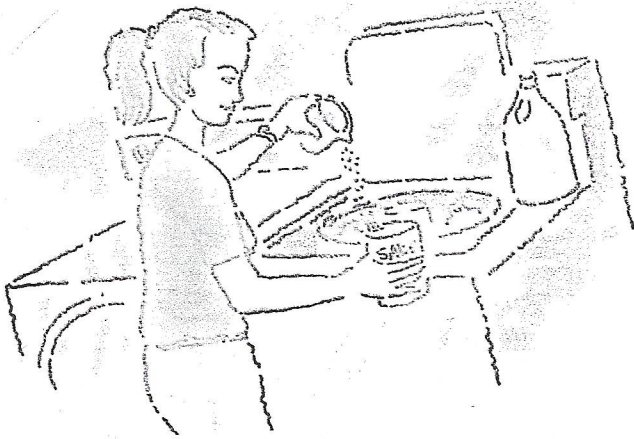


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LIVING IN A "GREEN" HOUSE

LIVING WITH ENVIRONMENTALLY FRIENDLY PRODUCTS FOR CLEANING AND HEALTH

Leader's guide



In preparation for this lesson:

- ◆ Bring samples of safe cleaners; (i.e.) lemons, salt, baking soda, club soda, washing soda, white vinegar, hydrogen peroxide, Borax, Turtle wax, rubbing alcohol etc. Mix some of the formulas in handout.
- ◆ Bring a list of prices for commercial cleaners and “green” cleaners ingredients.
- ◆ Ask participants, How many cleaners do you have under your sink? Do you have any alternate cleaners you use?
- ◆ Read a few of the cleaner formulas and uses of different eco-friendly cleaning agents everyone has in their homes.
- ◆ Involve the participants in discussion of uses they might have tried and share your experiences using these products.
- ◆ Use cloths to clean instead of paper towel, save the land- fills. If you must use paper towels, use the blue shop towels, they can be rinsed and used repeatedly.

For generations our “foremothers” have been combining vinegar with other household supplies to clean all around the house. Store-bought cleaners are not always as environmentally safe as natural, organic compounds. Most homemade cleaning formulas can be made for a fraction of the cost of a commercial counterpart. A number of ordinary household substances are combined with vinegar, baking soda, salt, etc. to make the formulas you will find in your handouts for a safer environment and you.

If you are like most Americans, you spend up to 90% of your life indoors and more than half of that time is spent in your home. The overall health of a home is usually affected by not one, but many sources of pollutants and in an effort to save energy and make our homes energy-efficient we are sealing in our homes, many chemicals found in commercial cleaners.

Commercial cleaners, polishes and pesticides are significant sources of toxins in the home, be sure to dispose of them according to the directions on the labels. The chemicals in cleaners and polishes are often a mixture of complex, unnamed compounds. Some contain strong acids (drain cleaners) or bases (oven cleaners) do not dispose of these together. Some contain petroleum distillates known as “grease cutters”. Some compounds in commercial cleaners such as chlorine bleach, ammonia, phosphates can be an irritant to your skin and lungs.

Avoid detergents with mercury, phosphates and heavy metals, such as arsenic and zinc. Fragrances may cause irritation and trigger allergic reactions

As well as not being good for your health these are not good for the health of your family, pets, septic system and our planet.

Drain cleaners are among the most dangerous household products. The best way to avoid the need for caustic drain cleaners is to prevent the clogs and buildups in the first place. Scrape dishes, use sink screen and don't pour cooking oil down the drain. Once a week pour a kettle of boiling water down the drain, if it does become clogged, use baking soda and vinegar and hot water recipe in your handout or better yet, collect all your cooking oils and use it to make seed block for your feathered friends.

When making your own cleaners, never combine chlorine bleach with vinegar or chlorine bleach and ammonia since it creates a harmful, potentially deadly gas.

When mixing vinegar with baking soda, it will make a white foam which is a normal chemical reaction, let foam subside before tightly closing in a spray bottle or other container.

Salt: From a kitchen spice and food preserver to cleaning house to helping soothe aches and pains, salt can tackle the toughest jobs and is a mild abrasive. Salt is a natural product and very inexpensive.

Vinegar: Vinegar is acidic, it dissolves scale, inhibits mold and cuts soap scum. Vinegar works well on alkaline substances and stains such as coffee, rust, tea and liquor. Vinegar can be a healer, a disinfectant, a preservative, and a condiment, it whitens and softens laundry. This is very amazing considering vinegar is a by-product of something gone bad (fermentation). When you learn all the wonderful things vinegar can do, you will wonder why you did not discover all its uses before.

