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## Spring cleaning the "green" way

Wouldn't it be nice to use common household products that are friendly to the environment and not a strain on your pocketbook? Get ready for spring cleaning with some earth friendly suggestions.

There are some basic ingredients found in most kitchens and laundry rooms that you can use to clean and freshen your home.

- Lemons – cleans, a natural disinfectant that kills most household bacteria, freshens
- Baking soda – cleans, scours, and deodorizes
- White vinegar – cuts grease; removes mildew, odors, and wax build-up
- Cornstarch – cleans windows and helps polish furniture
- Castile soap – a soap made mostly from olive oil, it biodegrades quickly and can be made at home
- Salt – works on some stains and helps control ice on sidewalks and roadways.
- Hydrogen peroxide – used for cleaning

## Tips for saving money and the environment

### Lemons

A slice of lemon dipped in salt can be used to clean copper-bottom cooking pots.

Cut a couple of lemons in half and place them in a dish, cut side up, to freshen a room.

### Baking soda

Dip your toothbrush in baking soda before brushing to help whiten your teeth and freshen your breath.

Clean hairbrushes and combs once a month by soaking them in a little warm water and a teaspoon or two of baking soda.

Sprinkle baking soda on your carpet and allow it to sit for at least 30 minutes before you vacuum for a clean, fresh smell.

Keep a small box of baking soda in the refrigerator to combat food odors.

Pouring a cup of baking soda down your drain each month helps keep them fresh.

### Vinegar

Remover deodorant and antiperspirant stains by rubbing lightly with white distilled vinegar before laundering as usual.

Adding 1 cup of white distilled vinegar to the rinse cycle of your wash will leave clothes soft and fresh.

Washing countertops, cabinets, and floors with white distilled vinegar can help deter ants.

A vinegar and water mixture is great for cleaning glass and mirrors.

### Cornstarch

Cornstarch is a good substitute for talcum powder, but use sparingly as it clumps or cakes more easily, use when diapering a baby or to control moisture on your feet or in your shoes.

Clean silver with a paste of cornstarch and water, apply with a damp cloth and remove with cheesecloth.

Use as a dry shampoo on your dog – rub into your dog's fur and comb and brush out.

Freshen stuffed animals – sprinkle on to toy, let stand 5 minutes then brush off.

### Castile soap

Use castile soap in your shower or bath.

Shampoo your hair without stripping away the natural oils.

Take castile soap camping or back-packing for a great all-in-one cleaner.

### Salt

Remove stains from a glass coffee pot by combining 4 tsp salt, 1 cup crushed ice, and 1 tbsp water in the pot and swirling gently. *Coffee pot should be at room temperature and not cracked or chipped.*

Clean silk flowers – place flowers and one cup of salt in a large bag, shake vigorously. The flowers will be clean when removed from the bag.

### Hydrogen Peroxide

Cleaning counters, table tops, and your wooden cutting board with hydrogen peroxide to help kill germs and leave a fresh smell.

Hydrogen peroxide works to clean out cuts and scrapes by foaming out dirt and debris.

You may want several different sizes of squirt bottles to use and store these mixtures. Be sure to clearly label these bottles and keep them tightly closed when not in use. Reuse old sheets and towels as cleaning cloths. Always test an area that is not noticeable before trying any of these tips to make sure the surface is not harmed. **Remember to keep all cleaning supplies out of reach of children.**



Help  
Howard  
the  
Housekeeper  
find a clean,  
happy planet.

