

Alternative Cleaning Products/Methods



**These products and methods have not been tested by professionals. I have used them and they worked for me.
Judy Fullmer, Past National FCE President**

Alternative Cleaning Products/Methods

Keep these essentials on hand for cleaning:

Alcohol: Rubbing alcohol removes stains, stickers and disinfects surfaces.

Ammonia: Cuts grease, use full strength to remove scuff marks or greasy fingerprints. NEVER MIX AMMONIA WITH ANY CLOROX OR CLORINE PRODUCT. THE FUMES ARE POISONOUS.

Baking Soda: Cleans, deodorizes, neutralizes household odors and acts as a mild abrasive. Sprinkle onto a damp sponge, pour right from the box or use as a paste mixed with water.

Bleach: Removes stains and disinfects. NEVER MIX BLEACH WITH AMMONIA, VINEGAR OR OTHER CLEANERS. Use only in well ventilated areas and be sure to wear gloves.

Borax: Natural laundry booster and multi-purpose cleaner; can be used throughout your house for cleaning and deodorizing.

Coconut Oil: Shower cleaner.

Cornstarch: Absorbs spills.

Club soda: Spot remover

Dryer Sheets: Use to dust, polish and eliminate static cling and odors.

Fabric Softener: Baseboard cleaner.

Gin or Vodka: Jewelry cleaner.

Hydrogen Peroxide: Disinfectant

Lemon juice: Bleaches, disinfects, polishes and removes stains. Use undiluted or mix with water.

Salt: Acts as an abrasive.

Shaving Cream: Stainless steel cleaner.

Toothpaste: Replaces shoe cleaners.

Vegetable oil: Shines faucets and gets rid of scratches on woodwork.

Vinegar: Cleans, neutralizes odors and removes soap scum and mineral deposits. Spray on, scrub in or soak on stubborn stains. White vinegar should be used for cleaning, cider vinegar may be used for other applications.

Washing Soda: Detergent booster, adds extra cleaning and freshening power. Neutralizes and eliminates odors. Not recommended for aluminum surfaces or no-wax floors.

Witch Hazel: Floor cleaner.

The next time you need to do some cleaning, consider reaching for one of these unlikely but effective cleaners.

ALCOHOL

Use alcohol in a spray bottle to clean eyeglasses, remove lipstick and makeup stains from cosmetic bags, compacts, etc. Use to sanitize phones, even cell phones. Will remove smudges from makeup and hair products. Try adding a touch of vanilla or your favorite essential oil (lavender) to the spray bottle.

For small areas, sponge surface with rubbing alcohol to get rid of germs. Allow to dry. Use in a well ventilated area and wear gloves.

AMMONIA

Mix ½ cup sudsy ammonia with water to make 1 gallon. Use solution to cut grease and clean floors. NEVER MIX AMMONIA WITH ANY CLOROX OR CLORINE PRODUCT. THE FUMES ARE POISONOUS.

Heloise's homemade prewash spray: mix equal parts water, non-sudsy household ammonia and dishwashing (not dishwasher) liquid. Make sure the dishwashing liquid does NOT contain bleach. Check the label carefully. Mix the three ingredients in a clean spray bottle and be sure to LABEL the bottle and include a caution that it should not be used with household bleach or any products containing bleach. Once you apply this prewash to a stain, you must wash the garment immediately.

Heloise's Window Cleaning Formula: ½ cup ammonia, ½ cup isopropyl rubbing alcohol, ½ cup water. Combine ingredients and put into a well labeled spray bottle. You can add food coloring and essential oil for fragrance.

Daily cleanup for kitchen and bathroom: mix ammonia in a clean trigger spray bottle (4 to 8 tablespoons with warm water) to clean sinks, counters, windows, mirrors, stovetops and small appliances.

General cleaning: ½ cup ammonia per gallon of warm water cleans floors, walls, tile, woodwork, windows and shower stalls.

Pour ammonia in toilet, drain, or garbage disposal to keep them clean and odor free.

Use nonsudsy or lemon as a window cleaner.

I have sprayed ammonia on my tulips to keep the rabbits and deer from eating them. A solution of ½ ammonia and ½ water seems to work. It must be reapplied if it rains.

