

How to GREEN CLEAN

Tips on how you can use non-toxic products in the home and garden.

<i>Cleaning Need</i>	<i>Alternative to Chemical Product</i>
Absorbing bad smells	• Cut an onion in half to absorb odour.
Air freshener	• Add a few drops of your favourite essential oils to a spray water bottle.
Carpet cleaner	• <i>To deodorise:</i> sprinkle bicarbonate (bicarb.) soda on carpet before vacuuming. • <i>To remove stains:</i> wet area and sprinkle with bicarb. soda, brush up and vacuum when dry. Or 1 tablespoon of Borax to 4 litres of warm water.
Chopping board cleaner	• Rub with a cut lemon.
Cloths	• Micro-fibre cloths can be used wet or dry without or with minimal cleaning products. • <i>Tip:</i> Wash in a laundry bag to keep lint-free.
De-scale kettle / urn	• Put a few slices of lemon in kettle or equal parts vinegar and water, boil and leave overnight. For heavy scale, add some tartaric acid with the lemon.
Fridge cleaner	• Vanilla essence on a damp cloth for a clean smell. Put a saucer of bicarb. soda in fridge to absorb bad smells, use the soda for cleaning afterwards.
Oven cleaner	• Vinegar and bicarb. soda.
Pipes and drains	• Bokashi liquid. • Vinegar. • Borax.
Polishing floor boards	• Lanolin.
Stove cleaner	• Lemon.
Surface and ceramic cleaner (including basins and showers)	• Use micro-fibre cloths with water. • Use bicarb. soda on a damp cloth (<i>Tip:</i> store soda in a flour shaker to keep dry). • Put vinegar in a spray bottle either use neat or diluted with water (depending on how dirty). Smell only lasts while wet.
Tiles and laminates	• Eucalyptus oil in a bucket of water. • Micro-fibre mops.
Toilet cleaner	• Vinegar and bicarb. soda leave overnight. • Bokashi liquid. • <i>Non-septic systems:</i> Make a paste from Borax and water or lemon juice with a few drops of tea tree oil for cleaning bowls, tiles and basins. • Antibacterial essential oils such as eucalyptus, lavender and tea tree add freshness to toilet bowls.

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Windows and mirrors	- Put vinegar in a spray bottle either neat or diluted $\frac{1}{2}$ cup vinegar to 1 litre water. Use vinegar with crumpled newspaper for a good sheen. Wash window with soapy water first if especially dirty. - For bathroom mirrors: apply eucalyptus oil with a wad of newspaper to prevent fogging.
Wooden floors	Add some methylated spirits to a bucket of warm water for mopping (this mixture helps prevent fleas).
Laundry	
Fabric softener	$\frac{1}{2}$ cup vinegar in place of fabric softener; also cleans washing machine. - Borax.
Laundry powder	Mixture of pure soap, lemon juice and washing soda removes stains and softens water so you need less detergent.
Mould, smell and bacteria remover	Soak clothes overnight in a bucket with 1 cup vinegar in warm water.
Pillows, doonas, blankets	Air in sun as sun kills bacteria.
Stain Remover	Put eucalyptus oil in a spray bottle (can be used neat or with water), spray stain then wash as normal. Good for removing grease, chewing gum and stubborn stains.
Wool washes	Use eucalyptus oil in wool washes to deter silverfish and moths.
Garden and Pests	
Aphids and soft caterpillars	<i>Chilli spray recipe</i> - combine a handful of hot chillies and 1 tablespoon of liquid soap. Add 1 litre of hot water and blend. Strain through a stocking of gauze. Transfer to a spray bottle and use on serious infestations.
Cockroaches and ants	Sprinkle Borax lightly where cockroaches and ants go, they get it on their feet and take back to the nest.
Fleas	Garden lime sprinkled on garden changes the pH so fleas can't breed.
Fly trap	$\frac{1}{2}$ fill a jar with water, put in some Vegemite or a splash of beer, pierce a small hole in jar lid. Empty contents weekly onto your compost bin.
Fruit Fly	Hang sweet fruit fly traps in trees that don't have fruit to keep flies away from trees that do.
Minerals for plants	Water from boiling eggs - let it cooled first!
Scale, Citrus leaf miner and spotted (red) spider mite	<i>Oil-spray recipe</i> - Blend 500ml vegetable oil with 250 ml liquid soap and store in a jar. To use, mix 1 tablespoon with 1 litre of water and spray on leaves or affected areas.
Slater deterrent	Put an open ended milk carton or soft drink bottle or an onion ring around small seedlings to provide a physical barrier for the first few days.
Snail deterrent	- Sprinkle sawdust or coffee grounds around seedlings to stop snails getting to plants, they don't like it on their 'feet', top up after rain. - Copper tape. - Put beer in a glass jar and lay on its side to catch snails. Feed snails to chooks.
Spider web prevention	Dilute Eucalyptus oil, wipe on surfaces to prevent spiders making webs.
Water worms/compost	Water from boiling potatoes and pasta - let it cool first!
Medical	
Antiseptic for cleaning cuts	Tea tree oil.
Relaxation	Put a few drops of lavender oil on pillow for a good nights sleep.
Stings, itches and bites	Tea tree oil.



