



Green Home Cleaning Guide

What You Should Know About Common Household Cleaners:

- **Laundry Detergent** – Many detergents are made from petrochemicals and may contain bleaches, synthetic whiteners and artificial fragrances, all of which can cause skin irritations and breathing problems.
- **Fabric Softener** – The artificial fragrances in fabric softeners can cause skin irritation, stuffy nose, breathing problems and watery eyes.
- **Ammonia** – The fumes from ammonia are extremely irritating to lungs and eyes and can cause skin rash and burns.
- **Dishwashing Detergent** – Chlorine, used in many dishwashing detergents, can cause headaches and breathing difficulties.
- **Bleach** – Chlorine in bleach can cause severe eye conditions and is toxic as a skin irritant and by inhalation.

Manufacturers of these hazardous products are not required to list exact ingredients on the label.

What Can You Do? Create Your Own Green Cleaning Kit With Non Toxic, Ecologically Safe Products!

- Box up all commercial cleansers you have in your cupboard (make sure lids are tight) and contact Earth 911 at 1-800-CLEANUP or www.1800cleanup.org to find your local household hazardous waste disposal facility.
- Select durable tools such as cotton cloths, rather than paper towels or disposable wipes and mops.
- Select products which are biodegradable, effective, packaged in recyclable material, not tested on animals and do not contain harmful ingredients such as petrochemicals.
- Choose reputable eco friendly brands like Ecover, Biopac, Citra-Solv, Life Tree and Seventh Generation.
- Better yet – make your own cleaners from baking soda, salt, white vinegar, lemon juice and borax – read on for info on how to formulate your own products.

Purchase Products Online:

Green Home - www.greenhome.com

Real Goods - www.realgoods.com

Gaiam - www.gaiam.com

Find a Hazardous Household Waste Disposal Facility in Your Area:

Earth's 911 - www.earth911.org or call 1-800-CLEANUP

Get More Info on Choosing Safer Cleaning Products:

- *Washington Toxics Coalition* - www.watoxics.org - Excellent literature on cleaning product dangers and recommendations for safer products.
- *Worldwise* - www.worldwise.com/wiseguide.html - Contains information on choosing safer cleaning and other household products, including details on terms found on product labels
- *Chemical Finder* - www.chemfinder.com - Type in chemical name and get a wealth of information.
- *Clean and Green: The Complete Guide to Non-Toxic and Environmentally Safe Housecleaning* by Annie Berthold-Bond (Ceres Press 1990) - Focuses on do-it-yourself formulas for making cleaning solutions.

Locate an Eco Friendly Dry Cleaner in Your Area:

Green Earth Cleaning - www.greenearthcleaning.com/rosterSearch.asp

Making Your Own Green Cleaning Formulas

Commercial cleaning products are among the most hazardous products sold to consumers. The best alternative for the health of your family and the planet is to make your own non toxic cleaning products at home. This can be done easily with just 6 household ingredients, a couple spray bottles and a glass or plastic bottle for storage. Roll up your sleeves and get ready to make your own green cleaning kit!

All Purpose Cleaner

Mix together 1 quart warm water, 1 teaspoon liquid soap, 1 teaspoon borax and 1/4 cup white vinegar. Put in a spray bottle and use on counter tops, floors, walls, carpets, upholstery, etc.

Glass and Mildew Cleaner

Mix equal parts white vinegar and water in a spray bottle, spray on glass or mildew to clean (if glass, wipe clean with newspaper). An alternate version if you are sensitive to the smell of vinegar is: mix 1 quart warm water with 1/4 cup white vinegar or 2 tablespoons lemon juice.

Drain Opener

Dissolve 1 cup baking soda and 1 cup white vinegar in boiling water and pour down the drain. Continue to flush with hot tap water until the clog breaks. Flush drain with boiling water weekly to avoid buildup.

Scouring Powder (for tubs, tiles, sinks, counter tops, dishes, etc)

Sprinkle borax (good for getting stains off porcelain sinks), baking soda (good for removing baked-on food from a casserole dish) or salt (works well to clean metal barbecue grills) on a damp sponge; scour and rinse. Or rub area to be cleaned with half a lemon dipped in borax.

Linoleum and Tile Floor Cleaner

Mix 1 gallon hot or warm water with 1/2 cup vinegar.

Toilet Bowl Cleaner

Put 1/4 cup borax in toilet bowl and let set overnight, scrub the next day. Or scrub with a solution of 1/2 cup borax and 1 gallon water.

Learn More Green Cleaning Recipes and Ideas:

Clean and Green: The Complete Guide to Non-Toxic and Environmentally Safe Housecleaning by Annie Berthold-Bond (Ceres Press 1990) Focuses on do-it-yourself formulas for making cleaning solutions.

*Special thanks to Cybrena Everett and Sustainable Life for preparing this One Sheet,
www.sustainablelife.org*