BAKING SODA

Baking soda is an alternative to harsh chemicals for cleaning. Baking soda will neutralize household odors; dissolve grease and dirt, clean kitchen and bath surfaces without scratching (fiberglass and chrome). It will remove black heel marks from floors. For food stained countertops apply a paste of 3 parts baking soda and 1 part water. Let stand for ½ hour, wipe and rinse. To freshen carpets, sprinkle dry baking soda on carpet, let set, and then vacuum. To remove odors from countertops and wooden chopping blocks, sprinkle dry baking soda on a damp sponge and rub it in. Rinse with water and dry. To remove mildew from shower curtains, sprinkle baking soda on, scrub, rinse. To remove mildew from tubs and showers mix ½ cup baking soda with enough water to make a paste. Apply with an old toothbrush to reach tight spots and get into the grout. Baking soda will remove soap scum from fiberglass shower stalls.

To clean scorched pans and baked-on food from oven safe dishes, sprinkle with baking soda, slowly add white vinegar. OR If soaking in water, add an old dryer sheet and let soak overnight. Wash and rinse clean.

To clean ovens and stove tops, sprinkle with baking soda, then mist with water. Let soak, wipe clean.

Add 4 tablespoons baking soda to 1 quart warm water for a non-toxic, all-purpose cleanser that can be used to scrub countertops.

To freshen the air in your car, sprinkle the interior carpet and seat (if fabric) with a generous coat of baking soda. Brush or rub it in, then leave overnight and vacuum it up. It works great on trunk odors too. Baking soda can also be used to eliminate stale odors in closets, sprinkle on carpet or place in small container in several areas to absorb odors.

To deodorize the disposal, put ¼ to ½ cup baking soda down the drain and follow with ½ cup vinegar. Let bubble for a few minutes, then turn on the water and run the disposal.

To Clean Silverware:

This recipe should not be used on antique or priceless pieces and should only be used occasionally. Keep in mind that this removed the oxide finish that adds subtle shadows, which create depth and dimension to detailed silver patterns.

This process can be done in your sink – enamel or porcelain - only. Do not use it in a stainless steel sink.

You will need: 2 sheets of aluminum foil, enough boiling water to cover silver pieces and 2 tablespoons of baking soda.

Put the drain stopper in the sink and add the foil, one piece lengthwise and one across. Pour in boiling water; add the baking soda and swish it around.

Place the silver pieces in the solution, making sure they touch the foil, and let stand for several minutes. Carefully watch as the tarnish moves from the silverware to the foil. Remove the pieces, rinse well and dry with a soft cloth. NOTE: Only use this method occasionally, especially if you have silver plate.

Washing Soda vs Baking Soda

Washing soda (sodium carbonate) is a strong alkaline cleaner used for heavy-duty tasks like laundry and degreasing, while baking soda (sodium bicarbonate) is a milder alkaline substance commonly used in baking and gentle cleaning. They differ in chemical composition, pH levels, and safety, with washing soda being caustic and not safe for consumption, unlike baking soda which is safe to eat.

BLEACH

Fight germs with your own antibacterial spray. Mix 1 tablespoon of bleach into a spray bottle of water. Use it to disinfect around the sink and on countertops. Rinse thoroughly and wipe dry.

BORAX

Clean and disinfect a variety of surfaces with ½ cup borax mixed with 1 gallon of hot water. Porcelain and fiberglass will sparkle when washed with a solution of borax and warm water. Just sprinkle borax on a damp sponge or cloth and wipe. Your surfaces will shine.

Add ½ cup of borax along with your regular laundry detergent, it will help your detergent to work more effectively. You'll get cleaner, fresher smelling clothing.

Sprinkle ½ cup borax in the bottom of garbage cans to stop mold from growing.

COCONUT OIL

Coconut oil can be used as a grout cleaner, glass cleaner, tile surface scrubber and soap scum remover. It has the potential to remove mold growth in showers. Used regularly, coconut oil will help reduce dirt buildup in your shower and prevent hard water stains from accumulating.

CORNSTARCH

Cornstarch can be used to dust furniture and absorb spills on carpets or floor mats.

CLUB SODA

Emergency spot remover – its carbonation brings spills to the surface and salts in the soda prevent staining. Pour on clothes or carpet as soon as possible, and then blot with a clean cloth.

