

13

DIY HOUSEHOLD PRODUCTS

THAT WILL SAVE YOU SOME SERIOUS COIN



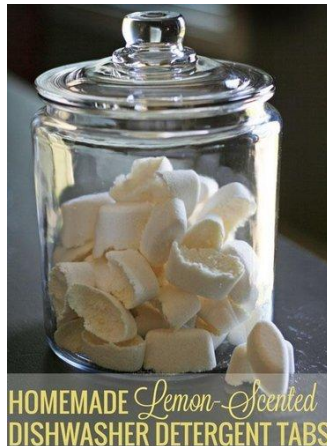
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Please note - make your own cleaning products at your own risk - Family Diary



1. Dishwasher Tabs



We could pen an ode to dishwasher tabs. Using them feels way easier than a detergent, yet they seem to come with a big mark up. These homemade detergent tabs use baking soda to cut grease, washing soda (which you can make yourself) to clean, and kosher salt to reduce hard water buildup. This recipe could run you as little as 46 cents per tab -- about a fifth of what you might pay at the store.

Ingredients

- 1 Cup Washing Soda (cleaner)
- 1 Cup Baking Soda (cuts out grease)
- 3 packages unsweetened lemonade drink mix (added cleaning power, antibacterial and smells awesome)
- 1 Cup of Kosher Salt (reduces hard water build up - you might be able to reduce this amount if you have soft water)
- 1 Cup Water

Method

1. Mix all dry ingredients together.
2. If you are using this as a dry powder: Omit the water. Then pour all dry ingredients into an airtight container. Consider adding in a bag of uncooked rice in a clean cloth to help keep the dry mixture from clumping. Add one tablespoon of dry powder mix to your dishwasher dispenser. Also use vinegar or jet-dry in your rinse dispenser too.
3. If you are making tabs: Add water, wait for fizzing to stop (about 1-2 minutes). Then add your mixture to ice cube trays, pressing with your fingers or back of a spoon. Let dry in a warm and sunny spot for 24 hours or till completely dry. Remove and add to an airtight container. Add one tab to the dishwasher dispenser. Also use vinegar or jet-dry in your rinse dispenser too.

[\[Recipe\]](#)



2. All-purpose Cleaner



This cleaner is the solution to so many messes -- in the kitchen, bathroom and the dinner table where your little one (perpetually) spills some milk. Vinegar is a homemade cleaning heavyweight and the star of this potion, with disinfecting properties thanks to its acidity.

Ingredients

- 1 part water
- 1 part vinegar
- 10-15 drops essential oils of choice
- Spray Bottle

Method

Pour everything in your spray bottle of choice and shake it around for a second. I shake it before each use to ensure the oils are well mixed.

That's it. Seriously.

[\[Recipe\]](#)



3. Glass Cleaner



This glass cleaner is as simple as vinegar + rubbing alcohol + water -- three ingredients already in your house! The game changing ingredient in this concoction is rubbing alcohol, which works to dissolve dirt and oil and dries quickly for a streak-free finish.

[\[Recipe\]](#)

DIY All-In-One Glass and Stainless Steel Cleaner

Ingredients

- ½ cup rubbing alcohol*
- ⅓ cup white/distilled vinegar
- water (Clean tap water is fine for short-term use. Use distilled or boiled and cooled water for long-term use.)

Method

1. Add the alcohol and vinegar to a 16oz. glass spray bottle. Add water until the bottle is full (use a funnel, if needed). If you don't care for a vinegar scent (although it goes away once the surface dries), add a few drops of your favourite cleaning essential oil. This cleaner may be stored at room temperature.

2. To Use: Spray the cleaner on windows and mirrors, then wipe with a microfiber cloth. A cotton towel may be used, but I highly recommend microfiber to achieve a streak and lint-free appearance. I've also used this cleaner on some of our stainless steel appliances with good success. Before using this cleaner on stainless steel always check your appliance manual since some appliances recommend using plain water for wiping the surface (like our new fridge).

