

BEFORE YOU BEGIN

- Save time, make cleaners in advance
- Save money & packaging, buy ingredients in bulk
- Make small batches
- label & store in durable, airtight, plastic containers & spray bottles
- keep out of reach of children & pets
- Wear rubber gloves, cleaners may irritate the skin

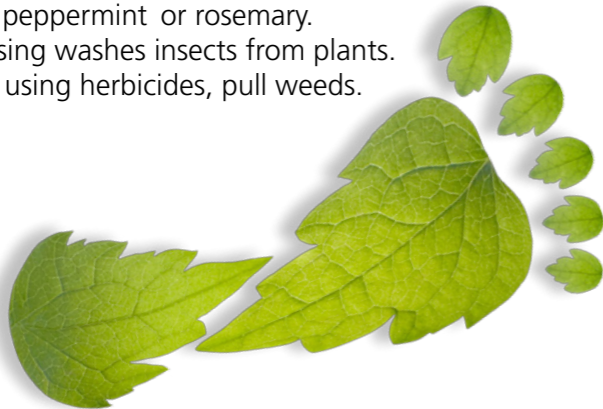
GARDEN

FERTILIZERS

Use organic compost, blood, fishmeal or grass clippings instead of chemical fertilizers. Leave grass clippings on the lawn instead of raking them. Nutrients will be reabsorbed into the soil.

PESTICIDES & HERBICIDES

For ant control, put cream of tartar, red chilli powder, paprika or dried peppermint at point of entry. For garden insects, use organic gardening techniques or essential oils such as peppermint, cedarwood, citronella, peppermint or rosemary. Strong hosing washes insects from plants. Instead of using herbicides, pull weeds.



INGREDIENTS

Either combined or on their own, these ingredients will produce safe, effective and cost-efficient cleaners.

BAKING SODA SODIUM BICARBONATE

An all-purpose, non-toxic cleaner. It cleans, deodorizes, scours, polishes and removes stains.

BORAX SODIUM BORATE

Deodorizes, removes stains and boosts the cleaning power of soap. Also prevents mould and odours.

CORNSTARCH

Cleans and deodorizes carpets and rugs.

LEMON JUICE

Cuts through grease and stains on aluminum and porcelain.

PURE SOAP

Cleans everything.

TABLE SALT SODIUM CHLORIDE

A mild disinfectant, acts as an abrasive, but gentle, scouring powder.

VINEGAR DILUTE ACETIC ACID

Removes mildew, stains, grease and wax build-up. Vinegar is a great glass cleaner.

WASHING SODA SODIUM CARBONATE

Cuts grease and disinfects. Also increases the cleaning power of soap.

RESOURCES

A good source for environmentally friendly alternatives

www.lesstoxicguide.ca

Research into alternative cleaning products

www.turi.org/laboratory/cleanersolutions_database

A list of common toxins found in household products

<http://leas.ca/Toxins-in-Household-Products.htm>

Where no alternative for a hazardous product exists, follow product label instructions. When no longer in use, bring to a Household Hazardous Waste Collection Event for proper disposal.

⚠ If someone in your home has a special medical problem, consult your physician before switching to alternative cleansers.

March 2010



Northwest Territories Environment and Natural Resources

ENVIRONMENTALLY FRIENDLY HOUSEHOLD CLEANERS

These *homemade* alternatives are less toxic and just as effective as commercial cleaners. By using these cleaners, fewer harmful chemicals are flushed down drains and into our waterways. This is healthier for you and the environment.





ALL PURPOSE

¼ C baking soda, ½ C white vinegar, and 2 L warm water. Mix ingredients together.

GLASS CLEANER

½ C white vinegar or lemon juice and ½ C warm water. Spray on glass and wipe with newspaper.

RUG & UPHOLSTERY

To clean and deodorize carpets: vacuum, sprinkle liberally with baking soda and then vacuum again. Or, mix together 1 C of cornmeal and 1 C of borax, sprinkle on carpets, and leave for one hour before vacuuming. For tough stains, use cold soda water, or blot repeatedly with vinegar and soapy water. Always test for color fastness on a hidden section of carpet.

OVEN

Line the bottom with aluminum foil or a metal tray that can be removed and cleaned.

⚠ Commercial oven cleaners are corrosive to skin and eyes.

FLY KILLERS

Keep garbage cans clean. Wash and sprinkle dry cans with pure soap after they have dried. As an alternate, use flypaper strips available at hardware stores.



SINK & TILE

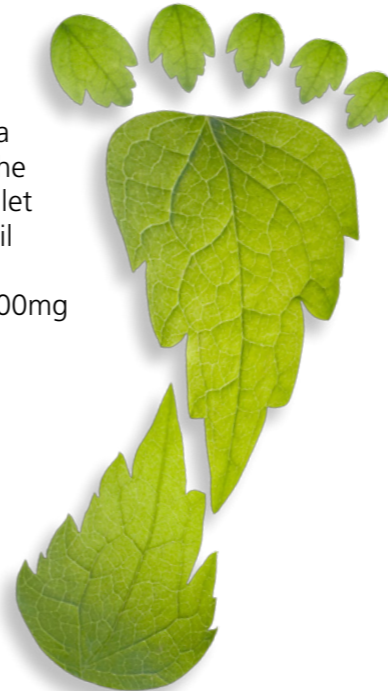
Mix ¼ C baking soda and ½ C white vinegar to clean tiles. For tough bathroom surfaces such as shower walls heat up 1 C of white vinegar and 1 C of water. Spray shower walls and allow to stand for 10 to 15 minutes, then scrub and rinse. The heat helps soften stubborn soap scum and loosens hard water deposits.

DRAIN

Using a plunger or mechanical snake, flush the drain with ¼ C baking soda followed by ½ C of white vinegar. Let stand for a few minutes then pour in boiling water. Pouring boiling water down your drains once a week helps prevents clogging.

TOILET BOWL

Shake a small amount of baking soda into the toilet; use a brush to clean the bowl. To disinfect, add a little borax, let stand for 30 minutes, then scrub until clean. Options: Pour 1 can of Cola in toilet. Let sit, then flush. Or, drop 1000mg of vitamin C in the bowl and leave overnight, then scrub.



SPOT REMOVERS

To remove stains, use club soda or immediate cold water. For grease, use borax on a damp cloth. For blood, mildew, butter, chocolate, coffee, mud or urine, dissolve ½ C borax in 2 C cold water. To remove wine stains, pour on salt then soda water immediately. Ink stains should be soaked in milk, and then washed.

FURNITURE & FLOOR POLISH

For unvarnished wood, polish with olive, peanut, walnut or almond oil. Toothpaste can also be rubbed on wood furniture to remove watermarks. To polish furniture, mix together 1 C of olive, walnut or almond oil with ½ C of vinegar or lemon juice. Shake well and apply a small amount to a soft rag. Spread evenly over furniture surface, and polish with a dry cloth.

LAUNDRY DETERGENT

Pour in ⅓ C washing soda as water fills the washer. Add clothes, then 1½ C soap flakes. Use ¼ C white vinegar in the rinse cycle to soften clothes.

LITTER BOX FRESHENER

Place baking soda or borax in the bottom of your pet's litter box.