

7 Natural Household Cleaners Recipes

CREAMY SOFT SCRUBBER

1/2 cup baking soda
liquid detergent

Pour the baking soda into a bowl and add enough liquid detergent to give the mixture the texture of frosting. Scoop it onto a sponge to wash surfaces. This is the perfect recipe for cleaning the bathtub, because it rinses easily and doesn't leave grit.

WINDOW CLEANER

1/4 to 1/2 teaspoon liquid detergent
3 tablespoons vinegar
2 cups water

Put all the ingredients in a spray bottle, shake it, and use as you would a commercial brand. The detergent in this recipe is important—it cuts the wax residue left by products you might have used in the past.

OVEN CLEANER

1 cup or more baking soda water
squirt or two of liquid detergent

Sprinkle water generously all over the bottom of the oven, then cover the grime with enough baking soda that the surface is totally white. Sprinkle more water over the top. Let the mixture set overnight. You can easily wipe up the grease the next morning because the grime will have loosened. When you have cleaned up the worst of the mess, dab a bit of liquid detergent or soap on a sponge and wash the remaining residue from the oven. Note: If this recipe does not work, you probably didn't use enough baking soda and/or water.

ALL-PURPOSE SPRAY CLEANER

1/2 teaspoon washing soda
dab of liquid soap
2 cups hot tap water

Combine the ingredients in a spray bottle and shake until the washing soda has dissolved. Apply and wipe off with a sponge or rag.

FURNITURE POLISH

1/2 teaspoon oil, such as olive (or jojoba, a liquid wax)
1/4 cup vinegar or fresh lemon juice

Mix the ingredients in a glass jar. Dab a soft rag into the solution and wipe wood surfaces. Cover the glass jar and store indefinitely.

VINEGAR DEODORIZER

Keep clean spray bottles filled with straight 5 percent vinegar in your kitchen near your cutting board and in your bathroom, and use them for cleaning. I often apply the vinegar to my cutting board before going to bed and let it set overnight. The smell of vinegar goes away within a few hours. Straight vinegar is also great for cleaning the toilet rim. Just spray it on and wipe off.

MOLD KILLER 1:

TEA TREE TREASURE

2 teaspoons tea tree oil
2 cups water

Nothing natural works as well as this spray for mold and mildew. I've used it successfully on a moldy ceiling and shower curtain, and a musty bureau and rug. Tea tree oil is expensive, but a little goes a very long way. It also has a very strong odor, but that dissipates in a few days. Combine tea tree oil and water in a spray bottle, shake to blend, and apply to problem areas. Do not rinse. Leave in the bottle—it has a long shelf life.

MOLD KILLER 2:

CITRUS SEED EXTRACT

20 drops citrus seed extract
2 cups water

The advantage of using citrus seed extract instead of tea tree oil for killing mold is that it is odorless. Combine the citrus seed extract and water in a spray bottle, shake to blend, and apply to problem areas. Do not rinse. Leave in the bottle—it also has a long shelf life.

MOLD KILLER 3:

VINEGAR SPRAY

Straight vinegar reportedly kills 82 percent of mold. Pour some white distilled vinegar into a spray bottle and apply to moldy areas. Let set without rinsing, if you can put up with the smell, which will subside in a few hours.