Types of Ingredients

Most fragrances are a combination of many aromatic ingredients. These ingredients are derived from nature or created by scientific methods.

**NATURAL** ingredients include essential oils, resins, and absolutes.

- **AROMATIC ESSENTIAL OILS** are derived from plants using either distillation or cold pressing. They are generally in liquid form. An essential oil from one plant can vary in color, odor and price depending on the crop from which the oil is derived. Mother nature rules here, and variations between lots of the same oil must be assessed for suitability.
  - Examples: Orange oil, Lavender oil, Patchouli oil, Cedar wood oil
  - Note: Not all plants yield aromatic essential oils.

- **RESINS** are materials which are exuded from a plant when the other layer of the plant is cut. They are dense and sticky and may solidify into a solid mass. Heat may be required to melt some resins.
  - Examples: Myrrh resin, Benzoin resin, Fir resin, Oakmoss resin
  - Note: Resins are long lasting fragrance ingredients

- **ABSOLUTES** are created by removing the aromatic components from plants which cannot yield essential oils. Many plants are too fragile to be distilled, therefore the absolute is the form in which we capture the aromatic components of the plant. The absolute is highly concentrated and somewhat viscous.
  - Examples: Rose absolute, Orange flower absolute, Jasmine absolute, Narcisse absolute
  - Note: The yield of absolute material per plant is exceptionally small, and the processing is very labor intensive. As a result, absolutes are usually very expensive.
Types of Ingredients

**MANMADE** ingredients include aromatic ingredients in liquid or powder form.

- **Commonly called CHEMICALS**, manmade fragrance ingredients produce a wide variety of aromatic sensations. Many of these ingredients are also found in nature, but science can reproduce them synthetically. The synthetic versions are generally less expensive, more consistent in odor and color and widely available.

- Aromatic chemicals offer the perfumer a vast palette of materials to complement natural ingredients. They help control the cost of a fragrance and help assure consistent quality.

- Many aromatic chemicals can create intense, unusual or dramatic effects in a fragrance.

- Examples of **MANMADE AROMATIC MATERIALS**: Citral, Linalyl acetate, phenyl ethyl alcohol, vanillin

- Most fragrances are a combination of the natural and synthetic ingredients. The perfumer will choose materials based on odor, cost, and stability in the product being scented.
The Fragrance Triangle

**TOP NOTES**
- Initial Burst
- Volatile Components
- Provide Impact

**MIDDLE NOTES**
- Also called the fragrance heart
- Represents the true fragrance character
- Longer lasting than the top notes

**BASE NOTES**
- Also called bottom notes or dry down
- Longest lasting components of the fragrance

**PARTS OF THE FRAGRANCE**
A fragrance is divided into 3 distinct parts: the top note, the middle note and the base note. Each of these usually has an assortment of ingredients.

**TOP NOTES** are the most volatile fragrance ingredients. The top notes give the fragrance its initial burst, and can provide impact in a finished product. Top notes are the first to evaporate, leaving the middle notes of the fragrance to be explored. Traditional top notes include citrus oils and light aromatic chemicals such as esters.

**MIDDLE NOTES**, or the heart of the fragrance, represent the truest character of the scent. These ingredients form the “fragrance signature”, and are evident throughout most of the life of the fragrance. Typical middle notes include floral, spice and fruit tones.

**BASE NOTES** are the longest lasting portion of the fragrance. These ingredients support the fragrance and give it depth. Base notes remain long after the top and middle notes have evaporated. Commonly used materials for base notes are musk, vanilla, resins and woods.
ANIMALIC ingredients create allure within a fragrance. Generally base note materials, animalic nuances add subtle sensual tones. Aromatic animalic ingredients can be used to enhance spicy, woody and sweet base notes. They can sometimes produce a leathery tone. Balance is important when using the aromatic animalic ingredients to prevent unpleasant and repulsive base notes.

**EXAMPLES OF ANIMALIC INGREDIENTS:**
- Musk
- Civet
Fragrance Notes

BALSAMIC

BALSAMIC notes are warm and / or sweet, and can frequently be found in the resinous group of materials. Balsamic notes support a fragrance from within, offering richness and providing a natural sensation. Base notes are sometimes composed of several balsamic materials.

EXAMPLES OF BALSAMIC MATERIALS:
- Amber
- Tolu
- Fir
Fragrance Notes

CAMPHORACEOUS / AGRESTIC

• **CAMPHORACEOUS** notes create a cooling sensation, and can be described as fresh. Natural essential oils in the herbaceous family often exhibit camphoraceous tones, with naturally occurring camphor oil producing this effect. On some occasions camphoraceous tones can produce a medicinal effect.

• **EXAMPLES OF CAMPHORACEOUS MATERIALS:**
  - Rosemary oil
  - Eucalyptus oil
  - Camphor powder
**CITRUS** tones are easily identified due to the association with food and beverages. Citrus essential oils are produced from the citrus fruit peel, and a fresh, slightly acidic note is displayed. Citrus tones are usually top notes, where they produce a fresh, juicy, effervescent effect.

**EXAMPLES OF CITRUS MATERIALS:**
- Lemon oil
- Grapefruit oil
- Bergamot oil
**Floral**

- **Floral** is the largest generic fragrance category. Within the floral category there are many sun-categories (such as aldehydic – floral or green – floral). Flowery notes such as rose, gardenia or jasmine can be used alone or in combination with one another to produce a “floral bouquet”. Since some flowers have little or no scent, creative floral accords are often produced to fulfill the need for scents such as daisy or orchid. Floral tones will generally be found at the heart of the fragrance.

