in plastic containers that are treated with fluorine. 	Look for products that are BPI certified. Since 2020, the Biodegradable Products Institute has required that all compostable food packaging must be PFAS-free. Look for BPI logo on product or research options at: <a href="https://bpiworld.org">https://bpiworld.org</a> Center for Environmental Health has a frequently updated database of PFAS-free food packaging at: <a href="https://ceh.org/products/single-use-containers">https://ceh.org/products/single-use-containers</a> . Click on database link. In chart, products with green/no-F are free of PFAS. Greenscreen certifies food service ware products that are PFAS-free: <a href="https://www.greenscreenchemicals.org/certified/products/category/food">https://www.greenscreenchemicals.org/certified/products/category/food</a> <a href="https://www.newmoa.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/05/PFAS_InFoodPkg_rnd7.pdf">https://www.newmoa.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/05/PFAS_InFoodPkg_rnd7.pdf</a>  e.g. <i>Worldcentric</i>

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<b>Cookware</b>	Almost <u>all</u> non-stick cookware contains PFAS. Those that don't, often contain bisphenol A (BPA), which should also be avoided. 	Avoid non-stick cookware. Go with stainless steel, cast iron, glass. If you must have non-stick, go with silicone enamel. Some products with silicone enamel listed at <a href="https://ecocenter.org/healthy-stuff/reports/whats-cooking-nonstick-pan-study-2020">ecocenter.org/healthy-stuff/reports/whats-cooking-nonstick-pan-study-2020</a>
<b>Artificial turf</b>	Artificial turf contains PFAS and other contaminants of concern. 	Natural grass
<b>Building materials</b>	Many building materials contain PFAS. For more information, see: <a href="https://greensciencepolicy.org/our-work/building-materials/pfas-in-building-materials/">https://greensciencepolicy.org/our-work/building-materials/pfas-in-building-materials/</a>	<a href="https://homefree.healthybuilding.net/products">homefree.healthybuilding.net/products</a> <a href="https://greenbuildingsupply.com">greenbuildingsupply.com</a> <a href="https://buildinggreen.com/product-guidance">buildinggreen.com/product-guidance</a> (Some material free, in-depth guidance requires membership)
<b>Cleaners and waxes</b>	PFAS is in many cleaners and in floor waxes. Many cleaning products do not fully disclose ingredients on product labels. 	<p>You can find a wide variety of pfas-free cleaners at <a href="https://ewg.org/guides/cleaners/">ewg.org/guides/cleaners/</a></p> <p><b>Third party certifications:</b> EPA Safer Choice, Ecologo and Greenseal are third party environmental certifications that restrict toxic chemicals in cleaners and some other products. Their logo is on products they certify.</p> <p><b>EPA Safer Choice</b> restricts PFAS in all of its certified products. Searchable database at: <a href="https://www.epa.gov/saferchoice/products">https://www.epa.gov/saferchoice/products</a>.</p> <p><b>Greenseal</b> restricts PFAS in general purpose cleaners, laundry cleaners, specialty cleaners, and had care products. Other products certified by Greenseal may have PFAS. Searchable database at: <a href="https://certified.greenseal.org">https://certified.greenseal.org</a></p> <p><b>Ecologo</b> restricts PFAS in cleaners. Other Ecologo-certified products may have PFAS.</p>   

*Disclaimer: Clean Water Fund has not independently tested the products identified above and we do not endorse products.*

**Third party certifications:** An overview of third party certifications and PFAS is at [https://ceh.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/07/pfas-free-purchasing\\_6-9-22.pdf](https://ceh.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/07/pfas-free-purchasing_6-9-22.pdf)

**For institutional purchasers:** Two buying guides for PFAS-free products are <https://www.mass.gov/doc/pfas-free-buying-guide/download> and [sfapproved.gov](https://sfapproved.gov)

Information is current as of May 2025. Check for updates at: <https://cleanwaterfund.org/pfas-chemicals-protecting-our-drinking-water-and-our-health>

## Misleading claims:

When it comes to PFAS, product claims can be misleading.

There are thousands of different types of PFAS. The first two chemicals to be introduced were PFOA (perfluorooctanoic acid) and PFOS (perfluorooctanesulfonic acid.). Voluminous research demonstrates that these chemicals are persistent, bio-accumulative and toxic. As a result, the Environmental Protection Agency worked with industry to phase out American manufacture of these chemicals in 2015.

Industry developed new chemicals to replace PFOA and PFOS. These new chemicals are sometimes called “short-chain” chemicals while PFOA and PFOS are referred to as “long-chain” or legacy chemicals.

## Some industry claims:

### **Long-chain PFAS are unsafe, short-chain PFAS are safe.**

No PFAS have been shown to be safe.

### **PFCec Free Durable Water Repellant (DWR) is safe.**

PFCec stands for PFCs of environmental concern, and PFCec Free refers to polymers or shorter chain PFAS that industry claims are safer, but no PFAS have been shown to be safe.

### **This pan is PFOA-free and PFOS-free.**

Products that make this claim often have other PFAS.

### **Fluoropolymers (large molecules with fluorine) are stable and safe.**

No, they're not. They are made using harmful PFAS chemicals and they can break down into other toxic PFAS.

### **Industry claims: PFAS are like berries. They're all different.**

Scientists around the world are calling for restrictions on the entire class of PFAS, because:

- PFAS have common characteristics that make them extremely persistent.
- Those PFAS that have been studied have been found to be toxic at very low doses.
- While every one of the thousands of PFAS have not been fully analyzed, there is enough concern about those PFAS that have been characterized to warrant caution.

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## FOR MORE INFORMATION, PLEASE CONTACT:

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**Community Action Works:** <https://communityactionworks.org>, (857) 702-2645



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