



Biosafety Cabinets VS Chemical Fume Hoods

There is often confusion about biological safety cabinets and chemical fume hoods, as both are often referred to simply as a “hood”. The comparisons below are based on standard laboratory chemical fume hoods and the most common type of biosafety cabinet on campus, the class II type A2.

	 Biosafety Cabinet	 Chemical Fume Hood
Feature		
Personnel protection	✓	✓
Environmental (room) protection	✓	✓
Product protection	✓	✗
Used for handling biological materials	✓	✗
Used for handling hazardous chemicals or odorous compounds	✗	✓
Exhausts air outside the building	✗	✓
Recirculates air back into the room through HEPA filters	✓	✗
Requires users to have good work practices for maximum protection	✓	✓
Requires annual certification to ensure it is operating correctly	✓	✓