*I know some people in the natural community avoid rubbing alcohol for cleaning purposes. A high-proof vodka may be safely substituted for rubbing alcohol.



4. Fabric Softener



It's worth repeating, vinegar is the cleaning superhero that conquers all. This recipe for fabric softener uses it as a softening agent and static cling fighter, while a measure of conditioner incorporates your favourite scent.

[\[Recipe\]](#)

Ingredients

- 350ml. container of inexpensive hair conditioner
- 1 1/2 cups of distilled white vinegar,
- 3 cups of really warm water and a container.

Method

1. You simply mix all of the ingredients together in a large bowl, whisk until fully mixed together, and that is it!

2. Grab a container and a funnel, and pour it in!



5. Laundry Detergent



South African families wash almost 250 loads of laundry per year on average. That's a lot of detergent! This recipe for homemade laundry soap might seem like it has a lot of ingredients, but it will save you loads on loads. The recipe makes enough for 504 loads, and at 62 cents per load, you can be doing laundry for under R300 per year. A box of one of the leading detergents will cost more and clean only a fraction of the loads.

Ingredients

- 1 Box of Super Washing Soda 1.5kg
- 1 Box of Borax 2.1kg
- 1 Box of Pure Baking Soda 1.8kg
- 3 bars of Fels-Naptha 154g or you could also use Ivory soap
- 1 container of Oxy-Clean 600g
- *optional: Purex Crystals 780g for scent (or you could use Downy unstoppables)

Method

1. Grate your Fels-Naptha Bar. You can use a cheese grater to do this, but I used my food processor as it was a lot quicker. Using my food processor I first grated the bar like cheese, and then used the regular blade to grate down fine. You could use Ivory soap (just microwave it and it will foam where you can just crush it into a fine grade).
2. Next I grabbed one of my plastic tote bins and put a black garbage bag inside of it. Then I poured each one of the ingredients inside.
3. Mix all these ingredients up well.
4. Then add it all to your container of choice.

You only need to use 1-2 tablespoons per load, and yes you can use it in your High Efficiency washing machines (that's what I have been using). Some people worry that just 1-2 tablespoons is not enough, but this stuff is concentrated and works really well! I have been using it for months now. My daughter has really sensitive skin, and this has been wonderful for her since all the others out there have add-ins.

[\[Recipe\]](#)

6. Carpet Stain Remover



This DIY carpet stain remover recipe is so simple it's foolproof. There's just one ingredient: hydrogen peroxide. Good not only for our little one's "ouchies," but for pizza-meets-carpet boo-boos, as well.

Ingredients

- Hydrogen peroxide

Method

A little hydrogen peroxide on a wet cloth will take it right out!

[\[Recipe\]](#)

7. Deep Clean Scrub



Deep cleansing scrub is a miracle worker on sinks and tubs, but can cost a pretty penny. This homemade scrub harnesses the power of baking soda and castile soap (and optional essential oil for scent) to help you banish grime and stains. While castile soap may seem like a pricier ingredient, it's found in many DIY cleaner recipes and is highly concentrated -- it will pay for itself many times over.

Ingredients

- 1/2 cup baking soda
- squirt of liquid castile soap (vegetable based soap)
- dozen drops of essential oils.

Method

1. Mix 1/2 cup baking soda with a squirt of liquid castile soap (I'm not big on getting out the measuring spoons for this but it's probably a couple of tablespoons).
2. Stir until combined and add a dozen or so drops of essential oil.
3. Use a rag or sponge to apply to sinks and tubs (or pretty much anything else in the bathroom) and scrub away.
4. Then rinse well.

Tip:

When the tub gets those gross rings or the sink looks stained, I add some salt and lemon for extra scrubbing and whitening power. Combine baking soda, salt and lemon juice until you have a paste and apply to stained areas. I'm lazy and will let this sit for a few hours if possible to let things loosen up a bit before attacking with a sponge.

[\[Recipe\]](#)



8. Vegetable Wash



Vegetable wash might feel like an unnecessary splurge to some -- that is, if you pay retail prices for it.