Baking soda: Baking soda is alkaline and therefore works well on acidic substances such as proteins, grease and animal messes, it is slightly abrasive and can be used for scouring, it is also a natural deodorizer and grease cutter and has mild bleaching properties. Baking soda is environmentally safe, inexpensive and nontoxic, it's actually a food so it is safe to use around children and pets. Whether in the kitchen, the bathroom, the laundry room or the garage, you will be amazed at what baking soda can do. Baking soda will absorb odors, deodorize and create a mild abrasive.

Washing soda: Increases your detergents cleaning power, helps neutralize and eliminate odors, cuts grease, food stains, makeup, blood and grass stains and more.

20 Mule Team Borax: Borax, or sodium borate, is a naturally occurring alkaline mineral. Borax will disinfect, deodorize and stop growth of mold, and when mixed with vinegar and other compounds can remove stains, also works as a water softener. Kills roaches and fleas.

Lemon Juice: Lemons are acidic and can be used the same as vinegar to loosen scale, soap scum and as a de-greaser, plus they are inexpensive and leave a clean smell in your home.

Soaps: Simple Castile soap (made from olive oil) and vegetable bases soap (such as Murphy's Oil Soap) have neutral pH. And are easier on you and the environment.

Once you discover the versatility of salt, baking soda and vinegar, borax, washing soda and a few other household products, you can do away with all those expensive and, sometimes toxic cleaners under your sink and the shelf life of these ingredients is forever.

When using the environmentally friendly cleaners you get the added benefit of a clean smelling house instead of the chemical smell of commercial cleaners

Many studies have proven you do not need the expensive anti-bacterial sprays on the market, plain soap and water, borax or vinegar does the same thing and safer for the environment. Antibacterial cleaners can promote growth of resistant bacteria.

Baking soda paste will clean most stains anywhere in the house, for tough stains you may have to add vinegar, just remember soda and vinegar will foam so make sure you wait for the foam to subside before putting mixture in closed container.

A spray bottle of ½ water and ½ vinegar is handy to have on hand for most cleaning jobs.

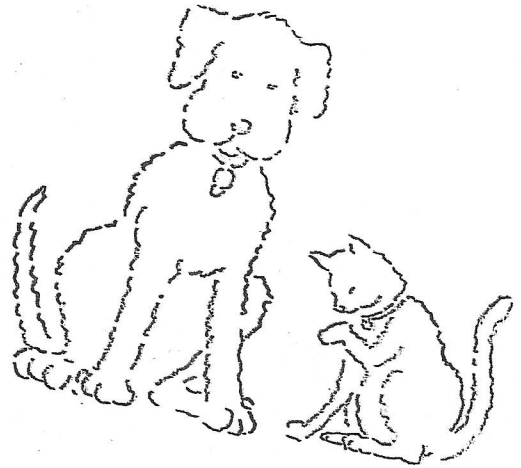
When a recipe asks you to make a paste, mix the dry ingredient with the wet ingredient to the consistency of toothpaste

Cleaning your home should not be a **hazmat** operation, with a little care, common sense, and a few basic ingredients, your home can be sparkly clean and healthy without breaking the bank

LIVING IN A "GREEN" HOUSE

LIVING WITH ENVIRONMENTALLY FRIENDLY PRODUCTS FOR CLEANING AND HEALTH

Member's Handout



"GREEN" HOUSE LESSON

Members Handout

Any time vinegar is used in a formula, use white vinegar unless otherwise specified.
Borax mix with liquid will foam, let foam subside before sealing into spray bottle or airtight container.

Important note: When making your own cleaners, never combine chlorine bleach and vinegar, since it creates a harmful, potentially deadly gas.

The formulas can be taped to recipe cards and filed alphabetically or by subject.

Salt: Soothes aches and pains, mild abrasive.

Vinegar: Use as a preservative, inhibits mold, cuts grease and soap scum. Whitens and softens laundry. Disinfects.

Baking soda: Mild abrasive, grease cutter, deodorizes, absorbs odors.

Borax: Disinfects, deodorize, stops growth of mold and a water softener.

Washing soda: neutralize odors, cuts grease and stains and increases detergents cleaning power.

Lemon juice: Use same as vinegar to loosen scale and soap scum and is a degreaser.

Soaps: Castile soap (made from olive oil) Murphy's oil soap (made from vegetable oil)are safe soaps to use.

Laundry:

Wash: ½ cup Borax to each load, for large capacity or front loader use ¾ cup

Add ½ cup baking soda with detergent to freshen laundry and help laundry detergent work harder.

Pre-Soaking Stains: 1 -TbIs. Borax per gallon of water or ½ cup in washer, pre-soak for 30 minutes.

Grease stains: Cover stain with salt, wait for salt to absorb grease, gently brush away salt, repeat until spot is gone, launder as usual.

Ink: Rub salt onto a fresh ink stain on fabric, and soak overnight in milk, launder as usual.

