

Clean and Green

Here's a collection of natural cleaning formulas:

BAKING SODA (sodium bicarbonate): An all-purpose, non-toxic cleaner. Cleans and deodorizes while removing stains and softening fabrics.

BORAX (sodium borate): A natural mineral that kills mold and bacteria. It is an alternative to bleach. It deodorizes, removes stains and boosts the cleaning power of soap.

CASTILE and VEGETABLE OIL BASED SOAPS: Cleans everything.

CORNSTARCH: Starches clothes, absorbs oil and grease.

HERBS and ESSENTIAL OILS: For disinfecting and fragrance.

LEMON JUICE: Cuts through grease and removes perspiration and other stains from clothes. It is also an alternative to bleach.

SALT (sodium chloride): An abrasive.

TOOTHPASTE A mild abrasive.

VINEGAR (acetic acid): Cuts grease and removes stains and is an excellent water softener.

WASHING SODA (sodium carbonate): Cleans clothes, softens water, cuts grease and is a disinfectant. It increases the cleaning power of soap.

Hints:

- To save time and money, make your cleaners in advance and buy the ingredients in bulk for cost savings and to avoid excess packaging.
- Make large batches of the recipes and store them in reusable airtight plastic containers and spray bottles. Using a pretty spray bottle or container makes cleaning days more fun and pleasant.
- Add your favorite essential oils or herbs to any of these formulas for fragrant Air Fresheners/Deodorizers:
 - 1) Place cloves, cinnamon sticks, allspice or other favorite scented spice in a pot of water, simmer for 1-2 hours.
 - 2) Put a few slices of leftover orange or lemon rinds in a pot of water and simmer for 1 to 2 hours.

- 3) Place baking soda in an open container of your choice. Good for closets, refrigerators and other small enclosed spaces.
- 4) 2-3 slices of white bread absorb refrigerator odors.
- 5) Place lemon slices in an open bowl in the kitchen.
- 6) Lemon and baking soda spray:
Dissolve baking soda in 2 cups hot water, add lemon juice, pour into spray bottle, and spray into air as air freshener.
- 7) Place unscented kitty litter in bowls to absorb room odors.
- 8) Vinegar in a cup or bowl rids rooms of odors.
- 9) Charcoal placed in a bowl rids rooms of odors.
- 10) Simply light a match for a few moments or burn a candle (scented or unscented). The flame from either will "eat-up" bad smelling gases in the air.
- 11) Pour vanilla extract into a shallow dish and set in an out of the way place.
- 12) Spin-Fresh Bathroom Deodorizer. Add a couple of drops of your favorite essential oil to the inside of the cardboard toilet tissue roll. With each turn, fragrance is released into the room.

All Purpose Cleaners:

- 1) Vinegar and Salt. Mix together for a good surface cleaner.
- 2) Baking Soda. Dissolve 4 tablespoons baking soda in 1 quart warm water for a general cleaner.
- 3) Baking soda on a damp sponge. Baking soda cleans and deodorizes all kitchen and bathroom surfaces.
- 4) Use liquid castile soap and baking soda or Borax in different ratios. Use a little soap and soda/borax with lots of water on floors, walls and counters.
- 5) For a general, all-purpose cleaner, try a paste made from baking soda and water or mix salt and water with a little vinegar. Add 3 tbsp. vinegar, 1/2 tsp. washing soda, 1/2 tsp. vegetable oil based liquid soap, 2 cups hot water. Mix ingredients in spray bottle or bucket. Apply and wipe clean.

Disinfectants:

- 1) Regular cleaning with plain soap and hot water will kill some bacteria.
- 2) Borax has long been recognized for its disinfectant and deodorizing properties.
- 3) Mix 1/2 cup Borax into 1 gallon hot water or undiluted vinegar and clean with this solution. Mix a half-cup of borax with 1 gallon hot water. Add a few sprigs of fresh thyme, rosemary or lavender. Seep for 10 minutes, strain and cool. Or add essential fragrant oils instead of fresh herbs. Store in a plastic spray bottle.
- 4) 2 tablespoons borax, 1/4 cup lemon juice, 2 cups hot water. Combine the borax and lemon juice with the water in a spray bottle. Use as you would any commercial all purpose cleaner.
- 5) Isopropyl Alcohol is an excellent disinfectant. Sponge on and allow to dry. Use in a well- ventilated area and wear gloves.