DRYER SHEETS

Wipe off dust from TV or computer screens with a clean dryer sheet. TV or computer screens have an electric charge that makes it a magnet for dust. Dryer sheets have an antistatic chemical that helps dust cling to the sheet and the slight film that it leaves on the screen helps keep dust to a minimum. Try removing marks on a floor with a dryer sheet or a pencil eraser. Or if that doesn't work on hardwood floors use a rag dabbed in mineral spirits or using a drop of baby oil on vinyl floors, then wiping away with a rag. Place a dryer sheet in the toes of your shoes to keep odors down, or just in the shoe box or storage container helps. Don't settle for those nasty toilet rings just because you can't get them off. Put some rubber gloves on, and then scrub the ring with a dryer sheet or two. The stain should come off rather easily.

FABRIC SOFTENER

Fabric Softener makes an excellent baseboard cleaner and can be surprisingly effective, even if the results aren't permanent. To use fabric softener to clean baseboards, dampen a cloth with warm water and add a lightly-squeezed dryer sheet to the mix. Your cloth should now be slightly soapy and ready to be used. Wipe it along the length of your baseboards, making sure to reach any problematic crevices that may contain grime or dirt. After wiping down all your surfaces, rinse any excess soap with another warm, dampened cloth. This should leave you with sparkling clean baseboards. A dryer sheet will work as well.

GIN or VODKA

Good old fashioned gin or vodka can be used to polish and clean your jewelry. The use of common alcohols as a cleaning agent dates back centuries, where, as strong solvents, they have been used to dissolve dirt and rust. It is recommended that you test the solution first on an inconspicuous spot on the item to be sure there will not be any damage.

HYDROGEN PEROXIDE

Peroxide vs Bleach

This is from a doctor's wife. She smelled the bleach being used to clean the toilet and counter tops. This is what she said:

"I would like to tell you of the benefits of that plain little ole bottle of 3% peroxide you can get for under \$1.00 at any drug store. What does bleach cost? My husband has been in the medical field for over 36 years, and most doctors don't tell you about peroxide.

"Have you ever smelled bleach in a doctor's office? NO!!! Why? Because it smells, and it is not healthy! Ask the nurses who work in the doctor's offices, and ask them if they use bleach

at home. They are wiser and know better!

"Did you also know bleach was invented in the late 40's? It's Chlorine, folks! And it was used to kill our troops.

"Peroxide was invented during WWI. It was used to save and help cleanse the needs of our troops and hospitals".

- Hydrogen Peroxide (H_2O_2) is a mild form of oxygen-based bleach that can be used as a cleaner.
- Hydrogen Peroxide will revert to water (H_2O) just a few months after opening and lose all effectiveness. To tell if a bottle of hydrogen peroxide is fresh and can be used effectively for cleaning, check for the "fizz". Pour a small amount into a sink; if it bubbles, it's good to use around the house. No fizz means it has reverted to water and should be tossed.
- You can use it to sanitize common bacteria spots, remove stains, clean machines, and even kill mold.

PERSONAL: Take one capful (the little white cap that comes with the bottle) and hold in your mouth for 10 minutes daily, then spit it out. (I do it when I bathe.) No more canker sores, and your teeth will be whiter without expensive pastes. Use it instead of mouthwash.

Let your toothbrushes soak in a cup of peroxide to keep them free of germs.

For fungus on your feet spray a 50/50 mixture of hydrogen peroxide and water on them (especially the toes) every night and let dry.

Soak any infections or cuts in 3% peroxide for five to ten minutes several times a day.

Tilt your head back and spray into nostrils with your 50/50 mixture whenever you have a cold, plugged sinus. It will bubble and help to kill the bacteria. Hold for a few minutes, and then blow your nose into a tissue.

If you have a terrible toothache and cannot get to a dentist right away, put a capful of 3% peroxide into your mouth and hold it for ten minutes several times a day. The pain will lessen greatly.

Put half a bottle of peroxide into your bathwater to help rid boils, fungus, or other skin infections.

KITCHEN: Clean your counters and table tops with peroxide to kill germs and leave a fresh smell. Simply put a little on your dishrag when you wipe down your countertops, or spray it on the counters directly.

After rinsing off your wooden cutting board, pour peroxide on it to kill salmonella and other bacteria.

To sanitize dishware, wash the dishes to remove food particles. Spray with hydrogen peroxide and wait 10 minutes before rinsing and drying.

