

Green, Clean Money-Saving Ma-SHEEN



With growing concerns about the environment — some 80,000 chemicals are in common use — and families tightening their belts, “green clean” alternatives promise help for all.

Homemade cleaning agent recipes save money, result in a healthier household and have a light impact on the environment. Ingredients can be found at your local supermarket, natural food store or drugstore to make cleaners that are safe, effective and inexpensive.

Back to the Basics

With a few simple supplies you can make virtually any cleaner you need.

Baking soda (sodium bicarbonate)	Cleans, deodorizes, removes stains and softens fabrics
Washing soda (sodium carbonate)	A stronger cousin of baking soda that increases the cleaning power of soap
Liquid soap/detergent	If you have hard water, buy biodegradable detergent without perfumes; if you have soft water you can use liquid soap
White distilled vinegar or lemon juice	Cuts grease, removes clothing stains; excellent water softener and alternative to bleach
Tea tree oil	Expensive, but worth it as a natural fungicide
Olive oil	Natural emollient
Herbs or essential oils	Disinfect; provide pleasant fragrances
Spray bottles, re-sealable glass jars	Be sure to label ingredients and batches; keep out of the reach of children

Eco friendly

Natural cleaners avoid the unhealthy environmental and household dangers of toxic chemicals, volatile organic compounds (VOC) and other health risks.

Simply good

Most modern synthetic cleaners are based on age-old formulas that used natural, non-toxic ingredients. Why not use the originals?

Furniture Polish

- 1 lemon (juice)
- 1 teaspoon olive oil
- 1 teaspoon water

Mix lemon juice with oil and water. Apply a thin coat on the wood. Let stand for five minutes. Buff with a soft cloth to get a deep shine

TIP: you can hide wood scratches by rubbing them with the meat of a walnut

Ever-Fresh Bathroom Deodorizer

Add a few drops of your favorite essential oil to the inside of the cardboard toilet tissue roll. Fragrance is released with each turn of the roll.

Mold and Mildew Killer

- 2 teaspoons tea tree oil
 - 2 cups water
- Combine in a spray bottle, shake and spray on problem areas. Do not rinse.

TIP: Spray it on a musty bureau, rug or moldy shower curtain. The tea tree oil smell is strong but goes away in a few days.

All-Purpose Spray Cleaner

- 1/2 teaspoon washing soda
 - Dab of liquid soap
 - 2 cups hot water
- Combine the ingredients in a spray bottle, shake until the washing soda dissolves. Apply and wipe off with a rag or sponge.

Oven Cleaner

- 1 cup baking soda
 - Water
 - Squirts of liquid detergent
- Sprinkle water generously over the floor of the oven. Cover grime with baking soda to make surface totally white. Sprinkle more water over the top and let set overnight. Wipe up loosened grease and dab detergent on a sponge to wash away the remaining residue. Be sure to use enough baking soda and water to get the job done.

TIP: Prevention is a good first step; place a sheet of aluminum foil on the oven floor, beneath but not touching the heating element and clean up spills as they occur

Glass Cleaner

- 1/3 teaspoon liquid detergent
 - 3 tablespoons vinegar
 - 2 cups water
- Combine ingredients in a spray bottle, shake well and use like a commercial brand.

TIP: Liquid detergent cuts the wax residue of the commercial brands used previously.

Car Soap

- 1/4 cup vegetable oil based liquid soap
 - 1/2 lemon (juice)
 - Hot water
- Mix ingredients in a pail. Tip: Wash your car on the lawn to water the grass and reduce storm drain runoff at the same time.

Budget wise

Once for ounce, homemade cleaners cost one-tenth the price of their commercial counterparts. Why not save 90% of the more than \$800* families spend on household cleaning supplies each year?

*Bureau of Labor Statistics, 2007

For more on green cleaning visit <http://www.care2.com> and <http://natural-products.suite101.com>