Glass Cleaners:

Windows and Mirrors:

- 1) Use undiluted vinegar in a spray bottle or
- 2) Equal parts vinegar and water in a spray bottle or
- 3) 1/2 lemon juice and 2 cups water in a spray bottle or
- 4) 1/2 cup vinegar or lemon juice, 2 cups water, 1/4 teaspoon vegetable oil based soap (such as Murphy's Oil Soap).
- 5) Mix 1/2 cup cornstarch with 2 quarts warm water. Apply with sponge then wipe with absorbent cloth or towel. Do not wash windows or glass when sun is on them or if they are warm. This causes the solution to dry too quickly creating unwanted streaks.
- 6) No-Streak Glass Cleaner: 1/4 cup white vinegar, 1 tablespoon cornstarch, 1 quart warm water. Mix the ingredients and apply with a sponge or pour into spray bottle and spray on. Wipe dry with crumpled newspaper, buff to a shine. (Use crumpled newspaper instead of paper towels for lint-free results.
- 7) Rubbing alcohol is effective in place of glass cleaner.

Scouring Powders:

- 1) Use a non-chlorine scouring powder such as Bon Ami.
- 2) Baking Soda or Dry Table Salt. These are mild abrasives and can be used as an alternative to chlorine scouring powders. Simply put either baking soda or salt on a sponge or the surface, scour and rinse.

Non-Abrasive Soft Scrubber:

You will need 1/4 cup Borax, Vegetable-oil based liquid soap (such as Murphy's Oil Soap), 1/2 teaspoon lemon oil. In a bowl, mix the borax with enough soap to form a creamy paste. Add lemon oil and blend well. Scoop a small amount of the mixture onto a sponge, wash the surface, rinse well.

Bathroom Cleaners:

Toilet Bowl Cleaners:

- 1) Baking Soda and Vinegar: Sprinkle baking soda into the bowl, then squirt with vinegar and scour with a toilet brush. Cleans and deodorizes.
- 2) Borax and Lemon Juice. For removing a stubborn stain, like toilet bowl ring, mix enough borax and lemon juice into a paste cover the ring. Flush toilet to wet the sides, then rub on paste. Let sit for 2 hours and scrub thoroughly. For less stubborn toilet bowl rings, sprinkle baking soda around the rim and scrub with a toilet brush.
- 3) 1 cup borax, 1/2 cup white vinegar. Flush to wet the sides of the bowl. Sprinkle the borax around the toilet bowl, spray with vinegar. Leave for several hours or overnight before scrubbing with a toilet brush.
- 4) Denture tablets are an excellent substitute for toilet cleaner. Drop two tablets into the bowl and clean as you would with toilet cleaner.
- 5) Liquid castile soap and baking soda or Borax, scrub with a toilet brush.

Drain Cleaner:

For slow drains, use this drain cleaner once a week to keep drains fresh and clog-free. Use 1/2 cup baking soda, 1 cup white vinegar, 1 gallon boiling water, 1/2 a used lemon. Pour baking soda down drain/disposal, followed by vinegar. Allow the mixture to foam for several minutes before flushing the drain with boiling water.

Tub and Tile Cleaners:

- 1) Baking Soda. Sprinkle baking soda like you would scouring powder. Rub with a damp sponge. Rinse thoroughly.
- 2) Vinegar and Baking Soda. To remove film buildup on bathtubs, apply vinegar full strength to a sponge and wipe. Next, use baking soda as you would scouring powder. Rub with a damp sponge and rinse thoroughly with clean water.
- 3) Vinegar. Vinegar removes most dirt without scrubbing and doesn't leave a film. Use 1/4 cup (or more) vinegar to 1 gallon water.
- 4) Baking Soda. To clean grout, put 3 cups baking soda into a medium- sized bowl and add 1 cup warm water. Mix into a smooth paste and scrub into grout with a sponge or toothbrush. Rinse thoroughly and dispose of leftover paste when finished.
- 5) Rub the area to be cleaned with half a lemon dipped in borax. Rinse well, and dry with soft cloth

Porcelain Cleaner:

- 1) Cream of Tartar. To clean porcelain surfaces, rub with cream of tartar sprinkled on a damp cloth.

