

how to make your own cleaning products



This quick reference guide contains simple home-made recipes which will make light work of any cleaning job in your home! Just choose from the following sections to find the perfect product for the task at hand:

*Bathroom and Toilet
General Cleaning
Kitchen
Laundry
Walls, Floors and Windows*

BANISHING 'PUBLIC TOILET' SMELL

I have discovered the cheapest solution to preventing our bathroom at home from smelling like a public toilet! Having two boys who need to learn how to 'aim' a bit better, I needed to come up with a solution fast - and found one! I simply clean the toilet and floor tiles with a bucket of vinegar and water. You don't need much vinegar, but I have found that it really takes the urine smell away well and is a cheap and safe way of cleaning the toilet too!

Contributed by: Edwina Hickey

BI-CARB IN THE BATH

I used to buy special shower sprays to clean the bath but now I use bi-carb soda. It really gets rid of soap scum and I also use bi-carb soda to clean out coffee cup stains.

Contributed by: Helen Robinson

BI-CARB SODA AND VINEGAR REPLACES OTHER CLEANERS

I have saved heaps by no longer buying expensive cleaning products. To clean my toilet, bath or shower, I quickly wet the area and let most of the water drain away. Then sprinkle the whole area with bicarbonate soda, using a small shaker. I then spray it with cheap white vinegar. There is a slight chemical reaction that dissolves all the mould and dirt. Leave it for a few minutes to work. You still have to scrub a little and you may need to re-do any heavily soiled areas. It also works for benchtops and sinks, it's a cheap alternative to chemicals and good for the environment too.

Contributed by: Janet Candy

CHEMICAL FREE HAND CLEANER

For a chemical free hand cleaner, scrub a cut lemon over your hands next time you have finished cooking with one. Lemons are a natural 'bleach' and will remove yellow discolouration and tobacco from hands.

Contributed by: Sylvie U.

CLEAN BATHROOMS (AND PEOPLE!) WITH LIME JUICE

I know some terrific handy uses for fresh lime juice! You can use limes to make an effective copper cleaner, simply mix the lime juice with a little salt. Lime also breaks down the film that appears in sinks, toilet bowls and showers. Squeeze the limes, spray on the affected area, soak for about 20 minutes and the scum should come off much easier. The best one however is for people who have overdone it with the fake tan! Applying turmeric powder along with lime juice will remove the stains. Lime juice is a natural bleach and will fix the problem in no time!

Contributed by: Jodye S

DETERGENT-FREE SHOWER CLEANER

I have found a miracle cleaner which costs less than a dollar! To clean glass shower screens and stainless steel items, all you need to use is an old stocking rolled up in a ball with no detergent. Rub over to remove soap scum or mould, then wipe over with a clean dry cloth. I have tried everything to clean my shower screens over the years but this is the only one which has worked!

Contributed by: Buggys

TOILET SPRAY CLEANER

Save on expensive toilet cleaners by making your own effective spray cleaner. Put all of the following into a spray bottle, let it sit for 15 minutes and then try it out.

- 2 tablespoons bi-carb soda
- 2 tablespoons white vinegar
- 2 cups boiling water
- 2 teaspoons of tea tree oil

The tea tree oil kills the germs & smells great!

Contributed by: Carol Sanderson

CLEAN YOUR IRON WITHOUT CHEMICALS

Try this cheap and effective way to clean an iron without using expensive chemicals. Heat your iron until hot. Rub the bottom of an old white candle over the iron and wait for the wax to melt. This will collect all of the 'gunk' on the iron. Then iron over an old piece of rag to make sure all of the wax is off. This has worked really well for me, my cheap \$25 iron has lasted over six years of being used every day!

Contributed by: Kylie Watson

GREAT ALL-PURPOSE HOUSEHOLD CLEANER

To make an all-purpose household cleaner, pour half a cup of vinegar into a spray bottle, fill the bottle up with cold water and then add about one teaspoon of ammonia. Shake the bottle and use this to clean kitchen benchtops, stoves, windows and bathrooms. It is especially great for dirty saucepans - spray or pour some of the mixture on to the offending scum, then leave for a few minutes. If the scum still sticks, cover it with the mixture and leave it overnight; then wash it in the morning.

Contributed by: Barb Halikas

HEAVY DUTY CLEANER

Four litres hot water, 1/4 cup cloudy ammonia and one teaspoon bi-carb soda make a great heavy duty cleaner. (Only use 2 litres of water for a stronger mixture.)

Contributed by: Margaret Van Emmerik

ROOM DEODORISER

Put a little bi-carb soda or vinegar in an open dish. This will absorb smells.