Blood: Dampen area with water, rub in baking soda, follow with hydrogen peroxide, rub in with brush and launder as usual.

Softener and whitener: To whiten, add ½ cup vinegar to wash cycle. To soften, add ½ cup to final rinse

Mildew: A mixture of salt, vinegar and water will remove most mildew from fabric. Use vinegar full strength for extensive mildew.

Basic stain treatment: A mixture of half water and half vinegar as a laundry pretreatment can do the trick on most common stains on clothing. Keep a spray bottle of this mixture in your laundry room. Spray mixture on stains before washing to give an extra boost.

Kitchen:

Fine China: ½ cup borax in a sink full of warm water, Designs on hand-painted china will not fade using this method, give china a second thorough rinse with clear water.

Cleaning Cookware: Borax is a gentle a cleaner for cookware. Sprinkle borax on pots and pans as you would a dry cleaner and rub with a damp cloth, rinse thoroughly. No need to worry about scratching borax is non abrasive.

Refrigerators: Borax is excellent for cleaning and deodorizing your refrigerator. Spilled food can be washed away with a sponge or soft cloth using a solution of 1 quart warm water and 1 tablespoon of borax. Rinse with cold water.

Copper bottom pots: Lemon dipped in salt will clean those as well as commercial cleaners. Alternate method: spray with vinegar, let sit until you see tarnish start to evaporate, (this will happen almost immediately), sprinkle with salt and scrub, rinse and dry.

Pewter: Pewter must be cleaned gently because it is a soft metal that can be damaged easily, this recipe makes a mild but safe cleaner. Add enough flour to a mixture of 1 teaspoon salt and 1 cup vinegar to make a smooth paste. Apply to pewter and allow it to dry for ½ hour, then rinse in warm water, polish with a soft cloth.

Coffee and Tea stains: Remove stains in cups by rubbing with baking soda, add salt and a little water for stubborn stains.

Clogged drains: For greasy food clog, pour ½ cup salt and 1/2/cup baking soda into drain, flush with hot tap water.

Clog prevention: Periodically pour ½ cup baking soda down your drain, then follow with hot water.

Alternate method: ½ cup baking soda and 1 cup vinegar will foam your drain clean and help prevent clogs, when foam subsides, rinse with hot water.

Drain odors: Pour a solution of 1 cup salt and 2 cups hot water down drain to eliminate drain odors and break up greasy deposits.

For disposal, pour ½ cup each salt, baking soda and dishwashing liquid into your disposal, turn on hot water, then run disposal for a few seconds to clean out debris and clear odors.

Stove Top: cleaning with vinegar water should be all you need to use, for stubborn stains, let sit a few minutes. This will make a clean and shiny stove- top.

*Twice a year, clean thoroughly and apply a coat of turtle wax and buff, this will make clean up easier.

Oven: For a thorough cleaning, place 1 cup of ammonia in a cold, closed oven overnight, in the morning wipe away ammonia, then wipe with baking soda and rinse.

Vegetable cleaner: Mix 1 tablespoon lemon juice to 2 tablespoons of baking soda with 1 cup of water. Put the mixture in a spray bottle and spray on vegetables, let sit a few minutes then rinse.

Cooking:

- To prevent cracking in homemade frosting, add a pinch of baking soda before spreading.
- Add a pinch of baking soda to water when soaking dried beans. It helps make them more digestible, also adding a dash when cooking them reduces the gaseous side effects.
- Omelets get fluffier if you add ½ teaspoon baking soda for every 3 eggs.
- Add a pinch of baking soda to a buttermilk waffle recipe to make the waffles lighter and softer.
- When making a boiled syrup, add a pinch of baking soda to prevent crystallizing.
- Reduce fishy taste by soaking raw fish at least ½ hour in 2 tablespoons baking soda and 1 quart water. Rinse and cook.
- Soften the pungent taste of wild game by soaking it in baking soda and water overnight. Rinse and dry before cooking.
- Add a pinch of baking soda to water when boiling cabbage to tenderize and avoid overcooking.
- Neutralize the acids in any recipe with a large amount of fruit by adding a pinch of baking soda.
- Soak rhubarb in cold water and a pinch of baking soda prior to making sauce. The water will turn black, Drain. You'll need less sugar in the sauce.
- Sprinkle baking soda on fresh pineapple to improve its flavor, especially if the pineapple is not quite ripe.
- Add ¼ teaspoon baking soda to 8 ounces of orange juice, grapefruit juice, or lemonade, and stir. This will add a fizz to the drink and reduce its acidic level.
- Home canned tomatoes and juice may become too acidic. Add a bit of baking soda before using it in cooking to cut the acid level.
- When cooking fruit on the stovetop, add a spoonful of vinegar to improve flavor.
- To keep blocks of cheese from molding, soak a paper towel in vinegar and wrap around it, there will be no vinegar taste on cheese.

