



# Green Cleaning Recipes

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*Based on <http://epa.gov/epp/pubs/cleaning.htm>; *The Five Basics for Nontoxic Cleaning and Better Basics for the Home: Simple Solutions for Less Toxic Living* by Annie Berthold-Bond*

## INGREDIENTS

- tap water
- baking soda
- borax
- distilled white vinegar
- plant-based liquid soap
- salt
- sponge
- squeegee
- spray bottle
- Tea tree oil

## RECIPES

CAUTION: All home-made formulas should still be well-labeled, and out of the reach of children.

**Tub and sink cleaner:** Baking soda, liquid soap, water. Sprinkle water on the sink and tub surfaces, followed by a generous shake of baking soda. Scrub with sponge or bristle brush. Add a little of the liquid soap to the sponge for more cleaning power. Rinse well.

**Window and mirror cleaner:** White vinegar, water and a few drops of plant-based liquid soap. Combine 1/4 cup of white vinegar and a few drops of the liquid soap in a spray bottle and fill with water. Spray on the glass surface. Rub dry with a lint-free cloth (don't use newspapers – they streak). Wash outdoor windows with warm water. Use a squeegee to dry. If you don't like the vinegar smell, add a touch of lemon juice.

**Toilet bowl cleaner:** Baking soda, liquid soap. Sprinkle baking soda inside the bowl. Add a couple drops of liquid soap. Scrub with a toilet bowl brush. Wipe outside surfaces with a wet sponge sprinkled with baking soda. Pour ½ cup vinegar into the bowl and let it sit to remove most lime scale.

**Oven cleaner:** *Baking soda, water* Make a paste from baking soda and water. Apply to oven surfaces; let stand for five-ten minutes. Use a scouring pad or knife to remove loosened grime.

**Drain cleaner:** *Baking soda, white vinegar, boiling water* Pour 1/2 cup of baking soda down the drain first, then 1/2 cup vinegar. Cover the drain until the fizzing stops, then flush with boiling water. Repeat if needed. If the clog is stubborn, use a plunger. If very stubborn, use a mechanical snake. Never pour liquid grease down a drain. Always use a drain sieve to capture food, hair, and other materials that could clog the pipe.

**Copper cleaner:** *White vinegar, water, salt.* Mix equal parts of vinegar and salt and apply to the surface with a sponge. Rinse thoroughly with water, and then dry.

**Silver polish:** *Salt, soda, aluminum foil/toothpaste.* To remove tarnish from silverware, line a large pan with aluminum foil. Add water to cover the silver, plus 1 tablespoon salt and 1 tablespoon baking soda. Let the mixture rest for at least an hour. The tarnish will transfer to the aluminum foil. Rinse the silver in hot water and dry. You can also use toothpaste to polish individual pieces of silver.

**Air fresheners:** Locate the source of the objectionable smell and remove it, then open the window, or use an exhaust fan to clear out musty air. Simmer a small amount of cinnamon, orange peel, and cloves on the stove or in a small ceramic saucer over a candle to give your home a pleasant fragrance. Fresh cut flowers will also pleasantly scent your home. Indoor plants absorb volatile organic chemicals. An open box of baking soda will help absorb odors in the refrigerator; sprinkling baking soda in the garbage can or diaper pail will do the same.

**Creamy soft scrubber:** Pour about 1/2 cup of baking soda into a bowl, and add enough liquid soap to make a texture like frosting. Scoop the mixture onto a sponge, and wash the surface. Add 1 teaspoon of vegetable glycerin to the mixture and store in a sealed glass jar, to keep the product moist.

**All-purpose spray cleaner:** 1/2 teaspoon washing soda, A dab of liquid soap and 2 cups hot tap water. Combine the ingredients in a spray bottle and shake until the washing soda has dissolved. Apply and wipe off with a sponge or rag.

**Furniture polish:** 1/2 teaspoon oil, such as olive (or jojoba, a liquid wax)  
1/4 cup vinegar or fresh lemon juice

Mix the ingredients in a glass jar. Dab a soft rag into the solution and wipe onto wood surfaces. Cover the glass jar and store indefinitely.

**Vinegar deodorizer:** Keep a clean spray bottle filled with straight 5 percent vinegar in your kitchen near your cutting board and in your bathroom and use them for cleaning.

**Mold killers:** 2 teaspoons tea tree oil and 2 cups water. Combine in a spray bottle, shake to blend, and spray on problem areas. Do not rinse. Makes two cups.

