

Whether they're being used to unwind for improved sleep quality, to uplift the mood, or to create the precise ambience, Essential Oil aromas have the potential to enhance the mind, body, and atmosphere. While it can be confusing to make a selection when faced with the vast number of Essential Oil options due to their limitless benefits, it can be easier to make a choice by narrowing down the options based on the characteristics of their "aroma families". Each Essential Oil aroma family exhibits a primary aromatic trait by which it is easily recognized (citrusy, floral, minty, etc.) and a corresponding effect (calming, grounding, cooling, energizing, clarifying, etc), which can help to readily identify the ideal application for it.

This article mainly highlights the core aroma families, as families also have offshoots or sub-groupings in which several categories of Essential Oils overlap. One example is the "Balsamic" aroma family. Essential Oils in this group can be described as having soft, sweet, warm, earthy aromas with spicy and floral undertones. They are reminiscent of resins and exude the scent of a forest and especially of Balsam trees. Inhaling the scent of balsamic essential oils can produce a peaceful, soothing, and grounding effect. Another example of a complex aroma family is "coniferous" oils, which exude a woody and earthy pine scent, as they are generally distilled from cone-bearing trees. Their scents are characterized as sharp, biting, camphoraceous, and energizing, reminiscent of fresh outdoor air. Based on these descriptions, Essential Oils in these sub-groupings can fall into several of the eight main aroma families. The sub-group of "lemony" oils, too, can encompass not only oils with "Lemon" in their names - Lemongrass, Lemon Balm, lemon Eucalyptus, but also oils like Ginger, Citronella, and Palmarosa.

An oil's aroma can also change from one batch to another, often for reasons based in nature, such as the source botanical's growing conditions. Thus, due to the complexity and subjectivity of scent profiles, this article focuses on the commonly accepted and widely recognized classes of aromas or "aroma families".