We found a way to make it with disinfecting ingredients you likely already have in your home: water, white vinegar and lemon juice.

Ingredients

- 1 and a half to 2 cups water
- 2 tablespoons white vinegar
- 2 tablespoons lemon juice
- 10 drops grapefruit seed extract (optional)

Method

1. Mix together and pour into a spray bottle.
2. Spray on fruits and veggies (except mushrooms) and let sit for a few minutes.
3. Scrub if needed and rinse well.

[\[Recipe\]](#)



9. Microwave Cleaner



We've all been there. You're heating up pasta sauce. You hear a series of pops and sizzles from across the kitchen, and you just know: it's all over the microwave.

Ingredients

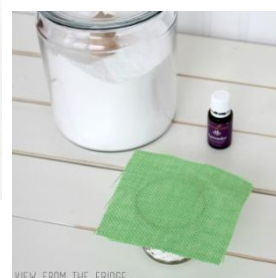
- 1 lemon
- bowl of water

Method

1. Take a lemon and cut it into slices, place them in a microwave safe bowl, fill the bowl with water.
2. Now place the bowl in the centre of your microwave and cook on high for 5 minutes.
3. When the timer goes off, **DO NOT REMOVE IT FROM THE MICROWAVE!** Let it sit there for at least 2 minutes so the steam from the water and lemons has time to work on the stains in there.
4. Now open your microwave and remove the bowl, be careful, it's going to be hot!!! Use oven mitts or a tea towel.
5. Take a damp rag and wipe out all of the dirt. I held a bowl under the microwave to catch the food bits. The great thing about the lemons and water is the acidity in the lemons mixed with the steam from heating the water inside loosens all of the icky stuff up, so no scrubbing necessary!

[\[Recipe\]](#)

10. Refreshers: Room, Fabric and Pets



These two DIYs make use of the same ingredients to fight unwelcome odours. Baking soda acts as a deodorizer, while essential oils add your favourite scent.

Ingredients

- Baking soda
- Your favourite essential oil(s) (I love using Lavender, but Purification is also a great choice to neutralize odours)
- Small mason jar (this would also be great using baby food jars with small holes drilled in the top)
- Breathable fabric (I used burlap)

Method

1. Simply add enough baking soda to fill the jar about 3/4 full
2. Add 10-15 drops of Essential Oil
3. Put on the top and shake it up!
4. Take off the top, stretch fabric over top and cut to size.
5. Secure fabric by screwing on outer rim of jar

Pets and Teenager's room mix:

Add 1 tablespoon of baking soda to a clean spray bottle.

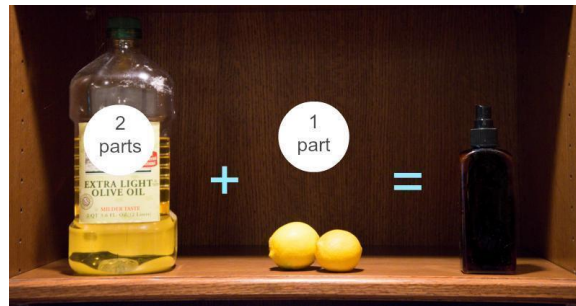
Next add two cups of warm water, put the lid on and shake until the baking soda has dissolved.

Then take the lid off and add 10 drops of lavender essential oil or any other you prefer. Put the lid back on and shake well.

Now, spray your fabric or just spray it all around the air! I use it on curtains, bedding, pillows, furniture and my rugs. It smells like Heaven, and I don't have to worry about spraying chemicals all over the house where my family lives.

[\[Recipe\]](#) [\[Recipe\]](#)

11. Wood Polish



This two-ingredient furniture polish employs olive oil for shine and lemon juice to help remove any buildup or stains. Leaving your furniture shiny and lemony-fresh.

Ingredients

- 2 parts olive oil
- 1 part lemon juice.

That's seriously it, folks.

Method

In an empty spray bottle or in a regular jar, mix 2 parts olive oil with 1 part lemon juice.

