Oxygen (O2)

Colour: None

Smell: None

Oxygen is essential to all life on earth. We need it to survive.

Percentage of atmosphere: 21%







Nitrogen (N)

Colour: None

Smell: None

All living things contain nitrogen - including us.

Percentage of atmosphere: 79%







Argon (Ar)

Colour: None

Smell: None

Argon is a good insulator - it's even used to keep deep sea divers warm!

Percentage of atmosphere: 0.97%







Carbon Dioxide (CO2)

Colour: None

Smell: None

CO2 is very important. We breathe it out from our lungs and plants absorb it via the photosynthesis process.

Percentage of atmosphere: 0.03%







Carbon Monoxide (CO)

Colour: None

Smell: None

Source: Vehicle exhausts, burning

firewood, cigarettes







Sulphur Dioxide (SO2)

Colour: None

Smell: Burnt Matches

Source: Volcanic eruptions, industrial processes, burning fossil fuels







Ammonia (NH3)

Colour: None

Smell: Strong and suffocating

Source: Cleaning products, industrial

processes







Nitrogen Dioxide (NO2)

Colour: Reddish brown

Smell: Pungent and acrid

Source: Vehicle exhausts, cigarette

smoke







Methane (CH4)

Colour: None

Smell: None

Source: Natural gas, release from melting permafrost, farming practices (cows)







Carbon Dioxide (CO2)

Colour: None

Smell: None

Source: Natural gas, burning of fossil

fuels and wood







Fine Particulate Matter (PM10)

Colour: Varies

Smell: Varies

Source: Soot (black carbon) from vehicle exhausts, burning fossil fuels, pollen







Ultra Fine Particulate Matter (PM2.5)

Colour: Varies

Smell: Varies

Source: Soot (black carbon) from vehicle

exhausts, burning fossil fuels, dust,

pollen





