

Scent Haiku Challenge: Write at least one haiku for each of the 10 main categories of scent we can detect as humans

1. Fragrant

The research team lumped fragrant smells in with **perfumery, floral, cologne,** and **rosy smells**. Fragrant scents are the ones that seem light and natural, what is typically described by perfume and cologne manufacturers as “**grassy**” or “**herbal**.”

2. Woody/Resinous

Your nose easily picks up deep, **earthy smells** that remind you of the outdoors, the researchers claim. The smells are distinct to nature, which makes them easily recognizable. The team included with woody/resinous scents of **musty, moldy, heavy, burnt,** and **smoky**.

3. Non-Citrus Fruity

Opposite the hearty musk of the outdoors are the **light, fresh scents** associated with **strawberries, banana,** and certain perfumes that draw upon these natural aromas. Unlike the sharp, bitter freshness of lemon, non-citrus fruit smells may feel more “**smooth**” or “**silky**” to the nose.

4. Sharp/Pungent

You know it the moment you smell it. These smells include **sour milk**, **fecal matter** (e.g. **manure**), **sweat**, and the natural smell of things that have turned **putrid** or **foul**. These scents make you reel the instant you detect them. **Oniony** and **garlicky** smells also fall into this category.

5. Chemical

Your nose is particularly adroit at detecting **synthetic smells**. Even the most realistic perfume has its limits. It's for this reason you're able to quickly sniff out **bleach** and **gasoline**, or **paint** and **felt tip markers**. Researchers also included **alcohol** and **disinfectants** in the category.

6. Minty/Peppermint

Described as **cool**, **fresh**, **exhilarating**, the **minty/peppermint** smell has perhaps no rivals in the scent world. It's become synonymous with cleanliness and is ubiquitous among oral hygiene products for this very reason. The researchers also include **spicy** in this category.

7. Sweet

Diverging from sweetness detected in fruit, the researchers classified as "sweet" the aromas of things like **chocolate**, **vanilla**, **almond**, and **malty scents**. They're warm, and often light. Oftentimes they'll be sold as "**creamy**" or "**rich**."

8. Popcorn

Popcorn as the figurehead for the group may be jarring, as its neighboring groups are so unmistakable (not to say popcorn isn't). But popcorn was grouped with other distinct smells, such as **peanut butter, burnt, nutty, heavy,** and **warm**. It's that earthy smell that isn't quite grass or wood.

9. Sickening

Sickening and **decaying** smells are a step beyond sharp/pungent smells. It's **sewage, burnt rubber, sulfuric acid,** and **household gas**.

Sickening smells are those that cause you to dry heave when the nose detects them in heavy enough concentrations. They aren't merely "unpleasant;" they're usually insufferable.

10. Lemon

Who could forget the trusty **scent of lemon**? Used in cleaning products for decades, the scent of lemon and **citrus** connotes freshness — like mint — with a hint of sweetness and sharpness that makes it unique from the others. It's light and acidic, and the nose knows it instantly.

ARTICLE SOURCE: <https://www.medicaldaily.com/10-different-smells-are-detectable-your-nose-how-did-popcorn-make-list-257395>

Materials provided by Jacob Salzer, HSA Haiku Mentor (March 2021)