

Dirty little household secrets

Tips for a squeaky clean, green & healthy home

Are you waging chemical warfare against household grime? Powerful cleaners that zap household grime can contain ingredients you'd really rather not be breathing, wearing or washing in.

Choice Magazine tested bathroom cleaning products and found that 43% of testers reported skin irritations from a popular mould remover. Nasty cleaning chemicals can be absorbed through our skin or inhaled. Here is a better way that's healthier for you, your family and our planet.



Get your kit together

Bicarbonate Soda (Baking Soda)

An excellent odour absorber and mild abrasive for cleaning.

Borax

Natural in its concentrated form, borax disinfects, deodorises and inhibits mould growth. Keep out of reach of children as it can be an eye irritant and is toxic if swallowed.

Essential Oils

Essential oils such as mint, eucalyptus, lavender, lemon and tea tree are mostly used for deodorising or scenting cleaners.

Lemon Juice

A mild bleach, deodorant and cleaning agent.

Liquid Soap

Vegetable-based soap sometimes referred to as castile soap.

Washing Soda (Sodium Carbonate)

Slightly caustic and a great grease cutter. Don't use it on waxed floors (unless you want to remove the wax), fibreglass or aluminium.

White Vinegar

Removes soap scum, grease and mineral deposits and acts as a deodoriser.



Note: these ingredients may be toxic in their concentrated form. When used in small amounts, they are non-toxic.



Our favourite green cleaning recipes



Everyday All Purpose Cleaner

1 cup vinegar
1 cup water

Fill a spray bottle with half water and half white vinegar. Spray on any surface (except wood) and wipe off. Leave for 5 mins on soap scum.

Drain & Toilet Cleaner

1 cup bicarbonate soda
1 cup vinegar

Sprinkle bicarb soda into toilet bowl and pour vinegar on top. Watch it react. Leave it for 10 minutes then clean with a toilet brush and flush. To finish, put a few drops of tea tree oil on a cloth and wipe around the bowl and seat to provide some antibacterial protection.

Mould Remover

Vinegar & Salt

Mix equal parts vinegar and salt into a spray bottle. Spray onto mouldy surface, leave for a few minutes and then wipe off using a soft cloth.

Awesome Liquid Handwash

250ml boiling water
2 tsp glycerol or glycerine
2 tbsp grated Sunlight/natural soap
2 tsp rosewater

Add the grated soap to boiling water, stir and then let sit for about 10 minutes until it melts. Stir in glycerol and rosewater. When mixture is smooth, pour into dispenser bottle. Do this while it is still warm as it will set to a jelly when cold and be difficult to pour.

Gutsy All Purpose Cleaner

1 tsp Borax
½ cup Bicarbonate soda
Vinegar
Eucalyptus oil

Place borax and bicarb soda into a recycled glass jar. Mix in enough vinegar to make a paste. Add a few drops of eucalyptus oil. Wipe mixture onto surfaces to be cleaned and wipe off with a soft cloth. You can make a milder version of this paste without the borax. If the paste dries out over time, simply add more vinegar.

Window Cleaner

1 part vinegar
4 parts water

Mix vinegar and water into a spray bottle. Spray onto windows and wipe off with newspaper, window squeegee or a soft cloth.

Oven Cleaner

Bicarbonate soda
Vinegar

Sprinkle a little bicarbonate soda over oven surface. Spray vinegar over bicarbonate soda (watch it sizzle!) then leave overnight. Wipe off with a cloth dampened with water. Wipe over one final time with vinegar on your cloth.

Squeaky Clean Baby Steps

Do your best to learn about whatever you clean with in your home. Scrutinise the labels on your cleaning products and then go on a product diet. Phase out harmful commercial cleaning products and replace them with healthy alternatives.

A note on commercial cleaning products

There are many environmentally responsible cleaning products on the market. If purchasing commercial cleaning products, look out for these qualities:

- Phosphate free
- Low sodium < 20g per wash
- Plant-based ingredients
- Synthetic fragrance free
- Petrochemical free
- Microfibre cloths