Contributed by: Helen Smith

HOME MIXED HOUSEHOLD CLEANER

My mother is chronically ill and disabled. She suffers from a rare type of auto-immune disease called lupus, and is therefore allergic to most chemicals. This made cleaning difficult because she was allergic to most cleaning products, or those she wasn't allergic to were too expensive to buy on my carer's pension. Because Mum's disease is an auto-immune disease, I have to keep our house hospital-grade clean.

So I have come up with a fantastic recipe, and my house is spotless, smells great and is fresh and clean. The solution cleans and polishes everything, including windows. I have never seen glass and stainless steel taps look so clean.

This solution also lasts forever. Household cleaner used to cost me \$80 per month, but now I buy detergent every three months, vinegar once a year at \$1.50, washing soda every 18 months at \$0.98c and eucalyptus oil once every eight months at \$3.50 - a saving of \$880 a year minus \$20 for the few items I do buy. In total I've saved around \$2640 over three years. Here is the recipe.

1 litre water
200ml vinegar
40ml detergent
40ml eucalyptus oil
2 dessertspoons of washing soda

Mix all ingredients together, and it's ready to use. It makes approximately two litres. Use 60ml of solution in warm water to wash your floors. Fill a spray bottle and use it to clean your table, benches and bathroom.

Contributed by: Becky-Lee Reed

'MICROFIBRE' STYLE CLEANERS FROM OLD STOCKINGS

I make a valuable saving on microfibre cleaning cloths by recycling my old stockings! I work in an office and spend quite a lot on stockings - they never seem to last more than a couple of days. Once they become unwearable, I wash them with the rest of my washing and add them to a bag of stockings I keep for dusting and cleaning around the house. They are brilliant and work just as well as the microfibre cleaning cloths, which can cost between \$4.00 and \$8.00 each! You can fold them inside out and keep using until they're full of dust and dirt - then just throw away. You can even use them with disinfectant sprays; they are great for any surface. A great way to recycle and save at the same time!

Contributed by: Rose Kosyer

REMOVING CAT HAIR WITH RUBBER GLOVES

I have found that having two cats and dogs who live in and outside of the house we do get a build up of fur, especially cat fur on the lounge. Quite by accident I found that while wearing my \$2.00 rubber gloves I can wipe my hands over the lounge and all the fur rubs off into a ball very quickly and easily. Any that falls to the floor I can remove by hand or by vacuuming. This certainly beats trying to use expensive upholstery cleaner to remove the offending fur and if you want to have a nice smell to your furniture then spray lightly with your favourite aromatherapy oil diluted in water in a spray bottle which I have made by reusing an empty, thoroughly washed out, pump action hairspray bottle.

Contributed by: Lyn Farthing



CLEAN YOUR OVEN RACKS WITH ALUMINIUM FOIL

An easy way to clean your oven racks is to wrap them in aluminium foil, place them in very hot water in your laundry with some laundry detergent. Make sure they are completely covered by the water. Leave until the water has gone cold then a light rub with either a brush or steel wool will bring your oven racks up like new. There is a chemical reaction between the foil, laundry detergent and hot water which lifts off the baked on grime.

Contributed by: Sandra Miller

CLEAN OVEN WITH CLOUDY AMMONIA

For a cheap oven cleaner, mix together three parts cloudy ammonia to one part water, then fill an empty spray bottle. Heat the oven, then switch it off before spraying the interior thoroughly. Leave overnight and wipe clean the next morning.

Contributed by: Deborah Jordan

DRAIN CLEANER WITH VINEGAR

I have found that by not buying expensive drain unblockers I have saved thousands of dollars over the years. All I do is put about a good tablespoon of sodium bicarbonate in the drain, followed by about a cupful of white vinegar. The strong fizzing action soon unblocks the drain - and you don't have to wear gloves or masks!

Contributed by: Rosalie Howard

CLEANING MICROWAVE WITH LEMON

To clean your microwave quickly and cheaply, without the need for harsh and expensive chemicals, place a few slices of lemon in a cup of water and 'cook' for a few minutes. When finished, just wipe out the microwave with a sponge or soft cloth. For more stubborn areas just repeat the process. In just a few minutes you will have a lovely clean microwave with a fresh lemon scent!

Contributed by: Sandra Sherman

CLEANING MICROWAVE WITH BI-CARB

An easy way to clean and deodorise your microwave is to put half a cup of water in a microwave proof dish with one tablespoon of bi-carb in the microwave. Cook on high for one minute. The steam from the water loosens anything that doesn't belong there and makes it easy to wipe away. The bi-carb absorbs odours.