Bathroom:

Clogged drains and odors: Use same formulas as kitchen.

Showers and tubs: To loosen soap scum, scrub tubs and showers with vinegar or baking soda, after tub and shower and shower doors are clean and dry.

Twice a year, apply a coat of Turtle wax to keep soap residue from sticking to shower walls, glass and tile.

Do not apply wax to floor of shower or tub, it will be too slick and create a slipping problem.

Toilet: Pour vinegar into toilet, let stand 30 minutes, next sprinkle baking soda onto brush and scrub any remaining stains.

Shower, Tub and Tile: Porcelain enamel surfaces will sparkle when washed with a solution of borax and warm water. Sprinkle on a damp sponge or soft cloth and use as you would a powdered cleaner. This can even be used on fiberglass surfaces without scratching, rinse thoroughly.

Toilet Bowls: Pour 1 cup of vinegar in the toilet, brush around sides. Sprinkle ½ to 1 cup of borax into bowl, then swish with toilet brush. Let stand for 30 minutes or overnight.

Around the house:

Air Freshener: For a perpetual air freshener in the toilet area, keep a pretty dish of baking soda on the back of tank, add your favorite scented bath salts to the soda, change every three months. Alternate method: Fill a pot with water and add lemon peels, cinnamon sticks, cloves and apple skins. Simmer on stove -top.

Candles: Stop new candles from dripping by soaking them in a solution of ½ cup water and ½ cup salt for several hours, let candles dry before lighting.

Fireplace: An occasional handful of salt thrown into the fire will help loosen soot in your chimney, it also makes a cheery, bright yellow flame.

Does your fireplace or wood burning stove sometimes have a bad burning odor? To get rid of it, throw in a few lemon peels while burning.

Plaster: Mix 2 tablespoons of salt and 2 tablespoons of cornstarch and enough water (about 5 teaspoons) to fill a small nail hole, chip or other hole in plaster or sheetrock, let dry, then sand lightly and paint.

Alternate method: A paste made of baking soda and white glue will also work for filling nail holes.

Add ½ teaspoon of vinegar to 1 quart patching plaster to extend the amount of time you have to work with the plaster before it hardens.

Fire: Keep a box of baking soda within reach in the kitchen, Pour soda directly on flames to extinguish.

DO NOT use soda on fire in deep fat fryer, the fat may splatter.

DO NOT use soda on any fire involving combustibles, such as wood or paper.

Most kitchen fires can be extinguished with a lid placed over the pan.

Cut Flowers: Instead of a commercial preservative, mix 1 gallon water, 1 tablespoon vinegar, and 1 tablespoon granulated sugar. Flowers will last twice as long as those kept in water only. To extend the life of your bouquet, change water every 2 to 3 days.

Wallpaper removal: Score wallpaper, spray on a 50/50 mix of water and vinegar, wait 5 minutes and scrape off.

Wood Furniture Cleaner: Mix ½ teaspoon of light olive oil and ¼ cup white vinegar.

Furniture polish: Combine 1- cup olive oil with ½ cup lemon juice into a spray bottle. Shake well then spray on a cloth and wipe onto wood furniture, polish with a fresh cloth. Or...

Wash with Murphy's oil soap or Castile soap and water, then polish with 1 teaspoon lemon oil or almond oil dissolved in 1 pint of baby oil.

Scratches; Combine an equal amount of vinegar and iodine, then apply mixture to a scratch in wood using an artists brush. If you need a deep color, add a little more iodine; for lighter color, add more vinegar.

Window cleaner: Mix 2-teaspoons of vinegar to 1 quart water, apply to window or mirror, squeegee off and dry with a soft cloth or newspaper.

Harsh commercial window cleaners will destroy the seal on double pane windows.

Floors:

Wood floors: Remove water spots on wood floors with a sponge dampened in a baking soda solution, or... Add 1 cup of vinegar to 1 gallon of water and mop lightly (do not saturate) No need to rinse. This will keep floors shiny and remove any greasy buildup.

Stains: Use fine steel wool dipped in mineral spirits to scrub a stain on a wood floor. After scrubbing, wipe with vinegar on a sponge. Allow vinegar to penetrate, then repeat and rinse if necessary.

Ceramic Tile: Mop with a mixture of 1 cup vinegar and 1 gallon of warm water to make ceramic tile sparkle.

Linoleum and vinyl: Scrub floor with a mixture of 1 cup vinegar and 1 gallon water, if floor needs a polish after this, use club soda.

No wax floor: Clean with ½ cup baking soda in a bucket of warm water, mop and rinse.

Carpets:

Ink: Spray and blot with hair spray, once ink is gone work a solution of half vinegar and half water into area to remove sticky hair spray.

