



Understanding Cartridge Filters in Your Home

Cartridge filters are one of the simplest and most affordable ways to improve your home's water quality. They are used inside standard filter housings and can remove sediment, chlorine, tastes/odors, and even help prevent scale depending on the type you choose. This guide explains the **three major categories** of cartridge filters found in homes and how each one is used.

■ 1. Sediment Filters

Sediment filters remove physical particles floating in water—think sand, grit, rust flakes, silt, or cloudy water.

Sediment filters come in **three different styles**, each with slightly different strengths.

A) Melt-Blown Sediment Filter

What it is:

A solid white cartridge made from layers of melted polypropylene fibers.

What it removes:

- Fine sediment
- Silt
- Rust flakes
- Cloudiness

Best for homeowners who:

- Have well water
- See cloudy water or fine residue in sinks/tubs
- Want a low-cost, general-purpose filter

Typical lifespan: 3–6 months

Lancaster Part Number: Example [210-C10-MB](#)



B) Pleated “Paper” Sediment Filter

What it is:

A cartridge with folded (pleated) material, similar to an air filter.

What it removes:

- Larger sediment
- Sand
- Grit
- Debris

Best for homeowners who:

- Have well water with heavy sediment loads





- Need a filter that can be rinsed (most pleated filters allow this)
- Want longer life compared to melt-blown

Typical lifespan: 3–6 months but can be rinsed

C) String-Wound Sediment Filter

What it is:

A core wrapped tightly in string, creating a depth filter.

What it removes:

- Larger particles first
- Finer particles as water moves inward
- Great for unpredictable sediment swings

Best for homeowners who:

- Have old pipes that shed rust
- Have fluctuating sediment levels
- Need a filter that resists clogging

Typical lifespan: 3–6 months

Lancaster Part Number: Example [210-C05-WT](#)



2. Carbon Block Filters

Carbon block cartridges are used primarily for **taste, odor, and chlorine removal**.

What they do:

- Reduce chlorine
- Improve taste
- Remove odors
- Reduce small particulates
- Improve overall drinking-water quality

Commonly used on **city water**, but also in well-water homes when an odor or taste issue is present.

Great for:

- Kitchen water
- Whole-home chlorine reduction
- Municipal water with strong chlorine smell
- Improving the taste of coffee, tea, ice, and drinking water

Typical lifespan: 6–12 months

Lancaster Part Number: Example [210-C05-CA](#)





3. Scale Prevention Filters (Polyphosphate Filters)

These filters help protect appliances and plumbing from hard-water scale buildup.

What they do:

- Reduce scale formation
- Protect water heaters, dishwashers, coffee makers
- Do NOT soften water, but prevent minerals from sticking

Great for homeowners who:

- Have hard water but aren't ready for a full water softener
- Want extra protection for tankless heaters
- Use them as a prefilter for appliances

Typical lifespan: 6 months

Lancaster Part Number: *Example* [420-C5-SCALE](#)



How Often Should I Change My Cartridge Filters?

A good rule of thumb is:

- **Sediment filters:** every 3–6 months
- **Carbon block filters:** every 6–12 months
- **Scale prevention filters:** every 6 months

You may need to change your filter sooner if you notice:

- ✓ Drop in water pressure
- ✓ Cloudy or discolored water
- ✓ Return of chlorine taste or odor
- ✓ Appliance scale buildup reappearing

Final Tips for Homeowners

- Always shut off water before opening the filter housing.
- Use the filter wrench that came with your system.
- Lubricate O-rings lightly with silicone grease.
- Keep spare filters on hand for emergencies.
- Record installation dates to stay on schedule.