



# Natural Cleaners

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Plainfield Public Library  
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# Why use natural cleaners?

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- Save Money.
- Reduce toxic chemicals in your house.
- They're better for the environment.
- You control the ingredients and know exactly what is going into your cleaners.

What do I need to get started?

# Common Natural Cleaning Supplies

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- Salt
- Lemon
- White Vinegar
- Baking Soda
- Borax
- Plant Based Liquid Soaps (like castile)
- Plant Based Liquid Dish Soap
- Club Soda
- Citric Acid
- Washing Soda
- Oxygen Bleach
- Hydrogen Peroxide
- Microfiber Cloths
- Sponges
- Cotton Rags
- Spray Bottles
- Buckets
- Essential Oils (optional)

# General Cleaners

# Natural All-Purpose Cleaner

This spray is effective on everyday dirt and grime, wipes up without leaving residue, and can be used on counters (not granite/marble), walls, floors.

- 1 tsp borax
- 1/2 tsp washing soda
- 1 tsp liquid castile soap
- 2 cups warm distilled water
- Spray bottle (glass preferred)
- Optional - 3 or 4 drops of favorite essential oil for scent

Put all ingredients into a spray bottle, shake gently until combined. Spray the mixture on surfaces, let it sit for a minute or two, and wipe off with a sponge or microfiber cloth. Use this within a couple of months.

# All-Purpose Liquid Cleaner

This cleaner is ideal for washing floors, cars, exterior walls, and large projects that would require a bucket.

- 1 gallon hot water
- 1 tablespoon baking soda
- 2 tablespoons liquid soap or detergent
- 1 tablespoon of borax or washing soda (optional)

Pour the hot water into a bucket and then add the baking soda and soap – add the soap last to prevent it from foaming too much. Add 1 tablespoon of washing soda if you have heavy grease to remove, or add 1 tablespoon of borax if you also want to disinfect or kill mildew.

# Glass Cleaner

- 1 cup white vinegar
- 1 cup water
- 1/2 teaspoon liquid dish soap
- 4 drops essential oil (optional for fragrance)

Fill a spray bottle with vinegar, water, soap, and essential oil and shake gently.

# Baking Soda Scrub

All-purpose mild cleanser that is great for cleaning grout, stovetops, sinks, and bathtubs.

- 2 tablespoons baking soda
- Liquid dish soap
- Vinegar
- Water (optional)

Put the baking soda in a wide-mouthed container and mix in the liquid soap a little bit at a time until you have a foamy paste. Work onto surface with a clean rag, sponge, or brush. Let it sit for 10 to 15 minutes (depending on if it's a light or heavy-duty job) and then spray with vinegar to rinse. If you are working with a surface sensitive to acid, rinse off the vinegar with water.

Kitchen

# Cleaning Appliance Surfaces

- Spray club soda on appliance surfaces, let it sit for a few seconds, and then wipe it off with a microfiber cloth.

## Cleaning Microwaves

- Pour a cup of water with the juice and peel of 2 lemons in a microwave safe bowl and microwave for 5 minutes on high. Let the solution sit for several minutes following the boiling. Wipe the inside of the microwave clean with a sponge.

# Cleaning Ovens

- Take advantage of self-cleaning oven cycles on a regular basis – monthly or seasonally depending on how frequently you use it.
- If you prefer to use less energy make a simple baking soda and water paste and spread it thickly over all interior walls of the over, and let it sit overnight. The grime should easily wipe off.
- If a spill occurs in your oven, pour salt on it to absorb the liquid and to stop it from smoking. With the salt poured on it, the spill should wipe up easily the next day.

# Cleaning Stovetops

- Wipe up spills immediately and never use anything abrasive.
- For tough stains use a paste of baking soda and dish soap, and let it sit on the stain for 10 minutes. Use a clean dishcloth or sponge to wipe.

# Cleaning Coffeemakers

- Run vinegar through your coffeemaker regularly to clean it and remove calcium buildup.
- Scrub the coffeepot with a paste made of salt and lemon juice.

# Cleaning Dishwashers

- Run the dishwasher empty on a hot cycle with a cup of vinegar on the bottom shelf.

# Cleaning Plastics/Tupperware

- For stained plastic containers, generously rub a cut lemon on the stains and then let the container sit for an hour before washing.

# Cleaning Refrigerators

- Leave an open box of baking soda in the fridge and freezer to help absorb odors.
- Deep clean the fridge with a mixture of 3 tablespoons of baking soda dissolved in a quart of warm water. Rinse mixture off with warm water.

# Cleaning Stainless Steel Sinks

- Mix together  $\frac{1}{4}$  cup salt and add enough lemon juice to make a paste. Using a damp sponge, scrub the sink well and then rinse thoroughly.