Plumbing Fixtures:

- 1) To clean stainless steel, chrome, fiberglass, ceramic, porcelain or enamel fixtures, dissolve 2 tbsp baking soda in 1 qt of water. Wipe on fixtures then rinse.
- 2) Vinegar and Paper Towels. Hard lime deposits around faucets can be softened for easy removal by covering the deposits with vinegar-soaked paper towels. Leave the paper towels on for about one hour before cleaning. Leaves chrome clean and shiny.

Shower Heads:

- 1) Metal Shower Heads:
To remove deposits which may be clogging your metal shower head, combine 1/2 cup white vinegar and one quart water. Then completely submerge the shower head and boil 15 minutes.
- 2) Plastic Shower Heads:
Combine 1 pint white vinegar and 1 pint hot water. Completely submerge the shower head and soak for about one hour.

Rust Stain and Hard Water Deposit Remover:

- 1) Apply full-strength vinegar or lemon juice and let stand until spot disappears, rinse. Repeat if necessary.

Mildew Remover:

- 1) Dissolve half-cup vinegar with half-cup borax in warm water.

Lime Deposits:

- 1) White vinegar

Kitchen Cleaners:**Oven Cleaners:**

- 1) The first step is prevention. Put a sheet of aluminum foil on the floor of the oven, underneath but not touching the heating element.
- 2) Clean up the spill as soon as it occurs.
- 3) While the oven is still warm, sprinkle salt or baking soda on the spill. If the spill is completely dry, wet the spill lightly before sprinkling on salt. When the oven cools, scrape away the spill and wash the area clean.
- 4) Baking soda, water; salt; vegetable oil-based liquid soap. Sprinkle water on oven bottom. Cover with baking soda. Let sit overnight. Wipe off and apply liquid soap with scouring pad. Rinse.
- 5) Retard grease buildup in your oven by dampening your cleaning rag in vinegar and water before wiping out your oven.
- 6) Sprinkle/spray water followed by a layer of baking soda. Rub gently with a very fine steel wool pad for tough spots. Wipe off scum with dry paper towels or sponge. Rinse well and wipe dry.
- 7) 2 tablespoons vegetable oil-based liquid soap, 2 tablespoons borax: Mix the soap and borax in a spray bottle. Fill the bottle with hot water and shake well. Spray on oven and leave for 20 minutes. Scrub off.
- 8) LAST RESORT ONLY: Fill a small glass bowl with 1/2 cup full-strength ammonia, place in oven and close. Let stand overnight, then wipe loosened dirt with paper towels or newspapers. If necessary, rub surfaces with an abrasive, such as fine steel wool, then wash with warm soapy water and rinse. Repeat process if necessary. Provide plenty of fresh air and wear gloves.

Refrigerators:

- 1) To clean exterior and interior walls, dissolve 2 tbs. baking soda in 1 qt warm water and wipe all surfaces. For stubborn spots, rub with baking soda paste. Be sure to rinse with a clean, wet cloth. (This works well on other enamel-finished appliances as well.)
- 2) To clean interior fixtures, such as vegetable bins and shelves, wash in hot soapy water, rinse well and dry.

Counter Tops/Kitchen Surfaces:**Fragrant Kitchen Rinse**

- 1) Use any of the following essential oils, alone or in a combination pleasing to you. Add 4 drops of oil to each pint of water. Pour into a spray bottle, store away cool dark place. Use as a final rinse after cleaning kitchen surfaces.
Eucalyptus, Pine, Lavender, Cypress, Lemon, Lemongrass, Lime, Thyme
Grapefruit, Orange, Wintergreen, Rosemary and Sage.