Contributed by: Lexie Walker

REMOVING STAINS FROM THE KETTLE

To clean the inside of a jug easily, economically and safely, put a lemon cut into quarters into the jug, fill with water and bring to the boil. Let it stand for 10 minutes or so. Your jug should look like new with all stains removed.

Contributed by: Loris Manns

BI-CARB GREAT IN THE WASH

The combination of washing powder and bi-carb soda is wonderful for getting clothes clean. Make a scoop of half your usual amount of powder and half a scoop of bi-carb, and wash in usual manner. I always dissolve my powder in warm water before I add to the machine.

I had to wash a number of beige coloured curtains that hadn't been washed in a year, from a rental property, and they were filthy. I washed with the powder/soda combination and also added about a half cup to a cup of vinegar. The result was beautifully clean curtains with no stains or marks at all, plus a pleasant smell.

I buy my McKenzies bi-carb in 2kg bags for \$3.40 from an Asian grocery shop. As everyone should know, bi-carb is terrific for cleaning just about everything!

Contributed by: Leah Johnson

BLEACH SUBSTITUTE

If you run out of bleach, here is a substitute that will work on coloured clothes. Use half a cup of either vinegar or baking soda. Not only is it a good substitute, but it is much gentler on your clothes.

Contributed by: Bundabergturtle

ECO WASH FOR 7C PER LOAD

You can save money, water, time and the environment by washing your laundry with Soap Nuts! A kilo of Soap Nuts can be bought online for \$44.50 including postage, which works out to be approximately \$0.07c per wash if you use six halves for six washes. You also save water and time as you only need to run a wash and spin cycle (no rinse cycle is needed). Soap Nuts are perfect if you reuse your grey water. I have three sons and have found the Soap Nuts get their clothes clean and I don't have a problem with detergent build up on the baby's cloth nappies, another bonus!
<http://www.soapinanutshell.com.au/>

Contributed by: Rachael

CHEMICAL FREE HOME-MADE LAUNDRY LIQUID

This laundry liquid makes about 90-100 litres and works out to only \$0.17c per litre. Fantastic if you have skin allergies. My hubby and kids love it.

Ingredients:

1 bar of Velvet or Sunlight soap
1 cup of lectric washing soda (this is a water softener available in the laundry section of the supermarket)
½ cup borax (available from your pharmacy)
30ml water miscible lavender oil (available in the supermarket. Coles have this in their medical section)
hot water

Method:

1. Grate the bar of soap into a big pot.
2. Cover with water and simmer over medium heat until all soap is melted, stirring occasionally.
3. Pour into a very large bucket approx 20 - 25 litres (I use a covered nappy bucket).
4. Add the lectric soda, lavender oil and borax.
5. Add enough very hot water to fill the bucket.
6. Stir often as it is cooling down (any long stick or spoon will do).
7. Let it sit overnight to gel, but give it the occasional stir as it starts to thicken.
8. For top loader washing machines use one cup per load, or for front loading machines use half a cup per load.
9. You can pour this into old detergent bottles or leave in the bucket. Make sure it's covered with a lid if using a bucket to protect children or pets.
10. If gel is too thick for your liking add more hot water to get desired consistency.
11. Home-made laundry liquid does not contain detergents so therefore it will not be very bubbly or frothy.

Contributed by: Karin Dalton-Smith

FABRIC SOFTENER RECIPE

Make your own fabric softener and save on commercial products. All you need is:

250g Lux soap powder
1 cup (250ml) methylated spirits
125g eucalyptus oil

METHOD: Mix all ingredients and keep in screw top jar. Using one tablespoon in a basin of warm water, soak the garment. No rinsing is needed, just drip-dry. This mix is recommended for reviving woollens too!

Contributed by: Jill Hopgood-Clark

REMOVING RUST STAINS

This simple tip has resulted in some valuable savings on replacing clothing in our household! We live in a country town where the water is known for causing rust stains on everything. Recently I washed my husband's cream bowls pants and they came out with very bad rust stains on them. I thought there was no choice but to buy a new pair at \$50, until a friend told me to try lemon juice. To treat stains this way, put several layers of paper towel under the stain, then saturate with lemon juice. Leave the item out in the sun (with the paper towel still under it) and the stain will disappear, then wash as normal. It's amazing! I saved \$50 on a new pair of pants with a lemon that cost just \$0.50c (apparently bottled lemon juice does the trick as well). I wish I had known this earlier, as this was not the first pair of bowls pants this has happened to. I might have to plant a lemon tree!

Contributed by: Debra F

VINEGAR AS FABRIC SOFTENER

Vinegar makes an excellent laundry softener and you also use half as much as purchased softener. It is non-allergenic and a bottle of vinegar will last you twice as long and is half the cost.

