

Oxygen

Nearly all living things need oxygen to survive. The oxygen is used to convert food to produce energy for carrying out life processes.

Green plants give out oxygen during photosynthesis where plants make food in the presence of sunlight, water and carbon dioxide.

Oxygen is needed for things to burn (combustion).



Alert Do not get confused about oxygen and burning (combustion). Oxygen is not combustible. Burning occurs because a substance reacts with oxygen. Hence oxygen only supports burning. Without it, burning does not take place.

Oxygen and acetylene are used in welding and cutting. Acetylene when burned alone can produce a flame temperature of about 2204°C . When oxygen is added, a flame temperature can be as high as 3316°C . The flame is much hotter and it can effectively cut metal by melting it.



A worker uses an oxy-acetylene torch to do some welding.

People who take up diving need to have access to oxygen to breathe underwater. They carry oxygen tanks on their backs.



A diver swims underwater.

Adapted:

PSLE Science Partner: The Complete Guide

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