

In the Bathroom

Mold and mildew cleaners

- ⇒ Make a concentrated solution of borax and water and clean affected areas.
- ⇒ Scrub mildew spots with baking soda or borax. Sponge with white vinegar.
- ⇒ Scrub with white vinegar and salt.
- ⇒ Mix 2 parts baking soda to 1 part borax. Sprinkle on surfaces, dampen and allow to sit for a time to absorb odors. Scrub and rinse.
- ⇒ Dissolve 1/2 cup vinegar and 1/2 cup borax in warm water.
- ⇒ To clean mildew from a shower curtain, machine wash with 1/4 cup soap and 1/2 cup baking soda; add 1 cup of white vinegar to the rinse cycle.



Scouring powder (Kitchen use also)

- ⇒ Pour 1/2 cup of baking soda into a bowl, add enough liquid detergent to make a texture-like paste. Scoop the mixture onto a sponge **or** use dry table salt on a damp sponge; scour, add lemon peels for fragrance then rinse well.

Toilet bowl cleaner

- ⇒ Scrub with a solution of 1/2 cup borax in a gallon on water for cleaning and disinfecting.
- ⇒ Spray or drizzle white vinegar on stubborn rings and lime build-up and scrub or use a pumice stone.

Tub and tile cleaner

- ⇒ Use full strength white vinegar on a sponge, then use baking soda as a scouring powder
- ⇒ Rinse well
- ⇒ Use 1/2 cup of borax to a gallon of hot water for cleaning and as a disinfectant.
- ⇒ Mix 1/4 cup white vinegar in 1 gallon water.
- ⇒ To clean grout, combine 3 cups of baking soda and 1 cup of warm water and scrub into the grout; rinse well with water.

In the Laundry

Fabric softener

- ⇒ Use 1/4 to 1/2 cup baking soda in rinse water.
- ⇒ Add 1 cup white vinegar or 1/4 cup baking soda during final rinse.
- ⇒ Use 1/2 cup borax and half the amount of detergent per wash load

Laundry bleach

- ⇒ Use 1/4 cup white vinegar in rinse water to brighten dark clothing.
- ⇒ Substitute 1/2 cup borax per wash load to whiten whites and brighten colors and to remove spots.

Laundry presoak

- ⇒ Soak heavily soiled items in warm water with 1/2 cup washing soda for 30 minutes.
- ⇒ Rub soiled areas with mild liquid soap.

Stain Pretreatment

- ⇒ Make a paste of baking soda and water and spread on stain. Wet with white vinegar. Soak in soapy water

Spray starch

- ⇒ For regular fabrics, dissolve 2 tablespoons cornstarch in a pint of cold water; store in a spray bottle.

Laundry Whiting Solution

- ⇒ Pour 1 cup of hydrogen peroxide into a washer load of white laundry
- ⇒ Don't pour it directly on your clothes. It can fade out the color just like bleach does!
- ⇒ It's a green alternative to bleach, and works just as well.

Richmond City Health District Lead-Safe & Healthy Homes Initiative

400 E. Cary Street, 4th Floor
Richmond, VA 23219

Phone: 804-205-3500 Ext. 7

Fax: 804-371-2207

www.HealthyHomesRCHD.com

Twitter@HealthyHomesVDH

Richmond
City Health
District



Keep It Clean—Safer
Household Cleaners



Household Cleaners

Americans spend 90% of their time indoors in an environment that has become increasingly airtight since the 1970's. Carelessly or excessively using everyday household cleaning products can cause harmful levels of toxins to build up indoors. Most people use cleaning products because they are efficient and effective and don't think of them as toxic. Yet, many of the cleaners, bleaches and solvents we use for cleaning can be dangerous if not used or disposed of properly.

Fortunately, there are many alternative cleaning agents that can be just as effective. Our grandparents used simple household items like salt, baking soda and white vinegar for cleaning before many of the products on the market today were available.

Some safer products that you may not be familiar with are:

- ⇒ **Washing soda**—sodium carbonate, marketed as **Arm and Hammer Washing Soda**
- ⇒ **Borax**—a naturally occurring mineral, marketed as **20 Mule Team Borax**
- ⇒ **Vegetable oil, olive oil or based soap**—marketed as **Murphy's Oil Soap**.

Try out some of the safer household cleaners in the brochure and see for yourself how effective they can be.



All Around the House

Air fresheners and deodorizers

- ⇒ Place baking soda **or** pour white vinegar in small dishes to absorb odors. You can add lemon peel for a fragrance.

All purpose cleaner

- ⇒ In spray bottle, combine 1/2 teaspoon baking soda, Dash of liquid soap, 2 cups warm water.

Carpet, rug and upholstery stain remover

- ⇒ Mix 1/2 teaspoon dishwashing soap, 1 cup white vinegar with 2 cups of water. Blot stain from the outside towards the center. Repeat if necessary.

Disinfectant

- ⇒ Mix 1/2 cup Arm & Hammer washing soda in 1 gallon hot water. To inhibit mold and mildew, Do NOT rinse off.

Floor cleaner

- ⇒ 1/2 cup white vinegar **or** 1/4 cup borax in 1 gallon water.

Furniture polish

- ⇒ **Finished wood**—use a mild vegetable oil based soap.
- ⇒ **Painted wood**—mix 1 teaspoon washing soda in a gallon of hot water. Rinse with clear water.

Metal cleaners and polishes

- ⇒ **Brass and Copper**—Paste of lemon juice and salt.
- ⇒ **Chrome**—Wipe with white vinegar, rinse with water, then dry.
- ⇒ **Silver**—Soak silver about 5 minutes in a quart of warm water containing a tablespoon of baking soda, a tablespoon of salt and a piece of aluminum foil.
- ⇒ **Stainless steel**—Paste of baking soda and water.

Window and glass cleaner

- ⇒ In spray bottle, combine 1/4-1/2 teaspoon liquid soap, 3 tablespoons white vinegar, 3 cups water. Polish with newspaper.



In the Kitchen

Appliance cleaner

- ⇒ In spray bottle, mix 1 teaspoon borax, 3 tablespoons white vinegar, and 2 cups hot water. Spray and wipe with a soft cloth.

Coffee and tea cup stain remover

- ⇒ Rub with moist baking soda.

Coffee maker cleaner

- ⇒ Fill reservoir with white vinegar and turn on.
- ⇒ Repeat with water several times.
- ⇒ Clean exterior with a mixture of warm water and baking soda or white vinegar.

Decal removal

- ⇒ Soak in hot water, use white vinegar, or coat with peanut butter and let set overnight.

Drain cleaner

- ⇒ Use plunger. Pour 1/2 cup baking soda and 1/2 cup white vinegar. Wait a few minutes and pour in 1 quart of boiling water. Repeat if needed. If this fails, use a metal drain snake available at hardware store.
- ⇒ To help keep drains unclogged:
- ⇒ Pour boiling water down the drain once a week.

Garbage disposal deodorizer

- ⇒ Grind lemon rinds in disposal
- ⇒ Pour baking soda in disposal

Refrigerator and freezer deodorizer

- ⇒ Open box of baking soda

Scouring powder (Bathroom use also)

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