

Professional Use Respirator FAQs

What is the shelf life of 3M™ Cartridges?

Provided they are stored unopened in the original packaging and away from direct sunlight, humidity and sources of high temperature, cartridges will last five years from their manufacture date. See “use by” date on packaging.



How should I store my 3M™ Respirators, Cartridges and Filters?

Prior to first use and when not in use, 3M™ Respirators, Cartridges and Filters should be kept clean, cool and dry, and away from contaminated atmospheres to avoid deterioration. Store cartridges in a sealed container or bag.



Why do I need to use a 3M™ Particulate Filter with my 3M™ Gas & Vapor Cartridges for some applications?

The particulate filter helps remove tiny droplets or particles in the air (e.g., mists from spray painting). The gas and vapor cartridges do not help filter these particles.



What is a fit test?

Because everyone's face can be different, a fit test is required to determine if a respirator is capable of an adequate seal to the face of the wearer. OSHA requires this to be done before the respirator is first issued and, after that, at least annually. In addition, all users must always perform a user seal check each time before they enter a contaminated environment.



Watch Videos:
"Fit Testing" and "How to Wear"

Can I wear a tight-fitting respirator with a beard?

No. OSHA requires respirator wearers be clean-shaven. Do not use a tight-fitting respirator with beards/facial hair or other conditions that prevent a good seal between the face and the edge of the respirator.

Why are the filters pink?

When a filter has the magenta color code, it has the P100 designation. This color provides uniformity and easy identification.



Common Cartridge Color Designations

Color code	Color	NIOSH approved for
Black	Black	Organic vapors
Yellow	Yellow	Organic vapors, acid gases
Magenta	Magenta	High-efficiency particulates (PAPRs) or P100

Note: color codes correlate with cartridge ring colors.



This respirator helps reduce exposures to certain airborne contaminants. Before use, the wearer must read and understand the User Instructions provided as a part of the product packaging. Follow all local regulations. In the U.S., a written respiratory protection program must be implemented meeting all the requirements of OSHA 1910.134, including training, fit testing and medical evaluation. In Canada, CSA standard Z94.4 requirements must be met and/or requirements of the applicable jurisdiction, as appropriate. Misuse may result in sickness or death. For proper use, see package instructions, supervisor, or call 3M PSD Technical Service in USA at 1-800-243-4630 and in Canada at 1-800-267-4414.

This document is not a substitute for User Instructions. Always read and follow all User Instructions.



For more information, visit [3M.com/respirators](https://www.3m.com/respirators).

Professional Cartridge Replacement FAQs



When do I replace my 3M™ Particulate Filters?

Replace filters under any of the following conditions:

- ▶ It becomes difficult to breathe comfortably (this will vary from individual to individual)
- ▶ The filter becomes dirty
- ▶ The filter has physical damage
- ▶ For P-Series filters only when used in environments containing oil aerosols: Dispose of P-Series filters after 40 hours of use or 30 days, whichever comes first

For guidance on filter replacement frequency, visit **3M.com/filterchange**.



WARNING

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When do I replace my 3M™ Gas & Vapor Cartridges?

The service life (i.e., how long it will last) of any gas and vapor cartridge is affected by many factors, such as contaminant, contaminant concentration, breathing rate, humidity level, temperature and other use conditions.

Replace 3M™ Gas & Vapor Cartridges in accordance with your established change schedule or government regulation. If the contaminant can be detected inside the respirator by smell or taste, replace cartridges immediately.

To avoid using your 3M™ Gas & Vapor Cartridges beyond their service life, take the following steps:

- ▶ Before use, check the expiration date printed on the package
- ▶ Write the date on the cartridges when you remove them from the pack
- ▶ Change cartridges in accordance with your established cartridge change schedule or government regulation
- ▶ If at any time you smell or taste the contaminant or irritation is detected, leave the contaminated area immediately and try adjusting your respirator and/or changing the respirator cartridges

To access 3M™ Service Life Software, visit **3M.com/servicelifesoftware**.

