

How to Reduce Your Risk of Breast Cancer Around Your House with Green Cleaning

Many cleaning chemicals being sold in the U.S. today contain chemicals that can harm our health. In addition, products labeled “green” can be expensive and are not regulated. Natural products, however, are safe and effective for cleaning your home and using them will reduce your and your family’s exposure to harmful chemicals in our environment.

Keep these points in mind:

- Buy a few high quality spray bottles that you can use many times. Bottles with ounce measurements on them are especially useful for measuring and mixing.
- Be sure to label your mixtures to avoid confusion.
- ALL cleaners, whether homemade or store bought, and cleaning ingredients should be kept safely away out of the reach of children and pets in locked cabinets or high places.

BAKING SODA

We all own a box of baking soda and now that we are facing some economically challenging times ahead, it makes sense to take a trip to the dollar store to stock up on a few more boxes of this precious eco-friendly powder.

1. **Deodorize your dishwasher:** Simply sprinkle $\frac{1}{2}$ cup of **baking soda** on the bottom of your dishwasher before running a cycle.
2. **Freshen up your sponge:** If your kitchen sponge or towel starts to get a bit stinky, soak it overnight in **2 cups of warm water**, **2 tbsp of baking soda** and **5 drops of tea tree oil**.
3. **Clear a clogged drain:** Mix $\frac{1}{2}$ cup of **baking soda** with $\frac{1}{2}$ cup of **white vinegar** (careful as when you add the vinegar, it may bubble over). Pour down drain followed by **2 cups of boiling water**.
4. **Moldy shower curtains:** Throw a mildew/mold stained shower curtain into the washing machine with a couple of bath towels. Add **1 cup of baking soda** to the detergent and add **1 cup of vinegar** to rinse cycle.
5. **Clean combs, brushes:** Freshen up your bristles by whirling them around in a bowl of **3 cups of warm water** and **2 tsp of baking soda**.
6. **Dandruff remedy:** Wet your hair and then rub a **handful of baking soda** vigorously into your scalp. Shampoo and condition with sodium lauryl sulfate (SLS)-free products and repeat for the next 5 or 6 times that you wash your hair.
7. **Deodorize your carpet or rug:** Lightly sprinkle **baking soda** over your carpet. Let it settle for 30 min and then vacuum.
8. **Paving stones:** Keep the weeds from growing in between paving stones by sprinkling **baking soda** onto the paving stones and sweep it into the cracks.
9. **Clean your grill:** Scour yucky grill racks with a paste made from **2 tbsp baking soda** and **2 tbsp of water**. Apply paste with a brush, leave for 15 minutes and then rinse.

10. **Clean your car:** Use a solution of **1/4 cup baking soda** in **1 quart of warm water** to clean your car lights, chrome, windows, tires, vinyl seats and floor mats without worrying about unwanted scratch marks. Apply with a sponge or soft cloth to remove road grime, tree sap, bugs, and tar. For stubborn stains use baking soda sprinkled on a damp sponge or soft brush.

LEMONS

The acid in lemons makes the citrus a great cleaning agent, and it has a bleaching effect, particularly when exposed to sunlight. When it comes to clothing, work quickly, then rinse, and wash clothing immediately.

1. **Clean copper pots and pans:** Dip **half a lemon** in **salt** and scrub tarnished copper pots to remove oxidation stains.
2. **Plastic food-storage containers:** To bleach stains from tomato soup and other acidic foods on dishwasher-safe items, rub **lemon juice** on the spots, let dry in a sunny place, then wash as usual.
3. **Banish stains on a cutting board:** Cut a **lemon in half**, dip it in **table salt**, and rub it over the stained area.
4. **Remove stains on countertops:** Start by squeezing some **lemon juice** on the stain and scrubbing with a cloth. If that doesn't work, sprinkle with **table salt** and scrub gently. You can use lemons on marble countertops, but only if absolutely necessary because the acids can damage the marble.
5. **Garbage Disposal:** Cut a **lemon** in half, then run both pieces through the disposal. It cleans and keeps your garbage disposal smelling fresh.
6. **Clean stains on stainless steel appliances:** by applying a **paste of lemon** and **salt** or **lemon** and **baking soda**. Allow the paste to sit for five minutes before washing and rinsing the stained area.
7. **Remove rust or mildew stains from textiles:** by rubbing with a paste of **lemon juice** and **salt**. Work quickly and wash clothing or other fabric item immediately.
8. **Remove oil stains:** Gently rub a **few drops of lemon** into the stain. Wash clothing immediately.
9. **Remove tough coffee or wine stains (from white fabrics):** Spray with **lemon juice** and hang in sunlight to bleach the stain away.
10. **Ink stains:** Start by blotting as much of the ink stain as possible, then saturate the stain with **lemon juice**. Sprinkle with **salt** and rub the **salt** into the stain with your fingers or an old toothbrush. Wash the garment right away.