Pots and Pans:

- 1) Burned, and crusted on foods; Soak or boil a solution of 2 tbs. baking soda per qt of water in each pan. Let stand until particles are loosened, then wash as usual. Use a mild or moderate abrasive if necessary.
- 2) To clean a greasy pan easily, add 1 or 2 teaspoons of baking soda to the water in which it is soaking.

Copper pan cleaner:

- 1) Sprinkle surface of pans with coarse salt. Rub salt into stains with the cut half of a fresh lemon.

No-Stick Cookware:

- 1) To remove stains from non-stick surfaces, pour a solution of 1 cup water, 2 tbs. baking soda into a pan, simmer 5 to 10 minutes. Do not allow mixture to boil or to boil over the side of the pan. Wash in hot soapy water, rinse and dry. Apply a light coating of cooking oil.

Baking Dishes - Enamel, Ceramic or Glass:

Soak in hot soapy water, then scour with salt or baking soda and rinse thoroughly.

Dishes:

- 1) Use liquid or powdered soap instead of detergents - which are petroleum-based. In dishwashers, use equal parts borax and washing soda.
- 2) Use Baking soda and liquid soap.

Drinking Glasses:

- 1) Occasionally soak drinking glasses in a solution of vinegar and water to really clean them. Makes them sparkle!
- 2) When a quick dip for crystal glassware is needed, prepare a solution of baking soda in tepid-cool water (1 level teaspoon to a quart) and brush with a soft toothbrush. Very good for glass coffee makers and thermos jugs too.

Spot-free Dishwasher Rinse:

Add 1 cup of white vinegar to the rinse compartment of your automatic dishwasher. Wash dishes as usual.

Coffee/Tea Stains:

To remove coffee stains from cups or counters, rub with baking soda paste.

Drain Opener and Garbage Disposal Cleaner:

For slow drains, use this drain cleaner once a week to keep drains fresh and clog-free. Use 1/2 to 1 cup baking soda, 1 cup white vinegar, 1 gallon boiling water, and 1/2 used lemon. Pour baking soda down drain/disposal, followed by vinegar. Allow the mixture to foam for several minutes before flushing the drain with boiling water.

Kitchen Safety: Fire

- 1) Emergency fire extinguisher: if a greasy pan catches on fire, turn the heat off and try to cover the pan. Sprinkle powdered baking soda over the fire. (Fill a large coffee can with baking soda and keep it near the stove.)
- 2) An oven fire is easily extinguished by closing the door after shutting off the heat.)

Carpets/Upholstery:

- 1) A great non-toxic carpet stain remover is club soda. Soak spot immediately with soda and blot until the stain is gone.
- 2) Pet Urine on Carpets: Dab area with toweling to absorb as much as possible, wash spot with liquid dish detergent, and rinse with 1/2 cup vinegar diluted in 1 qt warm water. Lay towels or paper towels over the spot and weight down to absorb excess moisture. Let stand 4 to 6 hours, then remove toweling, brush up nap and allow it to dry. Use an electric fan to speed drying.
- 3) Red wine stains can be removed from carpet by rubbing baking soda in and Then running carpet sweeper.
- 4) Sprinkle cornstarch onto carpet, vacuum.
- 5) To remove grease spots from carpets, first sop up the liquid with a sponge, then rub a liberal amount of baking soda into the spot. Let it absorb overnight. Next day, remove the excess and vacuum the area.
- 6) Dry cornstarch sprinkled on rug and vacuumed.

Carpet Fresher

- 4 cups baking soda or cornstarch
- 35 drops Eucalyptus essential oil
- 30 drops Lavender essential oil
- 25 drops Rosewood essential oil or any combination of your favorite oils

Measure 4 cups of baking soda into a bowl, add essential oils. Break up any clumps that form and stir until well mixed. Before vacuuming sprinkle powder from a shaker type can or jar. Let it sit on the carpet for about 15 minutes then vacuum.

Herbal Carpet Freshener

- 1 cup baking soda, 1/2 cup lavender flowers
- Crush the lavender flowers to release their scent. Mix well with baking soda and sprinkle liberally on carpets. Vacuum after 30 minutes. Sprinkle baking soda on carpets before vacuuming for a natural rug deodorizer.