Contributed by: Emma Mullins

REMOVE JUICE STAINS FROM COTTON CLOTHING

I rescued a \$200 white outfit from the rubbish bin using this super cheap and easy tip! I had bought my first designer skirt and top courtesy of a friend who had contacts in the industry, so I got 66% off the retail but it still cost me \$200. However, on arriving home proudly wearing my new purchase, my husband asked me to try the first blackberry from our tree and - you guessed it, the inevitable happened. I spilt some and there was a horrendous stain. My instinct was to wash it immediately in cold water but instead I took the advice I found online and stretched the stained piece over a bucket and poured boiling HOT water through it several times. The stain disappeared and my longed-for designer outfit was saved!

Contributed by: Lyn Osborne

REMOVE BLOOD FROM SHEETS BY SOAKING IN MILK

My husband suffers from psoriasis (a skin disease) and in his sleep he scratches, making his arms bleed. It was costing me \$34 for a flat queen-size sheet as blood is hard to get out.

I discovered that if you soak the affected area in milk, the blood dissolves. This has saved me heaps of money. You then just wash the sheet in your normal wash. For an added bonus you can scrub it before with a little sugar. No more wasted sheets!

Contributed by: Linda Davis

REMOVE FOOD STAINS

Save on buying expensive stain removers for clothes. Many food stains in your clothes are oil based, so all you need is to rub ordinary kitchen detergent on the stain to remove it!

Contributed by: Patricia Young

BABY OIL REMOVES CRAYON

No need to buy expensive cleaners to remove unwanted crayon artwork from walls - all you need is baby oil! Red crayon may be a little more stubborn, but one wipe is usually all it takes!

Contributed by: Lyndal H

CLEAN GLASS AND MIRRORS

I never use window cleaners as they are expensive and bad for the environment. I use a good car chamois and warm, soapy water (and elbow grease). This works for mirrors, shower screens, windows, sliding doors, the car, and so on.

Contributed by: Fiona Campbell

DUST WITH YOUR SOCKS ON

I never have to buy dusters since I came up with a simple alternative - recycling odd socks! We all have them - I got sick of having so many 'single', but they work brilliantly as dusters. You don't have to watch for the cloth to 'catch' on anything and you can have full control on whatever you need to dust!

Contributed by: Sheena Johnston

CARPET SPOT REMOVER

Clean carpet spots, especially pet accidents with white vinegar & water in equal amounts.

Contributed by: Dayna Spurway

CARPET SPOT STAIN REMOVAL

A helpful carpet cleaning professional shared a fantastic tip for removing spot stains out of carpets. No costly cleaners, in fact no cost at all! All you need is boiling water. Just pour boiling water over the mark, agitate it a little, then just dab it with a dry cloth (don't rub). When a friend spilt red wine on my cream carpet, she thought I had gone loopy when I boiled the kettle and got a towel to treat the stain. I don't think either of us really expected it to work, but I haven't spent a cent on carpet cleaner since!

Contributed by: Michelle Owen

CHEMICAL-FREE FLOOR CLEANER

For a cheap and easy chemical-free floor cleaning solution, just fill a bucket with hot water, squeeze the juice of one lemon into it and add a few drops of olive oil. Then wipe over as usual. The lemon leaves a pleasant fragrance and the olive oil will make your floor shine!

Contributed by: Yasmin Dawoojee

CITRUS OIL AND STEAM MOPS

When washing my tiled floor, I use a steam mop and put about three or four drops of orange or citrus essential oil (or your preference) on the material head of the steam mop before attaching it on the mop. These oils can be picked up from Crazy Clarks or The Warehouse for about \$3.00 or less, and they last about four months if steaming your floor once a week. They leave your floor and rooms smelling delicious.

Contributed by: Sharon Spong

CLEANING TIMBER FLOORS

I clean my timber floors cheaply and with great results using 100% eucalyptus oil and 100% lavender oil. It leaves a shiny, clean look with no residue build up or water marks when drying and smells great! One 250ml bottle of eucalyptus oil and one 100ml bottle of lavender oil lasts me around 12 months and cost around \$10 each from supermarkets. I use one capful of eucalyptus and two drops of lavender to half a bucket of hot water. I save around \$24 a year on buying other commercial floor cleaners and the results are just as good!

Contributed by: Michelle Treacy

EUCALYPTUS ON YOUR MOP

Putting eucalyptus onto your mop smells great. It not only cleans and disinfects the floor, but it also kills dust mites and repels other pests too.

Contributed by: H Kerr