To freshen garbage cans mix a solution of 1 to 1 water and hydrogen peroxide. Dip a scrub brush in the solution and clean the inside of kitchen and bathroom garbage cans and recycling bins. If there is stuck on grime, sprinkle the damp scrub brush with some baking soda to act as a gentle abrasive to help remove the mess.

Disinfect doorknobs, hardware and handles by attaching a spray nozzle to the top of the hydrogen peroxide bottle so it is easy to use when disinfecting surfaces. Lightly mist the area you wish to clean and let it work for at least 5 to 7 minutes to begin breaking down bacteria and grime. Dry the surface with a clean microfiber cloth.

BATHROOM: Fill a spray bottle with a 50/50 mixture of hydrogen peroxide and water and keep it in every bathroom to disinfect without harming your septic system like bleach or most other disinfectants will. To clean the grout in shower start by scrubbing the area with a baking soda and water paste, rinse, and then spray with hydrogen peroxide and leave for 10 to 20 minutes. Scrub well again, rinse and dry. If the stain remains, repeat the treatment.

Use hydrogen peroxide to clean mirrors. There is no smearing.

Use hydrogen peroxide to clean moldy shower curtains and grout lines on tile floors.

Sanitize beauty tools (tweezers, mani-pedi tools, eyelash curlers) with hydrogen peroxide to remove body soil and bacteria. Submerge non-electrical items in a bowl of undiluted hydrogen

peroxide for 15 - 20 seconds and then rinse in warm water. Dip a cotton ball in hydrogen peroxide to clean the surfaces of electrical items like hair dryers and toothbrushes.

LAUNDRY: You can also add a cup of peroxide instead of bleach to a load of whites in your laundry to whiten them. If there is blood on clothing, pour it directly on the soiled spot. Let it sit for a minute, then rub it and rinse with cold water. Repeat if necessary.

Front loading washers can develop smelly odors from mold and mildew growth caused by detergent and fabric softener residue and body soil left inside the washer drum and rubber door seals. To clean your washer, add 2 cups of hydrogen peroxide to the empty washer drum before running a hot water wash cycle. A monthly cleaning will help keep your washer smelling clean and fresh.

GENERAL: Get rid of houseplant pests. Hydrogen Peroxide can help fight fungal infections like powdery mildew and kill the eggs and larvae of insects. In a spray bottle, combine 2 cups of water and 4 tablespoons of hydrogen peroxide. Spray the mixture onto affected areas of the houseplant from top to bottom, leaf to roots.

Remove mold stains from painted walls. Kill mold spores and lighten moldy stains by spraying the area with undiluted hydrogen peroxide. Start at the center of the mold colony and work your way out to help prevent the spores from spreading and the stain from streaking more of the wall. Let the hydrogen peroxide work for at least 10 minutes before attempting to wipe away any visible mold. Allow the surface to air dry completely and then repeat the treatment if needed.

WARNING: When cleaning moldy areas, always wear a mask, gloves, and protective eyewear to prevent irritation from the spores.

Sanitize garden tools. Keep a bottle of hydrogen peroxide with your gardening tools for a quick way to clean tools and plant containers. Pruning shears, trowels, shovels, pots and planters can spread diseases and pests if they are not cleaned after using them around an infected plant. Spray the surfaces with undiluted hydrogen peroxide and allow them to air dry after each use.

LEMON JUICE

Use 1 tablespoon lemon juice to 1 quart water to clean windows.

Disinfect cutting boards with salt and lemon juice – no sponge required-. Use a lemon half (sprinkled with salt) to scrub, then rinse.

For a sweeter smelling microwave, zap a bowl of water with 2 tablespoons of lemon juice for one minute. To get rid of food odors, put a few drops of vanilla extract in a bowl and microwave for 30 seconds. Let set overnight, and then wipe down. Alternate: Fill a large bowl (at least 4 cup size) with 2 cups of water (no more) and add the juice of 2 large lemons, plus cut up the rind and pulp, too. Place the bowl in the center of the microwave (uncovered) and set it on high for about 4 to 5 minutes or until the water boils. The inside of the microwave will be steamy and hot, so let the water cool down for at least 15 minutes before opening the door. This is an important caution. Use a dry, clean cloth to wipe the inside top, bottom, and sides. It should smell fresh and clean. Do this about once a month.

