



Environmentally Friendly Household Cleaning Products

This brochure provided by
the Southwest Michigan
Solid Waste Consortium

Many popular household cleaners are expensive and contain toxic ingredients. You can save money and avoid hazards by using some common household products for general cleaning.

Basic Ingredients

Baking Soda: Cleans and deodorizes. Good scouring powder. Softens water, increasing the cleaning power of soap.

Borax: Cleans, deodorizes and disinfects. Softens water. Brightens all washable fabrics and costs less than bleach.

Soap: Sold as liquid, flake, powder or in bars.



Washing Soda: Disinfectant. Cuts grease and removes stains.

White Vinegar: Versatile cleaner that cuts grease and lime.



Managing Household Hazardous Waste

- ⇒ Use safer products such as:
Murphy's Oil Soap and Borax.
- ⇒ When purchasing toxic products:
 - Buy only what you need.
 - Use only as directed.
 - Consider sharing leftovers with family or friends.
 - Properly dispose of leftovers at a household hazardous waste collection.

Call the resource person in your county today to find out what collection programs are available.

Allegan County Resource Recovery
673-5415
Berrien County Resource Recovery
983-7111 ext. 8350
Cass County MSU Extension
445-8661
Calhoun County Environmental
Health Department 966-1241
Kalamazoo County Household
Hazardous Waste Center 373-5211
St. Joseph County MSU Extension
467-5540
Van Buren County MSU Extension
657-7745

Programs and materials are open to all without regard to race, color, national origin, gender, religion, age, disability, political beliefs, sexual orientation, marital or family status.

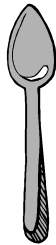
More Kitchen Products

Brass: Mix equal parts salt and flour with a little vinegar, then rub.

Chrome: Rub with undiluted vinegar.

Copper: Rub with lemon juice and salt or hot vinegar and salt.

Silver or Stainless Steel: Rub with a paste of baking soda and water. Soak silver in 1 quart water, 2 tablespoons baking soda, 1 tablespoon salt and small piece of aluminum foil.



Furniture Polish: Mix 2 parts vegetable or olive oil with 1 part lemon juice, apply with soft cloth.

Be sure to test all cleaners in a small, non-visible area before applying to entire surface, to insure no discoloration will occur.

Bathroom Products

Tub, Tile & Toilet: Scrub with a powdered soap and a scouring powder made of baking soda, borax or salt. Use white vinegar to loosen lime deposits.

Glass Cleaner: Mix 3 tablespoons vinegar with 1 quart warm water. For tough jobs, first wash glass with warm soapy water. Hint: for any window cleaning job, rub dry with newspapers for professional results.

Air Fresheners: Ventilate the area or place a box of baking soda in enclosed spaces. In an open dish set out vinegar, flower petals or herbs. Or, add cloves and cinnamon to boiling water and let simmer.

Mold & Mildew Cleaners: Make a concentrated solution of Borax and water and clean affected areas. Baking soda sprinkled on a damp sponge will also remove mold. Ventilate an area properly to reduce mold growth.

Drain Cleaners: To keep drains clear, always use a drain basket to catch hair. To clear clogs, use 1/4 cup baking soda followed by 1/2 cup vinegar; cover drain and sink until fizzing stops, then flush with boiling water.

Laundry Products

Fabric Softener: Add 1 cup vinegar or 1/4 cup baking soda during final rinse.

Never mix vinegar and chlorine bleach.

Spray Starch: Dissolve 2 teaspoons cornstarch in 1 pint cold water in a spray bottle. Shake before each use.

Detergent: Use products that contain washing soda or add washing soda or borax when using regular detergent. Washing soda and borax brightens fabrics and costs less than bleach.

General Products

All-Purpose Cleaner: Mix 2 teaspoons borax, 1 teaspoon soap and 1 quart water. Store in spray bottle. Add vinegar or washing soda to cut grease.

Disinfectant: Dissolve 1/4 cup borax in 1/2 gallon hot water.

Scouring Powder: Use a firm bristle brush and scrub with soap combined with either borax, table salt or baking soda.

Kitchen Products

Oven Cleaner: Clean with scratch pad, baking soda and water as soon as possible.

No-wax Linoleum Floor Cleaner: Brighten floors by mixing 1/2 cup white vinegar with 1/2 gallon water.

Moth Balls: Clean garments thoroughly before storing them since moths are attracted to dirt on clothes. Store clean woolens in cedar chests or closets, or store with gauze bags containing either cedar chips or 2 handfuls each of dried lavender and rosemary plus 1 table-spoon each of fresh cloves and dried lemon peel to repel moths. During the year, vacuum closets regularly to get rid of moths' food sources.

Home & Garden Pests

Prevention is best:

- * Fix holes in screens; caulk around windows, doors and pipes.
- * Keep kitchens, floors, closets and garbage pails clean to eliminate food source.
- * Remove paper clutter to eliminate nesting sites.
- * Vacuum up insect pests in the home. Be sure to immediately change bags.
- * Manually remove insects from plants.