Furniture Polish and Scratch Covers:

This polish should to be made fresh each time you use it.

- 1 lemon
- 1 teaspoon olive oil
- 1 teaspoon water

Extract the juice from the lemon. Mix with oil and water.

Apply a thin coat on your wood surface and let sit for five minutes. Use a soft cloth to buff to a deep shine.

- 1) Use 3 parts light mineral oil and 1 part olive oil and a drop of lemon juice.
- 2) Use a little olive or lemon oil and some beeswax.
- 3) Hide wood scratches by rubbing with the meat of a walnut.
- 4) Use a soft cloth and wipe with a bit of mayonnaise.
- 5) Rub furniture with a cloth dipped in cool tea.
- 6) Mix 2 parts olive oil with 1 part lemon juice. Apply mixture to furniture with

- a soft cloth and wipe it dry.
- 7) 1/8 cup linseed oil, 1/8 cup vinegar, 1/4 cup lemon juice. Mix ingredients, using soft cloth, rub into wood.
 - 8) To remove water stains on wood furniture, dab white toothpaste onto stain. Allow the paste to dry and then gently buff off with a soft cloth.

Floor Cleaners:

- 1) A pencil eraser removes heel marks from a floor.
- 2) For greasy, no-wax floors:
 - 1 cup vinegar
 - 1/4 cup washing soda
 - 1 tablespoon vegetable oil-based liquid soap
 - 2 gallons hot waterCombine all ingredients, stirring well to dissolve the washing soda. Mop as usual.

Metal Cleaners:

Silver:

- 1) Use toothpaste instead of toxic silver cleaner to clean and brighten even your best silver. Use an old soft bristled toothbrush and warm water.
- 2) Rub with a paste of baking soda and water.
- 3) To magnetize tarnish away, soak silver in salted water in an aluminum container; then wipe clean.
- 4) Soak in boiling water, baking soda, salt, and a piece of aluminum foil.
- 5) When a quick dip for silverware is needed, prepare a solution of baking soda in tepid cool water (1 level teaspoon to a quart) and brush with a soft toothbrush.

Brass:

- 1) Mix equal parts salt and flour with a little vinegar, then rub.

Chrome:

- 1) Rub with undiluted vinegar.

Stainless Steel:

- 1) Rub with a paste of baking soda and water.

Automotive Cleaners and Care:

Windshield Wiper Frost Free Fluid

Mix 3 parts vinegar to 1 part water and coat the car windows with this solution. This vinegar and water combination will keep windshields ice and frost-free.

Car Soap

1/4 cup vegetable oil based liquid soap, and hot water. Mix in pail. Wash your car on the lawn instead of your driveway to reduce runoff to the street or storm sewer.

Car Wax

1 cup linseed oil, 4 tbsp. caranuba wax (available at automotive stores), 2 tbsp. beeswax, and 1/2 cup vinegar. Put ingredients in top half of a double boiler or saucepan. Heat slowly until wax has melted. Stir, and pour into a heat resistant container. After wax has solidified, rub it on the car with a lint-free cloth. Saturate a corner of a cotton rag with vinegar and polish the wax to a deep shine.

Miscellaneous Cleaners:

Candles/Wax:

Sponge with a piece of cotton dipped in rubbing alcohol.

Decals/Gummed Labels/Price Tag Remover:

Use vinegar. To remove non-slip appliques and strips from bathtubs, saturate a cloth or sponge and squeeze hot vinegar over decals. Vinegar also removes stick-on hooks from painted walls. Saturate a cloth or sponge with vinegar and squeeze the liquid behind the hook so that the vinegar comes in contact with the adhesive. In addition, vinegar can be used to remove price labels and other decals from glass, wood, and china. Paint the label or decal with several coats of white vinegar. Give the vinegar time to soak in and after several minutes the decal can be rubbed off. (NOTE: Use these methods only on washable surfaces and washable paint)

Grease Cutters:

- 1) Use lemon juice, vinegar, or sprinkle with borax and scrub with scrub brush.
- 2) 1/2 tsp. washing soda, 1/2 tsp. vegetable oil-based liquid soap, 3 tbsp. vinegar, and 2 cups hot water. Mix in spray bottle, spray and scrub, wipe clean.

