

Safe Household Cleaners

Why we care

Household cleaners are so common that it's no wonder people don't think much about their environmental impact. Unfortunately, the production, use, and disposal of many household cleaners pose a risk to humans and wildlife. The good news is that there are many alternatives. For example, *Consumer Reports* found that plain water was more effective than half the commercial glass cleaners on the market.

Simple, positive change

With just a few safe, non-toxic ingredients you can clean almost anything in your home.

- **All-purpose cleaner:** Combine 1 qt. warm water plus 1 tsp. each liquid soap, borax and vinegar in a spray bottle to clean countertops, floors, walls, rugs, and upholstery.
- **Toilets:** First, scrub bowl with a toilet brush. Then, empty the water in the bowl by pouring in a bucket of water. Sprinkle baking soda on a wet sponge, and scrub the bowl inside and out.
- **Tub, sink and tile:** Sprinkle baking soda on a wet sponge and rub.
- **Glass:** Use a spray bottle and solution of 2 Tbsp. vinegar to 1 qt. water. Wipe dry with old newspapers.
- **Vinyl or wood floors:** Damp mop with a solution of 1 part vinegar to 10 parts water.
- **Drains:** Don't let grease or hair go down a drain. If a drain becomes clogged, use a plunger. For tough clogs, pour in ¼ cup baking soda, followed by ½ cup vinegar. Flush with boiling water. If that doesn't clear it, use a mechanical snake, or rent a water ram or power snake.
- **Oven:** When spills occur, sprinkle with baking soda when warm and scrub off when cool. Periodically clean surfaces with moistened baking powder and a nylon scouring pad.
- **Mold and mildew:** Keep shower area dry by using the fan and by wiping off moisture with a squeegee or sponge. If mildew appears, scrub with baking soda or borax.

Questions or feedback? Contact Jeanne Roy at jeanne@earthleaders.org.