Mildew: Kill it with a 50/50 mixture of water and water. Make sure the rug dries completely, you may want to use a hair drier to speed up the drying.

Red Wine: Immediately blot up moisture then sprinkle area with salt. Let sit 15 minutes. The salt should absorb the wine from carpet (turning pink in the process), then clean the entire area with a mixture of 1/3rd cup vinegar and 2/3rd cup of water.

Grease: Remove grease spots with a mixture of 1 part salt and 4 parts rubbing alcohol, rub hard in the same direction as nap, then rinse with water.

Carpet Spills and Stains: For spills. Blot the spill, sprinkle with borax to cover area, let dry and vacuum.

Wine and Alcohol Stains: Dissolve ½ cup of borax in a pint of water. Sponge in the solution, wait ½ hour, then, shampoo the spotted area. Let dry and vacuum. The sooner you treat these kinds of stains the better.

Deodorize Carpets: Sprinkle baking soda on the carpet, then vacuum.

Carpet Rinse: Combine ¼ cup vinegar and 1 gallon water, use this mix in a steam-cleaner after shampooing your carpet to remove any shampoo residue. This treatment will keep your carpet fresh and clean longer between shampoos.

Floor and Wall Cleaner: Fill a bucket with about 1- gallon of warm water. Add 1/3 cup of borax, 1 tsp. of dishwashing liquid and 1 Tablespoon of ammonia.

Remove urine odors from mattress: Dampen the soiled areas with water. Sprinkle borax over the areas. Rub the borax over the areas, working into mattress well. Let dry, vacuum or brush off any remaining borax powder.

Natural scouring powder: Measure ¼ cup borax into a container, add ¼ cup baking soda, add 1 ½ cups hot water. Stir until mixed.

Windows: For inside lightly soiled windows club soda works well, for heavier soiled outside windows you may want to use white vinegar and water.

Neither of these will affect the rubber gaskets like ammonia based cleaners.

Garbage Pail: Deodorize your garbage pail by sprinkling a little borax into dry pail, you can also use borax to wash the pail too

Dry Flowers: Cut flowers you wish to preserve, with or without stems. Sprinkle borax on bottom of a small box. Add up to two flowers, completely cover with more borax. Tape the box shut. Let them sit at room temperature for about one week. When dried completely, strain off the borax powder, may be reused for more flower drying.

Garage and Workshop:

Floor: Mix equal parts baking soda and cornstarch to sprinkle on spills, let dry, then sweep or vacuum. For tough stains, sprinkle on baking soda, let stand then scrub with a wet brush.

Windshields: Avoid frosted car windows on a cold morning by rubbing them in the evening with a sponge dipped in a saltwater solution of 2 tablespoons salt to 2 cups water.

Or...Spray the night before with vinegar/ water solution.

Paintbrushes: Soften hardened paintbrushes by soaking them for 1 hour in warm vinegar. First boil the vinegar, then pour enough into a container to cover bristles. Do not soak longer than a few hours or bristles may be ruined. Wash brushes afterward in soap and water, then allow to air dry.

Or...Revive hardened paintbrushes by boiling them in ½ gallon water, 1 cup baking soda and ¼ cup vinegar.

Cars Care: Use baking soda to safely clean lights, chrome, windows, tires, vinyl seats, and floor-mats in car. Sprinkle onto sponge, scrub, and rinse.

Spots on upholstery can be cleaned with a baking soda paste rubbed into the stain, let dry and vacuum.

Remove oil and grease on vinyl seats with a solution of baking soda and water, or with baking soda sprinkled on a damp sponge, then rinse and wipe.

Rust: Remove rust from nuts, bolts or nails by placing them in a glass jar, cover them with vinegar, seal the jar and let them sit overnight.

Rusty tools can be revived in the same manner, soak them in vinegar for several hours, then rub away rust.

Change vinegar if it becomes cloudy before rust is softened.

Magazines: If you have stored magazines in garage or basement and they have developed a musty odor, lay the magazines out in the sun for a day. Then sprinkle baking soda between pages and let sit for an hour or so. Brush off.

Outdoors:

Ants: You may be able to control entry of ants by spraying vinegar on thresholds, around sinks or any other entry points. Salt sprinkled around entry points will also work.

Cabbage Worms: Cabbage worms frequently attack garden cabbages, broccoli and cauliflower. To control them, dust the leaves of these vegetables with a mixture of 1 cup flour and ½ cup salt. Use this dusting powder in the morning or evening when plants are damp with dew.

Weeds: Boil 1 quart of water, add 2 tablespoons salt and 5 tablespoons vinegar, while still hot, carefully pour mixture directly onto weeds between cracks on sidewalks and driveways.

Roses: Mix 3 tablespoons natural apple cider vinegar in 1 gallon water. Fill garden sprayer with mixture, and spray roses daily to control black spot or other fungal diseases.

