

BATHROOM

Toilets

For a heavy-duty toilet scrub that deodorizes while it cleans, pour $\frac{1}{2}$ cup of baking soda and about 10 drops of tea tree essential oil into the toilet. Add $\frac{1}{4}$ cup of vinegar to the bowl and scrub away while the mixture fizzes.

For daily cleaning, fill a small spray bottle with vinegar (about 1 cup should do it) and a few drops of an essential oil of your choosing (lemon and tea tree both work well).

Spray on the toilet seats, let it sit for a few minutes, and then wipe the surface clean.

Tub and Shower

To get rid of mildew, spray pure white vinegar on the offending area, let it sit for at least 30 minutes, and then rinse with warm water (don't be afraid to use a sponge if rinsing doesn't clear away the grossness on its own). Alternatively, try mixing together baking soda with a bit of liquid castile soap, then scrub and rinse.

For daily cleaning or to get rid of soap scum, mix 1 part water with 1 part vinegar (and a few drops of essential oils if you're not into the smell of vinegar) in a spray bottle. Spray, let it sit for at least several minutes, and then wipe away.

Disinfectant

Skip the bleach and make a homemade germ-killer instead. Just mix 2 cups of water, 3 tablespoons of liquid soap, and 20-30 drops of tea tree oil.

Air Freshener

All you need is baking soda, your favorite essential oil, and an old jar with a lid you don't mind poking holes in. Fill your jar about $\frac{1}{4}$ of the way with baking soda and mix in 5-10 drops of essential oil, depending on how strong you'd like the scent to be.

Hand Soap

To make a non-toxic, foaming hand soap, mix together liquid castile soap and water (and an essential oil if you feel like it) in a foaming soap dispenser. Fill about one fifth of the bottle with soap, then top it off with water.

KITCHEN

Countertops

For a simple, all-purpose counter cleaner, mix together equal parts vinegar and water in a spray bottle. If your countertop is made from marble, granite, or stone, skip the

vinegar (its acidity is no good for these surfaces) and use rubbing alcohol or the wondrous power of vodka instead.

Cutting Boards

Talk about non-toxic: All that's needed to clean and sanitize cutting boards (wood or plastic) is... a lemon! Cut it in half, run it over the surfaces, let sit for ten minutes, and then rinse away. If you need some serious scrubbing power, sprinkle some coarse or Kosher salt over the board, and then rub with ½ a lemon.

Oven

To clean stubborn, caked-on food out of the oven, just heat the oven to 125 degrees and grab your spray bottle of vinegar (see “countertops” above). Once the oven is warm, spray the caked-on stuff until it's lightly damp and then pour salt directly onto the affected areas. Turn off the oven, let it cool, and then use a wet towel to scrub away at the mess. If that doesn't cut it, follow the same instructions but try use baking soda in place of salt (just let it sit for a few minutes before scrubbing).

Microwave

Pour some vinegar into a small cup and mix in a little lemon juice (exact amounts don't *really* matter). Put the cup in the microwave, let the microwave run for 2 minutes, and leave the door closed for several more minutes. Finally, open the door and simply wipe down all the sides with a warm cloth or sponge—no scrubbing required!

Sink Drain

To unclog a stuffed-up drain, start by boiling about 2 cups of water. Pour ½ cup of baking soda into the drain, and then add the water while it's still nice and hot. If that doesn't do the trick, follow the baking soda with ½ cup of vinegar, cover it up tightly (a pot lid should work nicely), wait until the fizzing slows down (when baking soda and vinegar come in contact, they'll react by fizzing) and then add one gallon of boiling water.

Dishwasher Detergent

Mix together 1 cup of liquid castile soap and 1 cup of water (2 teaspoons of lemon juice optional) in a quart-size glass jar. Add some of this mixture to one detergent compartment of the dishwasher, and fill the other compartment with white vinegar.

Dish Soap

If washing dishes by hand, simply combine 1 cup of liquid castile soap and 3 tablespoons water (a few drops of essential oil optional) in a bottle of your choice. Shake well and use like you would any other dish soap.

Refrigerator Cleaner

To clean what is perhaps the toughest of all kitchen “gross spots,” reach for the baking soda. Add about ½ cup of the white stuff to a bucket of hot water. Dip a clean rag in the mixture and use it to wipe down the fridge’s insides.

LAUNDRY ROOM

Laundry Detergent

Finely grate 1 bar of pure, unscented glycerine soap. Add 1 cup washing soda, ½ baking soda, ½ cup citric acid, ¼ coarse salt. Mix thoroughly. Store in airtight container and add 1-2 tbsp of detergent to each wash.

Stain Remover

Deal with stains as soon as possible. Heat sets stains so avoid hot/warm water and the dryer until the stain is gone. Combine 1 tbsp baking soda, 4 tbsp castille soap, and 8 tbsp hydrogen peroxide in a jar, apply to stain as needed with brush, let sit for 15 mins then throw into the laundry.

Fabric Softener

Make a big batch of softener by adding 20-30 drops of the essential oil of your choice to a one-gallon jug of white vinegar. Add 1/3 cup to each laundry load (just be sure to shake the mixture prior to each use).

Laundry “Scenter”

Make a sachet stuffed with your favorite dried herbs (lavender, peppermint, and lemon verbena are all great options). Toss it in the dryer while it’s in use.

Bleach

For a nontoxic laundry bleach alternative, add some lemon juice to the rinse cycle.

EVERYTHING ELSE

18. Floors

For a simple, effective tile floor cleaner, simply combine one part white vinegar with two parts warm water in a bucket. Use a mop or rag to scrub down the floors with the solution. No need to rinse off! (Note: this one’s not recommended for wood floors).

19. Walls

To scrub down walls, mix $\frac{1}{4}$ cup white vinegar with 1 quart warm water, then use a rag to scrub those walls down. To remove black marks, simply scrub at the spot with a little bit of baking soda.

20. Windows and Mirrors

For an all-purpose window cleaner, combine 1 part white vinegar with 4 parts water (feel free to add some lemon juice if you're feeling citrusy), then use a sponge or rag to scrub away.

21. Furniture Polish

For an all-purpose furniture polish, combine $\frac{1}{4}$ cup vinegar with $\frac{3}{4}$ cup olive oil and use a soft cloth to distribute the mixture over furniture. For wood furniture (or as an alternative to the first recipe), combine $\frac{1}{4}$ cup lemon juice with $\frac{1}{2}$ cup olive oil, then follow the same procedure.

22. Silver Cleaner

Put silver utensils and jewelry back to good use the non-toxic way. Line a sink or bucket with aluminum foil, lay out the silver on top of the aluminum, and pour in boiling water, 1 cup of baking soda, and a pinch of salt. Let it sit for several minutes and watch as the tarnish disappears.

23. Wood Cleaner

Clean varnished wood by combining 2 tablespoons of olive oil, 1 tablespoon of white vinegar, and a quart of warm water in a spray bottle. Spray onto wood and then dry with a soft cloth. (Note: Since olive oil can leave behind some slippery residue, this one *might* not be the best option for wood floors.)