HOMEMADE HOUSEHOLD CLEANERS

The majority of us share a common goal when we set out to clean our homes: to provide a safer, healthier environment for our family, friends, and selves. Yet, behind those sparkling countertops, glistening bathtubs, and streak-free window panes lie a multitude of chemicals that are linked to cancer, respiratory issues, reproductivity challenges, and even death if too much of the wrong chemicals are ingested or inhaled.

Despite the shining appearance they may bring, most of the household cleaning products on the market today make our homes more dangerous and toxic than the dirt and germs they “wash” away.

Thankfully, with just a few simple ingredients you likely already have on hand, you can create your own household cleaners that are not only safe for your family and the environment, but are also easier on the budget, too! Along the way, you can revolutionize your cleaning routine and actually improve the health of your household! The air we breathe can have just as much impact on our wellbeing as the food we eat, so it is important to put as much care into the products we use in our homes as we do the foods we put in our bodies.

And if DIY isn’t your thing, or you don’t want to invest the time and energy into making your own household cleaners, you can still reduce your exposure to the toxic chemicals in conventional
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cleaners by selecting those that rank the safest in the Environmental Working Group’s studies.

For the EWG’s recommended cleaning brands, see EWG’s Guide to Healthy Cleaning.

Whichever route you take, switching your cleaning products is one of the simplest steps you can take to live healthier today, putting you further on your path to success!

NON-TOXIC ALL-PURPOSE SPRAY

This “Swiss Army knife” herbal vinegar spray has antimicrobial and disinfectant properties that can tackle any mess your counters, stove, sinks, toilets, and windows can dish up! Moreover, it smells great, is completely non-toxic, and costs pennies on the dollar compared with conventional all-purpose cleaners.

Ingredients

- 1 quart distilled white vinegar (read the label and try to find one that is not petroleum based)
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‣ 1 cup dried thyme
‣ 1 cup dried lavender

Directions

‣ Combine herbs in a 1 quart glass jar and fill the jar the rest of the way with vinegar.

‣ Add a piece of parchment paper over the mouth of the jar (to prevent the vinegar from touching the metal) and secure the lid (or use a plastic mason jar lid).

‣ Shake well and let sit for 24 hours.

‣ Strain out the herbs and put the liquid into a spray bottle (preferably glass).

Source: LearningHerbs.com

NON-TOXIC BATHROOM CLEANER

This bathroom cleaner is inexpensive, non-toxic, and comes with extra scrubbing power for built up grime.
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Ingredients

- 2 cups distilled water, warmed
- 1 tablespoon baking soda
- 2 tablespoons liquid castile soap (Dr. Bronner’s)
- 30 drops tea tree essential oil
- 20 drops sweet orange essential oil

Directions

- Add warm water and baking soda into a glass spray bottle and shake well.
- Add the remaining ingredients and shake well again.
- To use, spray on the desired surface and let it sit for a minute.
- Scrub with a damp cloth and wipe clean.

Source: LiveSimply.me
NON-TOXIC OVEN CLEANER

Ingredients

- ½ cup homemade liquid soap (see the Dish & Laundry Detergent recipe)\(^1\)
- 1 ½ cup baking soda
- 2-4 drops lavender essential oil (you can use any scent you like, or none at all)
- ¼ cup organic white vinegar (you can also use apple cider vinegar)
- Water as needed to make a “paintable” but thick paste

Directions

- Remove your racks from the oven and clean them separately in the sink.
- Put the soap in a glass bowl. Add the remaining ingredients and mix well to form a paste.
- Paint the paste over the entire surface of your oven and let it sit for 6 to 8 hours or overnight.

\(^1\) If using store-bought soap instead of soap nuts liquid, use 1 Tbsp soap.
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‣ After the paste has sat, fill a bowl with clean water.

‣ Dip a scrubbing pad in the water, wipe off the grime, and repeat until the oven is clean.

‣ You will need to change the water several times as you work.

Source: YumUniverse.com

NON-TOXIC DISH & LAUNDRY DETERGENT

Ingredients

‣ 12 soap nuts (available on Amazon)

‣ 6 cups distilled water

‣ Optional: 1-4 drops of essential oil for scent (not recommended for children or those with sensitive skin)

Directions

‣ Add the soap nuts to a pot and pour in 6 cups of distilled water.
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‣ Bring to a boil and simmer for 30 minutes.
‣ Strain out the nuts (use a cheesecloth to get out any fine pieces), stir in optional essential oils, and pour into bottle.
‣ Use ⅛ cup for a medium to large load of laundry.
‣ Store in the fridge for 2 to 3 weeks.

Source: YumUniverse.com

NON-TOXIC FOAMING HAND SOAP

Ingredients

‣ 12 ounces of distilled or boiled water
‣ 2 tablespoons liquid castile soap (Dr. Bronner’s)
‣ ½ teaspoon olive oil (or sweet almond oil)
‣ Optional: 1-4 drops of essential oil for scent (not recommended for children or those with sensitive skin)
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Directions

‣ Recycle a foaming hand soap bottle from the store (clean it out well!) or buy an empty one.

‣ Fill with the water, leaving 1 inch from the neck of the bottle.

‣ Add the castile soap and oil (and optional essential oils) and close the bottle.

‣ Gently swish to mix and use as you would any foaming hand soap.

Source: WellnessMama.com

OTHER CLEANERS

Here are some other creative cleaning uses for items you probably already have on hand:

‣ Vodka can be used to polish any metal or mirrored surface.

‣ Toothpaste can be used to polish silver and jewelry.

‣ Baking soda can be used to clean grout.