Flowerpots: Spray flower pots with 50/50 mixture of vinegar and water to clean and disinfect them, rinse with clear water.

Pets:

Fleas: If you have had a flea infestation in your home, sprinkle carpet or rugs with salt to help kill flea eggs, let stand a few hours, then vacuum, repeat every 6 weeks.

Put salt in your vacuum bag to help kill any flea eggs that you may have vacuumed.

Cats: Clean litter box after emptying, clean with vinegar, rinse very well, sprinkle with baking soda to kill vinegar smell, refill with new litter.

To discourage cats from walking on, sleeping on or scratching certain items in your home, sprinkle items with vinegar. The smell will keep cats away.

In the garden to keep cats from using your flower garden, scatter crumpled newspaper you have soaked in vinegar to discourage this behavior.

Dogs: Minimize soap residue after a dog's shampoo by adding vinegar to the rinse water, rinse again with plain water, avoid eyes.

Give your dog a dry bath by sprinkling it with baking soda. Rub in, then brush out.

For a wet bath, combine 3 tablespoons of baking soda with 1 teaspoon dishwashing liquid and 1 teaspoon baby oil in a spray bottle. Spritz your pet, then wipe dry.

If your dog comes home with a swollen nose from a bee sting, make him feel better by bathing the affected area with vinegar. Or a baking soda/water paste.

If your pet has a run in with a skunk, minimize the odor by rinsing his coat with undiluted vinegar, be sure to keep vinegar from pets eyes during this process. Some skunk odor may remain, but it will be kept under control as it gradually wears off.

Another alternative is; wash the pet in a bath containing 1 quart of 3% hydrogen peroxide, ¼ cup baking soda, and 1 teaspoon of liquid dish soap. Rinse well, and dry.

Pet Accidents: To clean up after a pet's accident, scrub the area with club soda, and let dry. Then sprinkle with baking soda, and let stand. Vacuum.

Alternate method; Let spot dry, then apply undiluted vinegar. The vinegar will help control odor and keep your pet from visiting the area again.

Health and Beauty:

Face:

Cleaners and toners: Mix 1 teaspoon salt and 1 teaspoon olive oil in a small bowl, then use mixture to gently massage face and throat being careful to avoid contact with eyes. Follow by washing with your usual face soap, rinse. Alternate method; Use a mixture of half vinegar, half water to clean your face. Then rinse with vinegar diluted with water, let face air dry to seal in moisture.

Oily skin: To reduce oiliness, fill a spray bottle with tepid water, add 1 -teaspoon salt, and spray on your face. Blot dry. Alternate method, Oily skin can be controlled with a mixture of half and half apple cider vinegar and cool water. The mixture works as an astringent. You can freeze this solution into ice cubes and use it as a cooling facial treatment on a hot day.

Exfoliate: Make a paste of 3 parts baking soda to 1 part water, and use as a gentle, exfoliating facial scrub after washing with soap and water, rinse clean. Alternate method, Mix 1 part baking soda with 2 parts oatmeal in your blender, add water to make a paste, it makes a great facial scrub.

Aftershave: Apple cider vinegar is a great aftershave for men that will help keep their skin soft and young looking. Keep a small bottle of it in the medicine cabinet, and splash on face after shaving.

Men with sensitive skin may find that a solution of 1 -tablespoon baking soda in 1- cup water makes a great pre shave treatment or a soothing aftershave rinse, also relieves razor burn.

Hair:

Add a teaspoon of baking soda or vinegar to your usual shampoo bottle to help remove buildup from conditioners, mousses, and sprays, and to improve manageability

In an emergency, use baking soda as a dry shampoo on oily hair, sprinkle on and comb through, then fluff with a blow dryer.

Conditioner: Vinegar is a great hair conditioner and can improve cleanliness and shine. For simple conditioning, just add 1- tablespoon vinegar to your hair as you rinse it.

Dandruff: Massage full-strength vinegar into your scalp several times a week before shampooing. This can help create healthy hair and control dandruff.

Hair conditioning treatment: Mix together 3 eggs, 2 tablespoons olive or safflower oil, and 1 teaspoon vinegar, then apply to hair, cover with a plastic cap and leave on for a half hour, shampoo as usual.

Hands and body:

Mix equal parts vinegar and hand cream to help chapped hands.

For chapped hands mix lemon juice, rose water and glycerin in equal parts and rub on hands morning and night.

Deodorant: Apply cornstarch underarms followed by baking soda.

Itchy skin: To relieve itchy skin and/or aching muscles, add 8 ounces apple cider vinegar to a bath-tub of warm water. Soak in tub for at least 15 minutes.

Soaking in a tub of saltwater can be a great itchy skin reliever. Just add 1- cup table salt or sea salt to bath water. This solution will also soften skin and relax you.