Bathroom

# Cleaning Toilets

- The outside of your toilet is more likely to contain more bacteria than the inside of the bowl.
- Use the previously shown Glass Cleaner solution to clean and disinfect at the same time. Vinegar kills 99% of all bacteria it contacts.
- Use a pumice stone to remove stubborn mineral deposits. Soak the pumice stone in water for at least 15 minutes before using on the toilet to prevent scratching the porcelain.

# Cleaning Soap Scum

Soap scum occurs with soap combines with water minerals.

- Baking soda
- Vinegar
- Water
- Wide-Mouthed Container
- Nonabrasive Sponge

Prepare a paste by slowly adding water to baking soda in a wide-mouthed container. Rub in paste with a nonabrasive sponge and let sit for a few minutes. Rinse it off with vinegar first, and then rinse with plenty of water.

# Cleaning Showerheads

Clogged showerheads are caused by hard water buildup. Try to clean your showerhead every season to maintain shower pressure and ensure clean water.

- Vinegar
- Sandwich Bag
- Rubber Band
- Brush



Fill the sandwich bag with vinegar and tie it around the showerhead with a rubber band. Allow the showerhead to soak for several hours or overnight and then remove the bag and scrub the showerhead with a brush.

# Cleaning Sink Fixtures/Faucets

- Mix together 2 tablespoons of salt and add enough lemon juice to make a paste. Using a clean toothbrush dipped in the solution, scrub the fixtures and then rinse thoroughly.

# Cleaning Plastic Shower Curtains

- Spray plastic curtains regularly with a 50:50 mixture of vinegar and water to help stop mold and mildew.

# Helpful Hints & Tips

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## Acid versus Base

When choosing an ingredient for cleaning, it's important to know whether you need an acid (low pH) or a base (high pH).

<b>Acid Cleaners</b>	<b>Use on:</b>
Lemon juice, olive oil, club soda, vinegar	Rust, soap scum, water spots
<b>Basic Cleaners</b>	<b>Use on:</b>
Soap, baking soda, borax, washing soda	Body oil, food stains, general dirt & grime

# Helpful Hints & Tips

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- Give the natural cleaners time to sit before wiping off or rinsing. Give mind to the suggested sitting times and be aware that extra time might be added to your cleaning routines with natural cleaners.
- When mixing vinegar – or lemon – with baking soda, go slowly. The acid in vinegar/lemons reacts with the alkaline in baking soda which creates a fizzing, bubbling reaction.
- Boil sponges in a pot of water on the stovetop for 5 minutes or microwave them damp with clean water on high for 1 minute to disinfect them.
- Always test a newly made cleaner in a small inconspicuous spot before cleaning the entire area.

# Safety Rules

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- Be aware that some chemical combinations are hazardous – like bleach & ammonia.
- Label the cleaner containers clearly and store them out of reach of children and pets. Attach the recipe for a homemade cleaner to its container in case you need to contact poison control.
- Only follow recipes from reputable sources. Remember that “homemade” doesn’t always mean “nontoxic.”

# Works Cited - Books

*101 Easy Homemade Products for Your Skin, Health & Home* by Jan Berry

*DIY Natural Household Cleaners* by Matt & Betsy Jabs

*Clean Mama's Guide to a Healthy Home: The Simple, Room-by-Room Plan for a Natural Home*  
by Becky Rapinchuk

*Household Hints: Amazing Uses for Salt, Lemon, Vinegar, and Baking Soda* by Heather  
Rodino

*Squeaky Green: The Method Guide to Detoxing Your Home* by Eric Ryan & Adam Lowry

*Organic Housekeeping* by Ellen Sandbeck

*Green Clean: Natural Cleaning Solutions for Every Room of Your Home* by Jill Potvin Schoff

*Green Up Your Cleanup* by Jill Potvin Schoff

*Sara Snow's Fresh Living* by Sara Snow

*A Guide to Green Housekeeping* by Christina Strutt

# Works Cited - Websites

Jan Berry's Blog featuring Natural Cleaners & Soaps

<https://thenerdyfarmwife.com/>

Good Housekeeping: 9 Homemade Cleaners That Actually Work, According to Cleaning Experts

<https://www.goodhousekeeping.com/home/cleaning/tips/a24885/make-at-home-cleaners/>

Wellness Mama: Simple Answers for Healthier Families

<https://wellnessmama.com/>

Real Simple: 10 All-Natural Homemade Cleaning Solutions to Scrub Every Inch of Your Home

<https://www.realsimple.com/home-organizing/green-living/natural-cleaning-recipes>

Better Homes & Gardens: 13 Amazing Homemade Cleaners

<https://www.bhg.com/homekeeping/house-cleaning/cleaning-products-tools/homemade-cleaners/>

Matt & Betsy Jabs' DIY Natural

<https://www.diynatural.com/>