It's a smart idea to first strain the lemon juice in a fine mesh strain to prevent your spray bottle from clogging. I just used an empty spray bottle from a natural, store bought wood polish I have used before. Shake well to emulsify the mixture. Bada bing! You have yourself some wood polish.

Spray sparingly onto wood and in circular motions, rub the polish into the wood until it is well buffed with a soft cloth. If storing in a regular jar, just pour a small amount onto the cloth and buff into the wood in circular motions.

[\[Recipe\]](#)



12. Oven Cleaner



Cleaning out the oven is not for the faint of heart. Between the crouching, scrubbing and nauseating fumes, we tend to avoid it for as long as possible.

This oven cleaner is nontoxic and fume-free, with baking soda and salt for ultimate grease-cutting, scouring power. Let it sit and work its magic!

Ingredients

- ¼ cup castile soap (vegetable based soap) or concentrated dish detergent
- 1 cup baking soda
- ½ cup coarse sea salt or kosher salt
- warm water, for rinsing plus more for paste, if needed
- distilled white vinegar, for rinsing

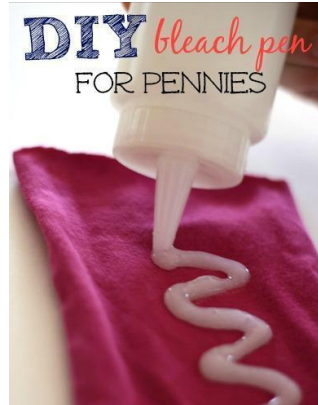
Method

1. Start with a cool oven. Remove oven racks. Racks can be cleaned with the same paste. I place them in the bathtub and let them sit before scrubbing.
2. Mix ingredients together to form a thick, spreadable paste. All you need is baking soda, coarse salt, liquid dish soap, and a sponge. The warm water comes later! The paste should be thick like frosting. You want it to stick to the oven walls and not run into a puddle.
3. Apply a thick layer of the paste all over the interior of the oven. Let the paste sit on the oven for several hours, preferably overnight.
4. Dip a sponge or brush in warm water and squeeze out excess water. Wipe down the oven walls, ceiling and floor, scrubbing if needed and watch the grease and grime disappear. Rinse and repeat until clean.
5. Spritz oven with a little distilled white vinegar to help remove any residue from the paste and wipe dry.
6. If the oven is particularly dirty with a lot of burnt-on grease, you may need to do this twice, or do touch-ups in spots. Generally this should work the first time though. Now your oven is ready for a fresh batch of cookies



Important Tip - Be gentle on oven glass. It's not likely, but it may scratch if you scrub too vigorously. Some instructions say to heat the oven, but I find that it works just as well without heat. [[Recipe](#)]

13. Bleach Pen



Bleach pens are the laundry room sidekick we can't live without. But they're a little pricey! This homemade bleach pen will cost you a minuscule 25 cents.

Ingredients

- 1 cup cold water
- 5 tablespoons cornstarch
- 5 tablespoons regular bleach

Method

1. Mix cold water and cornstarch together in a medium sized saucepan. It's important that the water is cold so that the cornstarch doesn't cause any lumps in the gel. Over medium high heat, stir the mixture continuously until it is very thick and pasty. Remove from heat and let cool completely.
2. Add the bleach to the gel and blend well. Carefully pour the gel mixture into container of choice. I have a bunch of these clear condiment bottles from the plastic shop that work great. An empty glue bottle would be even better if you need the nozzle to be a tad smaller.
3. When working with bleach, it's always a good idea to wear gloves to protect hands, and clothing that you're not too worried about in case of any splashing.
4. Use in the same way you would use a regular gel bleach pen. I made my version with regular strength bleach, so make sure to compensate if you are using an extra strength formula.

Below, you can see how I used it to take out a stubborn stain in my favourite white pants. Seriously, before this I had tried adding bleach to the wash cycle, but it still didn't take the stain out. Whipped out this gel pen, and whalah! All things white again.

[[Recipe](#)]