Relieve itchy winter skin in a bath with 1- cup baking soda and 1 ¼ cups baby oil in the water.

Exfoliate: After you take a shower or bath and while skin is still wet, sprinkle salt onto your hands and rub it gently over your skin, rinse. This salt massage will remove dry skin and make your skin smoother to the touch. Try it first thing in the morning to help wake up or after a period of physical exertion.

Dirty hands: Clean very dirty hands by scrubbing with cornmeal that has been moistened with a little bit of apple cider vinegar. Rinse in cool water, then dry.

Onion or garlic odors: To remove these odors from your hands, sprinkle on a little salt, then moisten with a bit of vinegar. Rub hands together, and rinse.

Mouth:

Toothpaste: Mix 3 parts baking soda with 1 part salt. Add 3 teaspoons of glycerin. Add 10 to 20 drops of flavoring (peppermint, wintergreen, anise, or cinnamon) and enough water to make a paste. Spoon into a small refillable squeeze bottle. This helps whiten teeth and remove plaque. Alternate method. Sprinkle baking soda in your palm, dip a damp toothbrush into it, and brush.

Mouthwash; Mix ½ teaspoon salt and ½ teaspoon baking soda into a 4-ounce glass of water, Use this solution to gargle and freshen breath.

Summer remedies:

Sunburn: For sunburn pain, saturate a washcloth with a solution of 4-tablespoons baking soda in 1 quart of water. Apply to affected area.

Alternate method: Vinegar has a cooling effect on sunburn, Splash it over sunburned area, then lightly rub into skin. Or simply cool sunburn with diluted vinegar in a spray bottle. Spray on affected area.

Or...Aloe Vera juice applied to sunburn will bring relief.

Bug bites and bee stings: Make a paste of vinegar and cornstarch. Apply paste to bee sting or bug bite and let dry. Alternate method, Work a mixture of salt and water into a paste that will stick to bee sting or bug bite. Apply paste, let sit until dry. This should relieve any itch or pain.

Or...Combine equal parts baking soda and salt, rub it on to relieve itch.

Home Remedies:

Backache: Soaking in a tub of hot water and 2 cups of vinegar for 30 minutes will help relieve a minor backache and soothe sore muscles.

Headache: to ease a headache, lie down and apply a compress dipped in a mixture of half- warm water and half- vinegar to the temples. Also try an herbal vinegar such as lavender to provide aromatic relief.

Leg cramps: Ease the pain of leg cramp or other cramp in the body by using a soft cloth soaked in full-strength vinegar as a compress.

Muscle sprain: Apply a poultice of white wine vinegar and bran to a recent sprain.

Respiratory congestion: To treat head or chest congestion, add ½ cup vinegar to a vaporizer and run for an hour or more. This can also be used for sinus congestion.

Cough: Sprinkle your pillowcase with apple cider vinegar to control nighttime cough

Cough Syrup, mix ¼ cup honey and ¼ cup apple cider vinegar in a jar, shake well before use, take 1- tabs. every 4 hours.

Sore throat: The simplest remedy for minor sore throat is a warm salt water gargle, mix 1 teaspoon salt to 8 ounces warm water and gargle three times a day.

Tooth ache: As a temporary remedy before going to the dentist, rinse your mouth with a mix of 4 ounces warm water, 2 tablespoons vinegar, and 1 tablespoon salt.

This lesson would not be complete without a few fun things to do with vinegar, baking soda and a few other kitchen items.

Play Clay

2 cups baking soda

1 cup cornstarch

1 ¼ cups cold water

Food coloring (optional)

Mix baking soda and cornstarch in saucepan. Add water, stir to mix, then cook over medium heat, stirring constantly, 10 to 15 minutes. Add food coloring to the water to make colored clay. Don't overcook. Clay should have the consistency of mashed potatoes. Remove to a plate. Cover with a damp cloth to cool.

Make it ahead of time and store it up to one week. Keep it refrigerated in a plastic container, but bring it to room temperature before using.

Drying: Air dry on a rack overnight.

Oven: Preheat oven to 350 degrees, turn oven off, then place finished objects on a cooking sheet. Leave on until oven is cold.

Microwave: Place objects on a paper towel, bake at medium power for 30 seconds, then over, bake for another 30 seconds, repeat until dry.

Salt Dough

This dough is similar to modeling clay and some of the properties of the popular play clay.

1 cup salt

4 cups all-purpose flour

1 ½ cups warm water

2 tablespoons vegetable oil *

Mix flour and salt together in a bowl. Add water, then knead dough and roll out as you would for cookie dough. Add a little bit of flour to dough gets to sticky to work with.

Store in airtight container.

*Add vegetable oil to dough only if you intend to store it for use at a later time.