SALT

Sprinkle salt on oven spills. Let salt set overnight and wipe clean next day. Sprinkle on stove top spills, scrub burned pots and pans.

The Benefits of Using Salt in a Toilet

Preventing Clogs: Salt's granular texture can help break down waste and toilet paper, preventing them from clumping together and causing clogs. This can be especially useful in households with a tendency to experience toilet blockages regularly. By using salt regularly, you reduce the chances of facing this inconvenience.

Odor Control: Salt is an excellent natural deodorizer. It absorbs moisture, which is often the breeding ground for foul odors in the toilet. Additionally, salt can neutralize odorous compounds, leaving your bathroom smelling fresher. This benefit is particularly helpful if you have a bathroom without proper ventilation.

Minimizing Mineral Buildup: Hard water can leave mineral deposits on the inside of your toilet bowl, which can be unsightly and difficult to remove. Salt's abrasive nature, when scrubbed with a toilet brush, can

help dissolve and remove these mineral deposits. Regular use of salt can keep your toilet bowl looking cleaner and more presentable.

Cost-Efficiency: Using salt is an economical way to maintain your toilet. It is readily available in most households, making it a cost-effective alternative to expensive commercial toilet cleaners. By reducing the need for chemical cleaners, you save money in the long run.

Environmentally Friendly: Salt is a natural substance that doesn't contain harsh chemicals, making it an environmentally friendly option for toilet maintenance. Using salt reduces the use of potentially harmful chemical cleaners that can be detrimental to aquatic ecosystems when flushed down the drain.

Convenience: Maintaining your toilet with salt is a straightforward process that doesn't require any special tools or skills. It can be done quickly and easily, making it a convenient option for regular toilet upkeep.

Preventative Measure: Salt is not just for addressing existing issues; it can also serve as a preventive measure. Regularly using salt in your toilet can help keep it in good working condition, reducing the likelihood of unexpected plumbing emergencies.

Longevity: By preventing clogs and minimizing mineral buildup, using salt can extend the lifespan of your toilet. A well-maintained toilet is less likely to suffer from wear and tear, potentially saving you money on costly repairs or replacements in the future.

How to Use Salt in Your Toilet

Using salt in your toilet is a straightforward process. Here's how you can do it:

Pour 1 cup of salt into the toilet bowl. Allow the salt to sit for at least 15 minutes, or you can leave it overnight for more significant effects. After waiting, use a toilet brush to scrub the bowl thoroughly, paying special attention to stains and buildup. Finally, flush the toilet to rinse away the salt and debris.

Repeat this process every few weeks to keep your toilet in top condition and prevent clogs and odors.

SHAVING CREAM

Shaving cream can be used for various household tasks, such as cleaning mirrors to prevent fogging, removing stains from clothing, and polishing stainless steel appliances. It can also help clean grout, jewelry, and painted surfaces effectively.

TOOTHPASTE

Toothpaste is an excellent solution for those pesky shoe stains. It removes scuff marks and shoe polish stains from leather and canvas shoes. Dampen the area with a cloth, apply some white toothpaste to the cloth and gently rub the stained area in circular motions with pressure, applying an even coat across the entire region. Once you have rubbed the whole surface, allow the paste to sit for several minutes before rinsing it off with a damp cloth – and voila ~ clean shoes.

VEGETABLE OIL

Shines faucets (chrome/stainless) and gets rid of scratches on woodwork.

VINEGAR

Vinegar has many uses: polish chrome, stainless steel, clean windows, wood furniture, paneling, floors, and mirrors (½ cup vinegar to 1 gallon water).

Keep fresh cut flowers blooming longer.

Removes hard water deposits from steam irons, sink fixtures, and shower stalls.

Soften hard lime deposits around faucets with vinegar soaked paper towels. Leave towels on faucet for an hour, and then clean. Remove showerhead deposits with vinegar. For metal showerheads, mix ½ cup vinegar and 1 quart water in a pot. Submerge showerhead in mixture, and then boil for 15 minutes. For plastic showerheads, mix 1 pint vinegar with 1 pint hot water in a bowl and let showerhead soak for an hour. Scrub off deposits with a toothbrush.

Vinegar will unclog and deodorizes drains.

