

Why Homemade?



Greener

There's a reason you can't dispose of commercial cleaners through normal means: they poison our water and toxify our planet. If that weren't bad enough, a surprising number of cleaning agents are petroleum-based.

Cheaper

Low-cost, everyday ingredients can make excellent cleaners. Compared to commercial products, you can create your own cleaning formulas for pennies on the dollar.

Healthier

Are you sure those commercial cleaning products don't do anything more than make you wrinkle your nose? Why risk using carcinogens and toxins in your home, when homemade is so easy?

The Key Ingredients

Baking Soda

Cleans and deodorizes; abrasiveness makes for a good scouring powder. Chemically, it's a base—don't bother mixing with an acid like vinegar. It may sometimes leave a residue; follow-up with a vinegar-based cleaner in that case.

Borax

Cleans, deodorizes, disinfects, and has anti-fungal and mildew properties. Borax is not considered an acute toxin, but it's not safe to ingest. Keep away from pets and children.

Castile Soap

A simple, biodegradable, vegetable-based soap; good for cutting through oils and grease.

Isopropyl (Rubbing) Alcohol

Cleans, disinfects, and sanitizes. If it's good enough for the medical profession, it's good enough for us! Use only in a well-ventilated area and, obviously, keep away kids, pets, and flame.

Vinegar

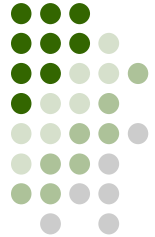
Cleans and disinfects. Its acidity helps kill bacteria, mold, and germs. Don't worry about the odor—it will dissipate completely once it dries. You can substitute an equal amount of lemon juice.

Washing Soda

In the same family as Baking Soda, Washing Soda is much more caustic. It also cuts through grease and helps remove stains. It doesn't give off fumes, but wear gloves!

CLEAN

Green
Cheap
Healthy

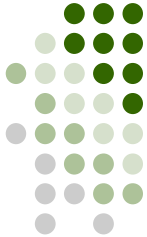


All-Purpose Household Cleaning



Recipes

Safety First



Smart tips to keep you and your family safe:

Read product labels and warnings. They know what they're talking about.

Always label homemade products. You wouldn't want to mistake a spray bottle of rubbing alcohol for vinegar to use in your salad!

If you have children or pets, take extra care. Use child-resistant containers, and store all cleaning products out of reach of children and pets and apart from food storage.

Don't use food containers for mixing or storing cleaning agents.

It's a good idea to test your cleaning formulas on a small area first.

Always be extra careful when using toxic (like Borax) or caustic ingredients (like Washing Soda): Wear gloves and other appropriate protective clothing.



All-Purpose Cleaners

Baking Soda Solution

Baking Soda
Hot Water

Proportions to taste. A thick paste makes a good scouring agent; a liquid formula can be used in a spray bottle. You can even just sprinkle a little soda on a damp sponge and wipe. As an option, you can use Washing Soda for more power, but wear gloves.

Soap Solution

Castile Soap
Hot Water
Baking or Washing Soda (optional)
Squeeze of Lemon (optional)

Start with 1 tsp to every quart of water, but you can play with the proportions to suit your needs.

Baking soda adds a little extra cleaning power and abrasiveness; lemon adds acidity for germ-fighting as well as a fresh scent.

1:1 Solution

1 part Vinegar OR Rubbing Alcohol
1 part Water

This works not just for cleaning surfaces but also glass. Use distilled water (i.e., water without minerals) to avoid streaks.

Disinfectants

Single Ingredient Solution

Undiluted Vinegar OR Rubbing Alcohol

Spray or sponge on. Key step—do not wipe or rinse. For full germ-killing effectiveness, allow the liquid to dry on the surface. You might want to test a small spot first.

Borax Solution

1/2 cup Borax
1 gallon Hot Water
Fresh herbs or essential oils (optional)

The herbs or oils will add a fresh scent. Some, like tea tree oil, will provide additional antiseptic properties.