Gift Bath Salts

Save money on gifts by making your own fragrant bath salts. This is a great activity to do with your kids or grandchildren.

This project is best done on a day with low humidity, as the salt will absorb moisture in the air.

2 cups Epsom salt

1 cup sea salt, rock salt, or coarse salt

Food coloring

¼ teaspoon glycerin

Essential oil for fragrance such as vanilla, citrus or peppermint (optional)

Combine salts in a bowl and mix well. Add food coloring, and stir with a metal spoon until well blended.

(Food coloring will stain a plastic or wooden spoon) Add glycerin and about 4 to 5 drops of essential oil, stir again. Adjust coloring salts by adding more food coloring. Spoon colored salts into decorative glass jars or gift bags. (baby food jars are great for this and you will be recycling at the same time). Add a gift tag with instructions to use 1/3 to ½ cup per bath.

Grow a Crystal Garden

Who said a garden was only made of flowers? This cool project is a sparkling alternative, and it's educational too!

6 tablespoons salt

6 tablespoons liquid bluing (a laundry whitening product)

1 tablespoon ammonia

Medium bowl

Small rocks or rock pieces

Food coloring

Mix salt, bluing, water, and ammonia in a medium size bowl. Pour mixture over rocks, then drip food coloring on top of rocks. Crystals will grow in about 3 weeks. After that time, keep adding water and they will continue to grow. Place bowl on a tray or breadboard if crystals begin to grow over edge of bowl.

BASIC FORMULAS

Pretreatment Stain Remover

½ cup ammonia

½ cup white vinegar

¼ cup baking soda

2 quarts water

2 tablespoons liquid soap

Mix all ingredients in a spray bottle. Spray this formula onto the stain, and let sit for a few minutes. Launder as usual.

Multipurpose Home Cleaner

2 teaspoons vinegar

1 teaspoon borax

½ teaspoon baking soda

¼ teaspoon liquid dish soap

2 cups hot water

Prepare mixture and store it in a clean spray bottle. This mixture eliminates the need for expensive commercial cleaners. Use the cleaner on any surface in the kitchen, it is especially good for cleaning ovens and stove-tops. For hard stains on cook-top, let sit for 15 min. For oven, let sit overnight.

Carpet Freshener

1 tsp. baking soda

1 tsp. cinnamon

1 tsp. ground cloves

1 tsp. ground cloves

1 cup crushed, dried herbs

(rosemary, lavender) etc.

Combine ingredients, and sprinkle over carpet, allow to sit for a few minutes, then vacuum.

Carpet freshener variations:

Mix 1 small box baking soda with your favorite potpourri oil, using just a few drops, and sprinkle on, leave on carpet 10 to 20 minutes, then vacuum.

OR

1 cup baking soda, 1 cup cornstarch and 15 drops essential oil fragrance. Leave on carpet 10 to 20 minutes, then vacuum.

Store in airtight container

Silver Tarnish Remover

Boil water and ½ teaspoon salt with 1 to 2 teaspoons baking soda

Place tarnished silverware in a pan with boiled mixture and a piece of aluminum foil. Simmer for 2 to 3 minutes, Rinse the silverware well, then use a soft cloth to buff dry.

Grease Cutter Cleaner:

¼ cup baking soda
½ cup vinegar
1 cup ammonia
1 gallon hot water

Use this solution to cut grease buildup on stoves, back-splashes, or glossy enamel surfaces. Wear rubber gloves and use in a well-ventilated area. This also works well as a soap scum cleaner.

Showerheads:

Remove mineral deposits by mixing ½ cup vinegar and 1 quart water in a large bowl or bucket. Remove shower head and soak in vinegar solution for 15 minutes. For plastic heads, soak 1 hour in a mixture of 1 pint water and 1 pint vinegar
OR...½ cup baking soda and 1 cup vinegar

If shower-head cannot be removed, Mix ½ cup baking soda and 1 cup vinegar in a sturdy plastic bag, then secure the bag around the showerhead with a twist tie so that head is submerged in solution, keep on and soak for 1 hour. Remove and run very hot water through the showerhead for several minutes.

Basic Wall Cleaner

1 cup ammonia
1 cup baking soda
1 gallon water

Mix thoroughly, then apply with a sponge. Wear rubber gloves to protect your hands from the ammonia, scrub marks gently. Rinsing is unnecessary. Use this to clean walls or other painted surfaces.

Basic Bathroom Cleaner

½ cup ammonia
3 tablespoons baking soda
2 cups warm water

Mix and use for everyday cleaning. Be sure to wear rubber gloves and use in a well-ventilated area. Store in spray bottle.

Variation: this version leaves out the ammonia:

1 box (16 oz) baking soda
4 tablespoons dish liquid
1 cup warm water

Mix well and store in a sealed container