SALT

Famously, salt provides an inhospitable chemical environment for most bacteria, including Salmonella, E. Coli, and it serves double duty against bacteria in that it also removes water from food and cells, making it harder for bacteria to grow without moisture. Salt also is a good non-abrasive scrubber and provides many uses in the home and for the body for this reason.

1. **Cleaning greasy or baked-on food** - The greasiest iron pan will wash easily if you use a little **salt** in it and wipe with paper. Or if you are facing the awful task of scrubbing out a roasting pan, dampen the pan and sprinkle **salt** all over. The salt will lift off the baked on food.
2. **Cleaning ovens** - **Salt** and **cinnamon** take the "burned food" odor away from ovens and stove burners. Sprinkle spills while oven and burners are still hot; when dry, remove the salted spots with a stiff brush or cloth.
3. **Cleaning refrigerators** - Use **salt** and **soda water** to clean and sweeten the inside of your refrigerator. It won't scratch enamel either.
4. **Cleaning tarnished silverware** - Rub tarnish with **salt** before washing.
5. **Removing onion odors from hands** - Rub fingers with **salt** moistened with **vinegar**.
6. **Restoring sponges** - Give sponges new life by soaking them in **cold saltwater** after they are washed.
7. **Removing rings from tables** - White rings left on tables from wet or hot dishes or glasses can be removed by rubbing a **thin paste** of **salad oil** and **salt** on the spot with your fingers, letting it stand an hour or two, then wiping it off.
8. **Brightening colors** - Wash colored curtains or washable fiber rugs in a **saltwater solution** to brighten the colors. Brighten faded rugs and carpets by rubbing them briskly with a cloth that has been dipped in a strong **saltwater solution** and wrung out.
9. **Removing mildew or rust stains** - Moisten stained spots with a mixture of **lemon juice** and **salt**, then spread the item in the sun for bleaching; and finally, rinse and dry.
10. **Ditch the stain remover:** Many stain removing sticks can be toxic. Instead make a solution with **4 tbsps** of **salt** in **2 cups** of **hot water**. This is especially good on yellow perspiration stains. Simply sponge the solution onto the stain and rub until the yellow disappears. Wash as normal.

VINEGAR

The acidic liquid is a powerful cleaner, eating through lime and grime, and killing many viruses and bacteria. From cleaning calcium buildup to unclogging drains to detoxifying your home, it seems like there's nothing vinegar can't do, and it's easy on the environment and your wallet.

1. **Remove cloudy buildup:** If your stemware is cloudy from the dishwasher, wrap the glasses in **paper towels** soaked in **vinegar**, let them sit, and the cloudy deposits will rinse right off
2. **Clean soap scum, mildew, and grime from bathtub, tile, and shower curtains:** Simply wipe the surface with **white vinegar** and rinse with **water**.
3. **Clean a toilet bowl:** Pour in **1 cup** of **white vinegar**; let it stand for five minutes, and flush.
4. **Unclog a shower head:** Unscrew the shower head, remove the rubber washer, place the head in a pot filled with **equal parts vinegar** and **water**, bring to a boil, then simmer for five minutes.
5. **Windows:** Put **3 tbsp vinegar** per **1 quart water** in a spray bottle. For extra-dirty windows try this: **½ tsp liquid soap**, **3 tbsp vinegar** and **2 cups** of **water**. Shake well. The best way to get streak-free windows? Use newspaper instead of paper towels to wipe them.
6. **General dusting:** It's better to dust with a damp cloth. Try **1 tsp olive oil** per **½ cup vinegar**. Mix together in a bowl and apply with a soft cloth.
7. **Wash walls:** Wipe down your walls with a **vinegar water mixture**, which helps absorb odors and clean surfaces.
8. **Deodorize a room filled with cigarette smoke or paint fumes:** Place a small bowl of **white vinegar** in the room.
9. **Remove lint from clothes:** Add **½ cup** of **vinegar** to the rinse cycle of the washing machine. This will also help brighten fabric colors.
10. **Remove decals or bumper stickers or price tag:** Soak a cloth in **vinegar** and cover the decal or bumper sticker for several minutes until the vinegar soaks in. The decals and bumper stickers should peel off easily.

Resources:

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