- **Examples of Floral Notes:**
  - Lily
  - Tuberose
  - Floral bouquet
Like the citrus accords, FRUIT notes can be easily identified due to their similarity to real fruit aromas. Sweet / sour tones found in apple, peach, strawberry and banana are replicated for use in perfumery. These fruit compounds are generally produced from synthetic materials, although touches of natural materials such as citrus may be added for a juicy effect. Fruit notes will be found in the top note or middle note of a scent, but exceptions exist in fruit scents such as peach which have creamy and sweet undertones.

EXAMPLES OF FRUIT NOTES:
- Apple
- Melon
- Raspberry
The **GREEN** category is very significant in today’s market. Market positioning of products based on “natural” themes has created a demand for fragrances that smell like plants, leaves and grasses. Green notes provide bright, strong, natural smelling accents for all types of fragrances. Green notes can be top notes or middle notes, and they traditionally exhibit good stability in a wide variety of products.

**EXAMPLES OF GREEN NOTES:**
- Herbs
- Vegetables
- Leaves
Fragrance Notes

MARINE

• **MARINE** notes add fresh, bright, watery and / or algae like accents to fragrance blends. They are rarely used alone due to their elusive quality, yet combined with florals, woods, or fruit types they create sparkle and add a natural sensation. Marine notes are often found accenting the top note of a scent and are reminiscent of the smell of sea breezes.

• **EXAMPLES OF MARINE NOTES:**
  • Sea spray
  • Dewy
  • Ocean breeze
The MINT family is characterized by its pierce cooling effect. Mint provides an invigorating effect and fresh lift for all fragrance types. It has become more important as a single note in today’s products that feature natural positioning. Mint accents the top note of a fragrance.

- **EXAMPLES OF MINT INGREDIENTS:**
  - Peppermint
  - Spearmint
  - Menthol
• **SPICE** notes are familiar due to their use in cooking and baking. They create warm or pungent sensations, and are used in almost all fragrance types. Most spice notes are derived from nature, and they can be found accenting the middle notes of a fragrance or used alone.

• **EXAMPLES OF SPICE INGREDIENTS:**
  - Cinnamon
  - Ginger
  - Pepper
Fragrance Notes

SWEET

- **SWEET** notes are important base notes for most fragrance blends. Recalling familiar sensations found in vanilla, sugar, honey and syrup, sweet notes are long lasting and comforting. Gourmand type scents have created a new demand for sweet notes in perfumery, where they provide edible sensations that captivate the senses.

- **EXAMPLES OF SWEET NOTES:**
  - Vanilla
  - Caramel
  - Honey
WOODS are important building blocks for fragrance. Woody notes enhance and enrich the base notes of most fragrances. They provide warmth, naturalness and long lasting richness. Most woody notes are derived from nature, where essential oils are distilled from fresh cut wood, tree bark or roots of a tree. In today’s market we find wood blends being used frequently in candles, particularly at the prestige level of distribution.

- EXAMPLES OF WOOD INGREDIENTS:
  - Sandalwood
  - Cedar wood
  - Vetiver
Fragrance Terminology

The fragrance industry has a language of its own that is used to describe, quantify and qualify the processes, ingredients and sensations with regard to aroma. These commonly used terms help perfumers, evaluators and clients exchange ideas.

**ABSOLUTE**  A concentrated fragrance material derived from natural plant product, processed by means of enfleurage, alcohol extraction or steam distillation.

**ACCORD**  “Fantasy Accords” are based on natural aromas that cannot be extracted in true olfactive form. The cumulative result of balancing ingredients to achieve an “original” effect is the “creation” aspect of perfumery.

**ANOSMIA**  Insensitive to odors. Specific anosmia is insensitivity to a particular substance, such as musk.

**AROMATIC**  A fragrance with a strong aroma of herbs, spices or camphor.

**BALANCE**  Balance is the result of the perfect adjustment of odor strength of combined ingredients.

**BITTER**  An odor which causes a bitter taste on the taste buds when smelled.

**BLEND**  A mixture of natural and / or synthetic aromatic ingredients.

**BLOOM**  Good top note diffusion with middle notes becoming full and rich.

**BODY note**  The heart and main part of the fragrance. The characteristic note when the most volatile top components have lost their dominance and all of the middle components of the fragrance come into play.

**BOUQUET**  A harmonious blend of several single floral notes in a fragrance compound.

**BOTTOM NOTE**  Also called the base note or dry down of the fragrance. This note contains the fixatives of the fragrance and imparts long lasting qualities.
CHEMICAL  Synthetic smelling, lacking the richness of naturals.

CLOYING    A term used to describe excessive sweetness in a fragrance.

COMPOUND   A mixture of aromatic ingredients that form a fragrance composition.

DIFFUSION  Also described as “throw” or “lift”, this term expresses the fragrance’s ability to radiate from the bottle or from a finished product.

DISTILLATION The process of purifying a volatile material by applying heat to turn it into vapor, then recovering the material to pure liquid by condensation which yields essential oil.

DRYDOWN / DRYOUT Another term for bottom note.

EARTHY     The aroma of freshly turned soil.

ENFLEURAGE The traditional method of separating the absolute aromatic material from the flowers by placing petals between layers of fat to which they impart their odor. The layering is repeated with fresh petals until the fat is rich in the flowers’ essential oils. The odor is then extracted from the fat with alcohol, after which the alcohol is distilled off, leaving the aromatic absolute.

ESSENTIAL OIL An oil obtained from a variety of natural sources such as flowers, leaves, seeds, roots, bark or buds.

FIXATIVE   A material incorporated into a fragrance compound to retard volatilization of the fragrance or stabilize the fidelity of the fragrance character.

FLAT       A fragrance that is lacking distinction.

FRAGRANCE  A composition of various synthetic and natural aromatic materials that create a definite odor effect.