Paint Brushes:

Soften hard paint brushes in hot vinegar for a few minutes. Then wash paintbrush in soap and warm water and let dry.

Rust Remover:

- 1) To remove rust from tin-ware, rub with a peeled potato dipped in a mild abrasive such as baking soda or salt.
- 2) Aluminum Foil. Briskly scrub rust spots on car bumpers with a piece of crumpled aluminum foil, shiny side up.

Shoe Polish/Care/Deodorizer:

- 1) Cold Pressed Nut Oil, Olive Oil, Walnut Oil, or Beeswax: Apply oil/wax to leather then buff with a chamois cloth to a shine.
- 2) Lemon Juice. Good for black or tan leather shoes. Follow by buffing with a soft cloth.
- 3) Vinegar; Remove water stains on leather by rubbing with a cloth dipped in a vinegar and water solution.
- 4) Petroleum Jelly. A dab of petroleum jelly rubbed into patent leather gives a glistening shine and prevents cracking in the winter.
- 5) Vinegar. To shine patent leather, moisten a soft cloth with white vinegar and wipe.
- 6) Art-Gum Eraser and Sandpaper or Emery Board. Dirt marks on suede can be rubbed out with an art-gum eraser. Then buff very lightly an emery board.
- 7) Add a shine by polishing it with the inside of a banana peel, then buff.

Shoe/Sneaker Deodorizer

6 Tbsp Cornstarch
3 Tbsp Baking Soda
20 drops Rosemary essential oil
20 drops Tea Tree essential oil
5 drops Lemon essential oil
5 drops Clove essential oil

Mix all, then put 1-2 Tablespoon in each shoe/sneaker and rub it in. Allow the powder to sit in the shoe overnight.

Stain and Spot Removers:

- 1) Concrete Grease Spot Remover: To remove grease from concrete flooring sprinkle dry cement over grease. Allow it to absorb the grease, and then sweep up.
- 2) Ink Stains: Use a non-aerosol hair spray to remove ink stains.

Tar Remover:

- 1) Food grade linseed oil. Wet rag with linseed oil and rub hard

Vinyl Cleaner:

- 2) 1 tsp. to 1/4 cup washing soda, and 1 cup boiling water. Dissolve the washing soda in the boiling water. Apply with sponge, wipe off with a damp cloth.

Wallpaper Cleaner:

- 3) Roll up a piece of white bread and use it to "erase" marks on wallpaper.

Insects/Rodents:

Fleas and Ticks

Wash pets with castile soap and water, dry thoroughly, apply an herbal rinse made by adding 1/2 cup fresh or dried rosemary to a quart of boiling water (steep for 20 minutes, strain and cool. Spray or sponge onto pet's hair, massage into skin. Let air dry, do NOT towel dry as this removes the residue of the rosemary.

Roaches:

- 1) Mix equal parts boric acid with flour , sprinkle around cracks and crevices **or**
- 2) Mix equal parts boric acid with sugar, sprinkle around cracks and crevices **or**
- 3) Mix equal parts boric acid with corn meal, sprinkle around cracks and crevices **or**
- 4) Diatomaceous earth (pure silica): sprinkle around flours, cracks and crevices **or**
- 5) Cucumber peels: set out on counter tops overnight to repel roaches **or**
- 6) Mix Borax with a little brown sugar and flour and sprinkle behind appliances, under sink, and in corners. Cockroaches carry the mixture back to their nests **or**

Heloise's Famous Roach Recipe:

1/4 cup shortening

1/8 cup sugar

8 oz. boric acid

1/2 cup flour

Ample water to form dough

Mix all, form small balls of dough and set out in open plastic sandwich bags (to retain moisture longer, when hardened, replace with new dough).

Moths:

- 1) Use cedar chips, shredded newspapers, lavender flowers...moths don't like the smell.

Mice:

- 1) Buy a "Have-a-Heart" mouse trap, catch the little guys alive and unharmed and set them free far from your or anyone's home
- 2) Keep a cat/cats to deter mice from even thinking about taking up residence.