**Vinegar Spray:** Straight vinegar reportedly kills 82 percent of mold. Pour some white distilled vinegar straight into a spray bottle, spray on the moldy area, and let set without rinsing if you can put up with the smell. It will dissipate in a few hours.

**Basic Formula for Antiseptic All-Purpose Cleanser:** Up to 1-teaspoon antiseptic essential oil (thyme, sweet orange, lemongrass, rose, clove, eucalyptus, cinnamon, rosemary, birch, lavender or tea tree. 1-teaspoon washing soda, 2 teaspoons borax, ½ teaspoon liquid soap or detergent  
2 cups hot water. Combine the ingredients in a labeled spray bottle. Spray onto surface and leave for 15 minutes or so before wiping off.

**Basic Carpet Cleaner:** ¼ cup concentrated all-purpose liquid soap and 4 gallons water. Fill the machine's water and detergent dispenser. Follow the manufacturer's directions.

**Basic Floor Cleaner Formula:** ¼ cup liquid soap and up to ½ cup white distilled vinegar or lemon juice, 2 gallons

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warm water: Combine the ingredients in a large plastic bucket. Use with a mop or sponge.

**Antibacterial Spray:** 1 cup water, 20 drops sweet orange essential oil  
10 drops lavender essential oil, 10 drops eucalyptus essential oil. Pour water into a labeled spray bottle. Blend the essential oils in a glass jar. With an eyedropper, add 8 drops of the essential oil base to the spray bottle. Spray on and let set for at least 15 minutes, or don't rise at all.

**Alkaline Cleaner:** ½ teaspoon washing soda, 2 teaspoons borax, ½ teaspoon liquid soap or detergent, 2 cups hot water. Combine the washing soda, borax and soap in a spray bottle. Pour in the hot water, screw on the lid, and shake to completely blend and dissolve.

**Acid Cleaner:** ¼ cup white distilled vinegar or lemon juice, ½ teaspoon liquid detergent, ¾ cup warm water. Combine the ingredients in a spray bottle.

## PESTICIDES

First, fill in all cracks around baseboards, cabinets, shelves, sinks, bathtubs, and in pipes. Sprinkle Borax around each point of entry. Borax is a crystalline salt used to manufacture detergents and soaps. It is also used as a water softener and mild antiseptic. Borax has been proven to be very effective against cockroaches.

**General Pesticide:** A great alternative to toxic chemicals for both indoor and outdoor plants. Mix 2 tablespoons of liquid soap or dishwashing liquid with 1 quart water, and pour into a spray bottle. Most indoor household plants tolerate this natural pesticide well. Spray leaves, stem and topsoil to deter insects from coming back.

**Ants:** Spray ants with soapy water. Locate where the ants are entering your home, and place citrus oil and/or cayenne pepper along their entry area. To make your own indoor ant traps, mix together one-half teaspoon each of honey, borax and a sugar substitute. Place the mixture into bottles and place the open bottles on their sides in the areas where ants are present. The ants will take the mixture back to their nests as food, and it will kill the entire colony. (Keep borax away from your children and pets).

**Flies:** Sprinkle clothe pieces with a few drops of eucalyptus oil, and place them on the table where your food will be served, as well as near your pet's food dish. Make sachets with cheesecloth and stuff them with dried basil leaves, bay leaves, cloves and eucalyptus oil. Place the sachets near doors or windows or anywhere else that flies are causing a problem.

**Cockroaches:** If you do not have cats, make sachets with cheesecloth and stuff them with dried catnip. Place the sachets where roaches are present. You can also make a catnip tea and spray the tea behind counters, the back of cabinets and along all baseboards. Spray roaches directly with soapy water to kill them. If you have cabinets that drop down from the ceiling, place borax on top of them. The roaches will take the borax back to their nest, and it will kill the entire colony. (Note: keep borax away from children and pets, and do not place near food).

**Moths:** Make sachets with cheesecloth and either stuff them with cedar chips or a stuffing material sprinkled with cedar oil. Place the sachets in areas where moths are a problem.

**Flea Powder:** ½ teaspoon each dried eucalyptus, fennel or rosemary, and pennyroyal ¼ cup cornstarch. Grind the herbs into a powder in a spice mill or a blender. Combine with the cornstarch in a glass jar. Shake to blend. Sprinkle on the pet and work into the fur.