Green cleaning is a safer, lower cost and less wasteful way to clean your organisation.

Most businesses contain many more chemical cleaners than needed. These cleaners create packaging waste that is disposed of in landfill and the chemicals in the cleaning products can damage human health and the environment. Natural cleaning substitutes traditional cleaners with cleaning solutions that contain fewer or less-toxic substances.

Adopting different cleaning practices can also aid in keeping a clean organisation while minimising the need to use toxic substances, for example use of large entryway mats and damp-mopping instead of sweeping, reduces airborne bacteria, fungi and dust. The use of power headed vacuums with high-performance filters are used to minimise dust in the organisation.

To clean, naturally and safely throughout the organisation, there are many alternatives that involve using basic ingredients.

A natural cleaning kit could include –

- **White vinegar** which cuts through grease and is a deodoriser.
- **Bicarbonate of Soda** (Baking Powder) cleans, deodorises, softens water and is a good scouring powder.
- **Pure soap** is a general purpose cleaner that is completely biodegradable.
- **Lemon juice** is a whitener, a deodorant and a cleaning agent.
- **Washing soda** cuts through grease and removes stains.
- **Salt** can be used to scour cookware and polish copper pans.
- **Borax** is a naturally occurring mineral salt. It cleans, deodorises, bleaches and disinfects. Borax is also used to control pests such as ants and cockroaches.

General rules for green cleaning

- **Reduce** the use of household cleaners by buying less, using less and looking for natural, safer alternatives.
- **Be smart** when you shop, read the label to avoid buying the more toxic product and buy only what you need.
- **All purpose cleaner** - Warm water with pure soap or white vinegar is a cheap and easy general cleaner for use throughout the home.

In the living room

Carpet cleaner - Sprinkle bicarbonate of soda on the carpet before vacuuming to deodorise. It's also a great stain remover. Just vacuum or brush up when dry.

Window cleaner - Add half a cup of vinegar to a litre of warm water for an effective window cleaner. Wash the window first with warm soapy water if especially dirty. Use crumpled newspaper moistened with vinegar to get a beautiful sheen.

In the car

Battery cleaner - Clean battery terminals with a mixture of two teaspoons of bicarbonate of soda to 1 litre of water and apply generously. Vaseline smeared around the base of the terminal will prevent further build up.

Chrome polish - Use flour or bicarbonate of soda with a dry, clean cloth.

Tar remover - Moisten a cloth with eucalyptus oil and rub clean.

Car windows - A soft cloth moistened with vinegar is great for cleaning windscreens and windows.

In the bathroom

Toilet cleaner - Make a paste from borax and lemon juice for cleaning toilet bowls.

Ceramic cleaner - Clean tiles, sinks, toilets and baths with bicarbonate of soda using a damp cloth.

Glass and mirror cleaner - Use newspaper with vinegar. To prevent mirrors fogging apply eucalyptus oil with a wad of newspaper.

Tiles - Apply a borax (or bicarbonate of soda) paste then scrub. Rinse well.

Air freshener - Use fresh flowers or sprigs of rosemary, lavender or mint.

Shower heads - remove calcium build up by soaking in vinegar for 24 hrs.

In the kitchen

Surface cleaner - Use bicarbonate of soda on a damp cloth to clean bench tops, sinks, windows and your refrigerator or freezer surfaces.

Dishwashing detergent - Use pure soap to wash dishes and add white vinegar to the rinse water to give glasses an extra shine.

Oven cleaner - Avoid caustic oven cleaners. Wipe the oven down while it is still warm with a soapy cloth or a damp cloth sprinkled with bicarbonate of soda.

Odours in fridge - Place a small dish of vanilla essence on the bottom shelf or leave an open packet of bicarbonate of soda in the fridge to absorb food odours.

Drains - Boiling water can be used to flush drains and avoid build-up of residue.

In the laundry

Bleach - Use one cup of lemon juice in a half bucket of water and soak overnight, or substitute half a cup borax per wash load to whiten whites and brighten colours.

Stain remover - Rinse in cold water before stain can dry. Apply bicarbonate of soda.

Hint: Oil, grease, tar, gum, ink, grass stains and other stubborn stains can be removed by adding a few drops of eucalyptus oil before washing.

Laundry detergent - To make a cheap, environmentally friendly and safe washing detergent, mix one third of a cake of pure soap (grated) with one third of a cup washing soda. Dissolve in hot water in a bucket and top up with water. The mixture will set to a soft gel. Use 2-3 cups per wash.

Fabric softener - Vinegar acts as a fabric softener. Soak garment overnight in a solution three parts water to one part vinegar then wash as normal.

Warnings

- Ingredients such as essential oils and borax should be handled with care as if they are ingested they can be poisonous.
- It is advisable to wear gloves to prevent any skin irritation. Always test products on a small section of fabric/material prior to use.
- Keep all cleaning solutions out of reach of children and pets. Think safe when handling and storing cleaners and dispose of them legally and safely.

Disclaimers

This Fact Sheet was believed to be correct at the date of its approval.

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