

Recipes for safer cleaners

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.
- Liquid soap means castile soap, a mild soap once made from olive oil, but now may include other vegetable oils as well. Coconut oil soaps are another good alternative to petroleum-based soaps.
- Vinegar means distilled white vinegar, available by the gallon at your super-market. Note that while vinegar has a slight scent while wet, when dry, it leaves no odor.

KITCHEN

- Countertops: For a "soft scrub," mix together baking soda and liquid soap until you get a consistency you like. The amounts don't have to be perfect. Make only as much as you need, as it dries up quickly.
- Ovens: To clean extra-greasy ovens, mix together 1 cup baking soda and 1/4 cup of washing soda, then add enough water to make a paste; apply the paste to oven surfaces and let soak overnight. The next morning, lift off soda mixture and grime; rinse surfaces well.
- Microwave ovens can be cleaned with a paste of 3-4 tablespoons baking soda mixed with water. Scrub on with a sponge and rinse.
- Cutting boards: Disinfect them by spraying with vinegar and then with 3% hydrogen peroxide (available in drug stores). Keep the liquids in separate spray bottles and use them one at a time. It doesn't matter which one you use first, but both together are much more effective than either one alone.

BATHROOM

- Tub and tile cleaner: Mix 1 2/3 cup baking soda, 1/2 cup liquid soap and 1/2 cup water. Then, as the last step, add 2 tablespoons vinegar (if you add the vinegar too early it will react with the baking soda). Immediately apply, wipe, and scrub.

Resources

Household: <http://householdproducts.nlm.nih.gov/ingredients.htm>

Water: epa.gov/safewater/ccr

Children: <http://healthychild.org/>

Johnson and Johnson Baby Wash: www.thenaturalpower.com/johnson-johnson-and-wal-mart-sued-for-selling-toxic-baby-shampoo/