

“Helpful Tips for A Healthy Planet”

Compiled by Sierra Club’s Cimarron Group

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HOUSEHOLD CLEANING RECIPES

Cleaning your home with milder, renewable, and biodegradable products is a step in the right direction, but when it comes to disinfecting, even natural cleaners should be used in moderation. According to Children's Health Environmental Coalition, there is mounting evidence that an overly sanitized environment inhibits our ability to develop biological defenses against bacteria and viruses. According to the "hygiene hypothesis," a certain amount of exposure to microbes helps children to develop strong immune systems. For the average home, most of the time, soap and water are all that is needed to get rid of germs.

- **All purpose cleaner** – ¼ cup baking soda, ½ cup white vinegar, 1 gal. warm water
- **Bleach** – 1 part hydrogen peroxide to 8 parts water, soak and then rinse (or borax)
- **Non-caustic drain opener** – 1 cup baking soda, 1 cup salt, ½ cup white vinegar, 1 qt. boiling water; pour all ingredients except water in drain wait 15 min. then add water;
- **To keep drains clear** – ¼ cup salt down drain followed by 1 qt. boiling water once a week
- **Fabric softener** – ¼ cup baking soda in wash or ¼ cup vinegar to rinse cycle
- **Furniture polish** – ¾ oz. olive oil, ½ oz. white vinegar, 1 qt. warm water; mix all ingredients and put in spray bottle; works best warm
- **Grease remover** – borax on a damp cloth; use baby oil on hands for grease & paint
- **Starch** – ½ oz. cornstarch, 1 cup water; put in spray bottle and shake well
- **Toilet bowl cleaner** – ¼ oz. household ammonia, 1 cup hydrogen peroxide, 1 qt. water; let stand 30 min. then scrub and flush.
- **Silver polish soak** – 1 qt. warm water, 1/3 oz. baking soda, 1/3 oz. salt, and small piece aluminum foil; change foil when old one changes color
- **Salt scrub** – Salt is good to scour your sink; it has abrasive, disinfectant, and antiseptic properties (or baking soda)
- **Odor remover** – Place several bowls of vinegar around a room you want to rid of smoke odor.
- **Fireplace cleaner** – Clean the flue in your fireplace by throwing ½ cup salt into the fire
- **Carpet cleaner** – mix ½ cup baking soda, 1 cup borax, 1 cup cornmeal & sprinkle on rug; rub with cloth & let sit a few hours or overnight and vacuum
- **Scorch mark remover** – rub with grated onion
- **Chrome polish** – apple cider vinegar
- **Perspiration stains** – white vinegar & water
- **Mildew removal** – equal parts of salt & vinegar
- **Copper polish** – lemon juice & salt

LAWN & GARDEN

- **Crabgrass** – sprinkle corn gluten meal on lawns in the spring
- **Compost** – organic compost suppresses soil-borne plant disease and pests, prevents erosion of our fast-depleting topsoil, balances both acid and alkaline soils, bringing pH levels to the optimum range for nutrient availability and encourages beneficial insects, worms, etc.
- **Watering** – it is much better to water slowly and thoroughly rather than frequently; always water in the early morning or late in the evening to prevent evaporation
- **Xeriscape** – plants are drought-tolerant and more disease & insect resistant

PET TIPS

- **Digestion** – cinnamon and clove added to pet food will improve digestion and reduce body odor; ¼ tsp. spice to 25 lb of body weight per day
- **Freshen coat** – rinse your pet with herbal tea (chamomile, lavender, or peppermint)
- **Skunk odor** – use 1 quart 3% hydrogen peroxide, ¼ cup baking soda, and 1 to 2 tsp. liquid soap; apply thoroughly, avoiding eyes, and rinse off because mixture is volatile if stored; prepare immediately before using.
- **Ear mites** – place a few drops of vegetable oil in cat's ear, massage in and clean with cotton ball; repeat daily for three days – it smothers mites and accelerates healing
- **Fleas and ticks** – lavender oil in pets beds

FIRST AID

- **Sore throat** – mix ¼ cup vinegar and ¼ cup honey, take 1 tablespoon six times a day. Vinegar kills the bacteria.
- **Skin blemishes** – dab with honey and cover with band-aid, honey kills the bacteria and works overnight.
- **Boil cure** – cover with tomato paste, the acids from the tomato soothes the pain and brings the boil to a head.
- **Bruises** – apply vinegar soaked cotton ball to bruise for 1 hour, reduces blueness and speeds up healing.
- **Arthritis pain** - warm 2 parts oatmeal to one part water in microwave, apply for soothing pain relief
- **Disinfecting wounds** – Tea tree oil mixed with vegetable oil, also good for fungal infections and insect bites.
- **Nausea** – add a few drops of peppermint oil to water.
- **Insect repellent** – mix peppermint oil with vegetable oil
- **Nasal and respiratory congestion** – Inhale after adding drops of peppermint oil in boiling water.

PESTS

- **Ants, raccoons, rabbits** are repelled by ground red pepper
- **Flies in trash can** - sprinkle dry laundry soap in bottom of can
- **Roaches** – mix equal parts of boric acid, flour, cornmeal and sugar--use for dusting infested areas. Cockroaches walk through it and then ingest it when they groom their legs and feelers; also, hot sauce will work
- **Insects in general** – use bags of fresh basil throughout house

BEAUTY TIPS

- **Damaged hair repair** – one ripe banana and a few drops almond oil, leave on hair for 15 min. and rinse.
- **Dry hair conditioner** – mix 1 egg, 1 tsp honey, 2 tsp olive oil, apply to wet hair, cover with shower cap. Leave on for 30 min and shampoo.

OKC FARMERS MARKETS

Watch for updates online: www.okfarmersmarket.org

- **Edmond Farmers Market** – First Street west of Broadway (Wed. & Sat. 8am to 1pm)
- **OSU/OKC Farmers Market** – 400 N. Portland (Sat. 8am to 1 pm)
- **OSU/OKC Downtown Farmers Market** – 100 Couch Drive, between Broadway and Robinson on Robert S Kerr (Weds. 11:00am – 1:00pm)
- **Bethany Children’s Center Farmers Market** – 6800 NW Expressway (Thursday 3:30-7:00pm; Saturday 8am to 1pm)

GREEN LIVING WEB SITES

- www.newdreamorg
- www.coopamerica.org
- www.Earth911.org
- www.ediblestates.org
- www.myfootprint.org
- www.thegreenguide.com
- www.GreenerChoices.org
- www.nrdc.org/thisgreenlife
- www.greenmatters.com
- www.grist.org
- http://idealbite.com
- www.motherearthnews.com
- www.naturalhomemagazine.com
- www.sierraclub.org/sustainable_consumption
- www.sustainabletable.com
- www.ucsus.org/publications/green_tips

INFORMATION SOURCES FOR HAND-OUT

- ***Heloise's Hints for A Healthy Planet*** (Copyright 1990--Perigree Books)
- ***Dr. J.B. Pratt's Healthy Home Tips*** (formerly distributed at Pratt Foods)
- ***The Garden Gate*** (Oct. 2005) www.gardengatemagazine.com
- ***The Healthy Edge*** (Oct. 2006)
- ***Oklahoma Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ) Publications***
www.DEQ.state.ok.us (Use Less Stuff Campaign Recommended Green Living Sites; "Safe Alternatives for Household Hazardous Waste"; "Greening Your Life Tips for Earth Day")

