

Does Cleaning Your House Make it More Toxic?



Most cleaning formulas on the market today are highly toxic

Some of the most toxic cleaners on the market today are designed for use in the kitchen. Where you prepare and eat your food can be loaded with toxins if you use certain commercial cleaning products. Not only is toxic residue left on surfaces, but toxic fumes are released into the air.



Many companies are getting on the “green” bandwagon and making environmentally friendly cleaners – at a price, of course. The “green” cleaning products are definitely the way to go, but you can also make good kitchen cleaning products yourself at a fraction of the cost. Another benefit of making your own cleaning products is that you can keep reusing the same containers further reducing what you add to landfills.

Many of the homemade cleaning solutions use vinegar. You may think this is going to make your home smell like vinegar. Rest assured it will not. Vinegar assimilates other odors and dissipates quickly.

Using the homemade cleaners listed below is not only environmentally responsible, but economical as well. Using homemade cleaners will in no way sacrifice the cleanliness of your home. In fact, using homemade cleaners will make your home cleaner and less toxic.

General Disinfectant

Use two clean separate spray bottles; fill one with 3% hydrogen peroxide and the other with white distilled vinegar. Spray the surface to be disinfected with either solution followed immediately by a spray from the second solution. The order of which is sprayed first does not matter, the important thing is to spray one after the other. The pairing of these 2 mists has been scientifically proven to kill virtually all Salmonella, Shigella, or E.coli bacteria on heavily contaminated food and surfaces.

Using this combination is more effective than chlorine bleach or any commercial cleaner available. **NEVER mix the two in the same bottle. ALWAYS spray one right after the other.** Combining these two items forms an acid (peracetic acid) which varies in strength, can cause skin damage, and does not have the same disinfecting effect as the two applied in sequence.

Cost of Homemade Product (32 oz.) \$1.24
 Cost of Comparable Clorox Spray (32 oz.).....\$5.99

Savings \$4.75

Here is a list of things you will need to get started:

- White Distilled Vinegar (1 gal) \$2.18
- Cornstarch (12 oz.).....\$1.12
- Baking Soda (4 lbs.).....\$2.12
- 3% Hydrogen Peroxide (32oz).....\$0.96
- Borax (4 lbs).....\$2.98
- Essential Oil.....Varies
- Castile Soap (32 oz.).....\$3.74
- Or other vegetable based soap like Murphy's Oil

Fragrant Kitchen Rinse:

Ad 4 drops of your favorite essential oil (I like lavender) to a pint of water. Pour into a spray bottle and store in a cool dark place. Use as a final rinse after cleaning kitchen surfaces.

Window Cleaning

Mix ¼ cup white distilled vinegar, 1 tablespoon cornstarch, and 2 cups of warm water into a recycled plastic spray bottle. Shake it up to dissolve the cornstarch, spray liberally on glass and wipe with a soft cloth or newspaper. Always wash windows when they are cool to avoid streaking.

Cost of Homemade Product	\$0.05
Cost of Store Product (Earth Friendly)	\$3.85
Savings \$3.80	

Granite Countertops

For granite countertops mix ¼ cup of isopropyl alcohol and a few drops of liquid dishwashing detergent into a recycled spray bottle. Use weekly, wiping with a micro fiber cloth. This is for disinfecting and should be used with proper ventilation.

Cost of Homemade Product	\$0.65
Cost of Store Product (Always Brilliant)	\$6.99
Savings \$6.34	

An even more environmentally friendly cleaner is to mix 4 tablespoons of baking soda into 1 quart of warm water and wipe down the countertop.

Cost of Homemade Product	\$0.04
Cost of Store Product (Always Brilliant)	\$6.99
Savings \$6.95	

All Other Countertops

You can use baking soda on a damp sponge or rag. Baking soda cleans and deodorizes.

For a soft scrub you can mix baking soda and castile soap until you get a consistency you like. Just make what you need as it dries up quickly.

Cost of Homemade Product	\$1.02
Cost of Comparable (Green Product, LifeTree)	\$2.99
Savings \$1.97	

Dishwasher Rinse

Add 1 cup of white vinegar to the rinse compartment of your dishwasher. Wash as usual and your dishes will be spot free.

Cost of Homemade Product	\$0.14
Cost of Comparable Product	\$4.25
Savings \$4.11	

Miscellaneous:

- ✓ Burned and crusted on foods: soak or boil a solution of 2 tablespoons baking soda per quart of water in each pan. Let stand until particles are loosened and wash as usual
- ✓ Sprinkle surface of pans with coarse salt, rub salt into stains with the cut half of a fresh lemon.

Floors

Use two clean separate spray bottles; fill one with 3% hydrogen peroxide and Mix ½ cup vinegar to a gallon of hot water. Add a few drops of your favorite essential oil for scent. Scrub or mop floor with mixture.

Cost of Homemade Product	\$0.08
Cost of Store Product (Green Product, LifeTree)	\$7.59
Savings \$7.51	

Sinks

Mix 1 2/3 cup of baking soda with ½ cup castile soap in a bowl, dilute with ½ cut of water and add tablespoons of vinegar. Stir with a fork until the lumps are gone. Place the mixture in a container with a squirt flip top cap – the cap must have an opening big enough not to clog. This works well on any surface that you would use a soft scrub for.

Baking soda can also be used as a scouring powder in your sink

Cost of Homemade Product	\$1.03
Cost of Comparable (Green Product, Ecover)	\$2.99
Savings \$1.97	

Stoves

Prevention is best for cleaning your stove. Wipe spills off immediately when they occur. Place a sheet of aluminum foil underneath, but do not touching the heating element. When the oven is still warm, you can sprinkle salt or baking soda on the spill. If the spill is dry, wet it with water before applying the salt or baking soda. Once the oven is cool, scrape the spill and wash the area clean.

Cost of Homemade Product	\$0.26
(plus cost of aluminum foil)	
Cost of Comparable (Easy-Off, VERY TOXIC)	\$5.39
Savings \$5.07	

Refrigerator

To clean the exterior walls, dissolve 2 tablespoons of baking soda in 1 quart of warm water and wipe all surfaces. Stubborn stains can be rubbed clean with baking soda paste. Rinse clean with a wet cloth.

Use hot soapy water to clean the interior.

Cost of Homemade Product	\$0.20
Cost of Comparable (Green Product, LifeTree)	\$3.59
Savings \$3.39	

- ✓ Occasionally soak drinking glasses in a solution of vinegar and water to make them sparkle.
- ✓ Eliminate garbage disposal odors and clean and sharpen blades by grinding ice and used lemon or orange rinds until pulverized.
- ✓ The costs of products will vary, but the savings are obvious. For comparisons, we tried to use green products for similar uses.