

Housecleaning Without Harm

WHAT YOU'LL NEED

Vinegar
Baking soda
Washing soda
Lemon juice
Pure soap
Vegetable oil
Cloth rags
Scrub brushes
Assorted essential oils

WHITE VINEGAR

Cuts grease, removes mildew, odors, some stains and wax build-up.

BAKING SODA

Cleans, deodorizes, scours and softens water.

LEMON

One of the strongest food-acids, effective against most household bacteria.

PURE SOAP

Unscented and biodegradable, pure soap will clean just about anything. Available in flakes, powders, liquid, or bars. Look for vegetable based glycerin soaps, and avoid using soaps which contain petroleum distillates.



**Make your own
non-toxic
cleaning kit
using only a few
simple
ingredients**

Do you know that the synthetic cleaning products we use every day are based on formulas that have been passed down through the generations because the chemistry was right? However, many commercial cleaning products no longer use natural ingredients. They often contain toxic solvents and propellants that can affect human health, contribute to air pollution and contaminate water.

WINDOW & GLASS CLEANER

Combine equal parts of white vinegar and water in a spray bottle. Wipe with newsprint for a lint-free shine with a dirt resistant film.

Tips for cleaning glass:

Never wash your windows while the sun is shining on them. They will dry too quickly and leave streaks. If you are sensitive to newsprint, try using a linen cloth or a clean damp chamois cloth.

ALL-PURPOSE CLEANER

Combine ½ teaspoon baking soda and 2 tablespoons vinegar with a dab of pure soap in a spray bottle. Slowly add 2 cups of hot tap water and shake until dissolved.

Recommended use: Spray onto most surfaces and wipe off with a sponge or rag.

SCOURING POWDER

Combine 1 2/3 cup baking soda, ½ cup pure soap, ½ cup water, 2 tbsp vinegar. Pour into wide-mouthed container or jar and shake before use. Rinse well.

Recommended use: A non-abrasive for tubs, tiles, sinks, etc.

TOILET BOWL CLEANER

For regular maintenance, use baking soda or undiluted vinegar to scrub the surface. NEVER mix bleach with vinegar, toilet bowl cleaner or ammonia because the combination of these substances produces toxic gasses that are hazardous.

CREAMY SOFT SCRUB

Combine ½ cup of baking soda with just enough pure soap to make a texture like frosting. Store in a sealed glass jar to keep moist.

Recommended use: Scoop the mixture onto a sponge, and wash surfaces such as bathtubs and sinks. It rinses easily and doesn't leave grit. Over the top!

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ENVIRONMENTAL PROGRAMS

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CARPETS & RUGS

Cleaning spills- Blot or scrape up as much of the spill as you can, working from the outside in. Wash immediately with one of the solutions below. Before using, test the stain remover on an inconspicuous area of the rug to ensure it won't damage the carpet colour.

Blood stains – Sponge stain immediately with club soda or cold water. Blot dry. Repeat as necessary.

Non-oily stains – Mix together one teaspoon of white vinegar, one teaspoon of liquid detergent and two cups of lukewarm water. Apply to the stain with a soft brush or towel. Rub gently. Rinse with a towel dampened in clean water. Blot dry. Repeat as necessary.

Urine stains and odours – Absorb as much urine as you can with a dry towel. Next, spray the area with a solution of equal parts water and white vinegar. Let solution penetrate soiled area, then absorb with a dry clean towel. Repeat until the area no longer smells of urine. Dry thoroughly.

Curious about what the ingredients in your favourite cleaners are? Check out the Environmental Working Group's *Healthy Cleaning Database* www.ewg.org/guides/cleaners to see how your cleaners rank.

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FLOORS

Floor cleaner – In a bucket, mix ½ cup of white vinegar with one gallon of hot water. Add 1/8 cup washing soda for a stronger cleanser.

Wood floor polish – Mix one part vegetable oil to one part vinegar and apply a thin coat. Rub in well.

Ceramic tile – Mix ¼ cup of white vinegar (or more if the floor is very dirty) into one gallon of water. This solution removes the most dirt without scrubbing and doesn't leave a film.

OVEN CLEANER

Mix 5 tablespoons baking soda, 4 tablespoon vinegar and 3 drops liquid soap into a thick paste. Apply to inside of oven. Let the mixture sit overnight. You can easily wipe the grime clean the next morning because it will have loosened. Dab a bit of liquid detergent or soap on a sponge, and wash the remaining residue from the oven.

FURNITURE POLISH

Combine 1 cup olive, almond or walnut oil with ½ cup white vinegar or lemon juice. Mix in a sealed glass jar and store indefinitely.

Recommended use: Dab a soft rag into the solution and wipe onto most wood surfaces. It will get rid of scratches and most watermarks.

AIR FRESHENER

Baking soda in an open container will absorb odours in small spaces. To make a deodorizing spray, combine ½ cup water and ½ cup vodka (optional) with 15- 20 drops of essential oils of your choice. You might want to try 8 drops lavender oil, 4 drops each bergamot and clove oil and 2 drops peppermint oil.

FABRIC SOFTENER

Add ½ cup of white vinegar or baking soda to the rinse cycle to reduce static cling and soften water.

Tip for reducing static in synthetic clothes:

Run dryer on 'air dry' or 'no heat' when clothes are almost dry, then hang them up to finish drying.