Vinegar will remove the discoloration from pots and pans. Just put 1 cup of vinegar, followed by 1 cup of water into the pot or pan and let boil for several minutes. When you notice the stain is gone, pour

the solution out and then wash and rinse as usual. Remove heat spots on stainless steel cutlery with undiluted vinegar or club soda.

For windows, mix ½ cup white vinegar to ½ gallon of water (one source says equal parts), dry with newspapers. Use undiluted vinegar to remove stubborn spots and streaks. For other purposes use straight from the bottle or dilute. I put it in a spray bottle and label.

To remove the “canned” taste from canned seafood, rinse the canned meat with plenty of cold water. Next, soak for about 15 minutes in a mixture of 2 tablespoons vinegar and a splash of sherry. Rinse well and the canned taste should be gone.

Disinfect and deodorize the toilet bowl in a flash. Sprinkle the sides with baking soda, let sit for a few minutes, and then drizzle with vinegar. Scrub with a toilet brush and flush.

To maximize the absorbency of your towels, add a cup of white vinegar to the rinse water once a month when washing a load of towels. When the cycle is complete, dry as usual. The vinegar removes excess detergent that can decrease absorbency.

To clean your good crystal put a rubber mat in the sink to prevent breakage, and then rinse the glasses in a 3 to 1 mixture of hot water and vinegar.

To remove a bad smell from a cabinet: wipe down the area with vinegar and let air dry by leaving the doors open. You might have to do this three times or more.

To remove odors from washing machine (may be caused by soap buildup under the rim): Use the highest and hottest water setting. Add ½ to 1 gallon of cheap vinegar, no detergent, and run a complete cycle empty – no clothes. If you have a top-load machine and still have an odor, do this: select the large load, normal wash, hot water setting, and let the tub fill up. Stop the machine and add hot water till it reaches the top rim of the drum where the buildup is hiding. Don't overfill, just make sure the rim is under the water. Pour 2 – 4 cups of household bleach into the washer, close the lid and restart the wash cycle. Wait for a few minutes before stopping the cycle. Let the mixture sit (lid closed) for at least 20 minutes or so, then restart the cycle one last time. The washer should smell clean. Remember to leave the lid open between uses so it can air out.

To clean the inside of your dishwasher, turn on the dishwasher when it is empty; don't use any dishwasher detergent. Let the bottom of the washer fill with water, stop the cycle, then pour in 2 to 3 cups of plain white or apple cider vinegar. Let the dishwasher finish the cycle. You might need to repeat if you have extremely stubborn hard-water stains inside. Do this periodically to keep the dishwasher clean and fresh.

WASHING SODA

Washing soda is a non-toxic all purpose cleaner, a natural water softener, boosts detergent cleaning power by 40%, cleans and deodorizes, freshens, cuts grease, cleans petroleum oil, removes wax, and neutralizes odors. Add ½ cup washing soda along with laundry detergent at the beginning of wash cycle. For tough stains, fill a container with warm water, add 2 tablespoons of washing soda per gallon of water (or ½ cup in washer). Presoak for at least 30 minutes before washing. For best results, presoak overnight and then add ½ cup washing soda along with detergent to in wash cycle. To make a pre-treat mix about 4 tablespoons of washing soda in ¼ cup (2 oz) of warm water to make a paste. Dampen problem area. Using rubber gloves, gently rub stain with paste. Then wash as usual. To clean walls, countertops, refrigerators, ranges, appliances, sinks, tubs, showers, tiles, and toilet bowls make a solution of ½ cup washing soda per bucket of warm water. Wash the surface, wearing rubber gloves; and then rinse.

WITCH HAZEL

Witch hazel is a powerful astringent commonly used in facial toners, but it also works incredibly well as an effective floor cleaner. It can also be used on counters, countertops, and other surfaces around the home. A combination of equal parts water and witch hazel can be used safely on any surface without fear of tarnishing or chipping away at the material. It will leave your home with a pleasant smell without an overbearing fragrance.

RECIPES

All Purpose Cleaner

Fill a quart sized spray bottle with 1 tablespoon borax, 1 teaspoon powdered washing soda, ½ teaspoon lemon juice and a couple of drops of dishwashing soap. Great on everything from grease to handprints on the wall. No odor and it is safe.

