



Basic Home Cleaning Tips



All-Purpose Cleaner: Add 1/2-cup a true liquid soap to 1-gallon hot water. (A true soap is made from oil and lye, not man made detergents. We use a vegetable-based liquid-soap, like Dr. Bronner's®, found at most health food stores.)

For a clean scent and to help cut grease, add 1/4 cup of lemon juice to the hot water. This solution is safe for all surfaces and is very effective for most jobs. For a stronger cleaner, double the amounts of soap and lemon juice, or add Borax to the spray bottle. Rinse with clean water.

Air Fresheners: Commercial air fresheners work by masking smells and coating the nasal passages with chemicals which diminish the sense of smell by deadening the nerves. Avoid these products. Instead, try natural air purifiers — houseplants. Alternatively, try these natural recipes to diminish odor and add a fragrant smell to your house:

- Use baking soda in your garbage can or refrigerator to help reduce odors at their source.
- Dissolve 1 teaspoon of baking soda in 2 cups of hot water; add 1 teaspoon

lemon juice. Pour the solution into a spray bottle and spray as you would an air freshener.

- Place a few slices of a citrus fruit, cloves or cinnamon in a pot with enough water to simmer gently for an hour or two.

Liquid Dish Soap: Grate a bar of true soap into a saucepan. Cover with water and simmer over low heat until it melts. Add some vinegar to the water for tough grease and to remove spots. Pour into a container and use as you would any liquid dishwashing soap.

Mirrors, Glass and Windows: Wash windows with 1 part vinegar to 4 parts water. Use washable, reusable cheesecloth or old towels to dry the window instead of paper towels. If needed, try adding a drop of liquid soap to the mixture to prevent streaking.

Carpets: To fully clean and deodorize carpets: vacuum, liberally sprinkle cornstarch or baking soda, leave one hour, vacuum again. For tougher stains, try cold soda water or repeatedly blot with vinegar and soapy water.





Laundry Room

Recipes & Hints

Detergent: Add ½ cup washing soda and ½ cup of Borax to water as the machine is filling, then clothes. This is sufficient for a large load and will clean and deodorize your laundry as well as using soap. The first time you try this the water will look like you have added soap or detergent due to the leftover residue of previous washes. If the water is hard, add ¼ -cup washing soda or ¼ cup vinegar during the first rinse. For heavily soiled items, try presoaking in warm water with ½ -cup washing soda for 30 minutes. Rub the soiled areas with liquid soap, or a solution of 2 Tbsp washing soda in 1-cup warm water.

Bleach Alternatives: Try adding ½ -cup washing soda to whiten whites and brighten colors. You can also add lemon juice to the rinse cycle and hang your clothes outside in the sun.

Softening fabrics (including wool): Add ¼ cup white vinegar to rinse water or to a dispenser ball. This does not make your clothes smell like vinegar.

Dry Cleaning: Most dry cleaning solvents are very toxic. Many of the clothes that are 'dry clean only' are washable by hand with soap and cold water. If not, then find a cleaning service that practices wet cleaning, which uses heat, steam, vacuum, water and natural soaps to clean your clothes.

Ingredients:

Washing Soda – (Sodium Bicarbonate)
Cuts grease and neutralizes odors. You can find this in the laundry section of your grocery store in a yellow box. One brand is *Arm & Hammer*, but it is *not* baking soda.

Borax – This comes in a green box and is also found in the laundry section of most grocery stores. The most popular brand is called *20 Mule Team Borax*.

Distilled White Vinegar

Quick Tips

- Do full loads of laundry, use accurate water level settings.
- Up to 90 per cent of the energy used for washing clothes goes to heating the water. A cold wash and cold rinse will work just as well as a hot water wash and a warm rinse on all clothes.
- Wash clothes that need it. Outer layers of clothing like shirts, sweaters and pants can be worn more than once without laundering.
- Hang clothing outside to dry or inside in a dry, warm room and save energy.
- When using a dryer, clean the lint trap after every load to keep the air circulating efficiently. Use the automatic setting.
- Stains— Rule #1: The sooner you treat them, the better. Rule #2: Spot test any "remedy" on your fabric first. For many stains, allowing them to dry in the sun after cleaning will do wonders.