To Clean Garbage Disposal

The way to clean the disposal is to put the stopper in the drain, fill the sink with hot, soapy water, then pull the plug so a gush of water fills the disposal. Turn on the unit and let cold water run for several minutes to push it all through the plumbing system. Throw in some citrus rinds, like lemon, orange, or grapefruit peel, run lots of cold water, and grind away. Your kitchen will smell wonderful! Ice cubes might knock off bits of food that may be stuck on the side.

To Clean Kitchen Drain

Dissolve ½ cup washing soda in 1 quart of warm water. Run hot water down drain first, then turn off faucet, pour the solution into drain and immediately flush with hot tap water. (Do not use for blocked drains). When drain is clogged, pour 1 cup table salt and 1 cup baking soda down drain, and then pour a pan of boiling water down drain. This will dissolve grease and open drain. I also use baking soda and vinegar (lemon juice can also be used) to clean or open a sluggish drain. Put 1 or 2 tablespoons of baking soda in the drain. Pour 1 cup of vinegar over the baking soda. The solution will bubble and fizz. Flush with water after the fizzing stops.

To Clean Dishwasher

Place 1 cup of bleach (chlorine) on the lower rack, then run the machine (empty) through its wash cycle. Stop the machine and replace the bleach with 2 cups of vinegar, then allow the dishwasher to finish its rinse cycle.

To Kill Weeds

Use boiling water – just carefully pour it over the weeds (a teakettle works well). Be sure to protect your hands and feet. You can use plain table salt – just sprinkle it on the weeds. Use vinegar. Fill a spray bottle with full strength vinegar and give the weeds a spritz or pour it on.

These methods will also kill other grass, plants or flowers, so be careful.

To Clean Toilet

1 packet of Fine Grit Drywall Sanding Screens and Barkeepers Friend. Put on gloves. Cut 1 or 2 small square pieces of the screen, set aside. Sprinkle Barkeepers Friend inside your toilet. Wearing the gloves, gently yet firmly, begin to scrub away at the hard water buildup in a circular motion with the screen. Don't press TOO HARD. The goal is to remove hard water stains, not destroy the porcelain. Flush and be amazed.

Homemade Air Freshener

Obtain a glass spray bottle, amber would be best to prevent the solution from degrading in the light. Add the following ingredients to the bottle: 1 ½ cup distilled water, ½ cup unscented witch hazel or cheap vodka or white vinegar (look for witch hazel that has a high percentage of witch hazel or pure witch hazel), 1 – 2 tablespoons baking soda (optional but recommended for added freshness), 20 to 30 drops total of essential oil (tea tree, lemon, orange, grapefruit, or lavender). To increase the cleansing power, use 1 cup water and 1 cup witch hazel, alcohol or vinegar.

Wrinkle Releaser

To make homemade wrinkle releaser mix 2 cups of distilled water and 2 tablespoons liquid fabric softener. Pour into a spray bottle.

Carpet

Grandma McCoy used cream of tartar to clean and deodorize carpets. Sprinkle on the stain or area; brush into the carpet, let set for 10 or 15 minutes then vacuum it up. Cornstarch is also an absorbent.

Paint

Paint may be stored for up to 2 years. Seal cans tightly, and then turn them upside down. The paint will form a seal against oxygen and stay fresh longer. Keep latex paints from freezing.

Cleaning Solution & Bug Repellent

Place 2 (or more) cinnamon sticks in a bottle of warm water for 10 minutes.

To a spray bottle add the following

1. 2 oz 100% Lemon juice
2. 2 oz Dawn dish soap
3. 3 oz 91% acidity white vinegar
4. 1 oz 91% (or better) Isopropyl Alcohol

Add 12 oz of the cinnamon water to the spray bottle and shake. Ready to use.

This mixture will clean any surface, prevent mold and bacteria from growing. Will get rid of any bug from any area and it kills on contact. It will repel any bug up to 6 months on treated surfaces. Spray on any surface or area where you don't want bugs or you want to clean.

Tools

Keep an empty spray bottle on hand for spraying your homemade remedies on countertops and windows. An old toothbrush is the perfect size scrub brush for loosening tough stains in tight spots. Toss your bacteria spreading sponges and use rags. Sponges are the unhealthiest things you can have, especially around food. Use rags made from old towels. They're inexpensive, and you can wash them in hot water and bleach to ensure cleanliness.

Judy Fullmer

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