

Natural Environmentally Friendly Cleaning

What?

Natural cleaning, also commonly known as 'green cleaning' is a simple way to clean and reduce the chemical load within your home, by choosing safer, less harmful, natural alternatives.

Why?

- Most homes contain many more chemical cleaning products than really needed.
- Natural alternatives are generally more cost effective.
- Natural cleaning products are healthier for you and your family, reducing the toxic chemical load in your home.
- Many chemical cleaning products come with excess packaging that is disposed in landfill.
- Chemicals are damaging to our health and the health of the environment.
- Reduces the negative impact our lifestyles have on the environment.

How?

Today we find many diverse cleaning products on our supermarket and store shelves. You may use many different cleaning products around the home for many different tasks. However, by choosing to 'green clean' you require only a few basic ingredients that can be used for many different applications. Used individually or combined, these cleaners are safe, effective and cost-efficient. Below is a list of basic ingredients to get you started on your natural cleaning crusade!

Ingredient

What is it used for?

BICARBONATE SODA (baking soda)	An all-purpose, non-toxic cleaner. Cleans, deodorises, removes stains and softens fabrics.
BORAX	A natural mineral, kills mould and bacteria. An alternative to bleach, it deodorises, removes stains and boosts the cleaning power of soap.
CASTILE SOAP (or vegetable oil based soaps)	Cleans everything.
CORNSTARCH	Starches clothes, absorbs oil and grease.
ESSENTIAL OILS	Provides fragrance.
EUCALYPTUS OIL	Disinfectant, deodoriser, stain remover and insect repellent.
LEMON JUICE	Cuts through grease and removes perspiration and other stains from clothing. Also used as a mild bleach.
METHYLATED SPIRITS	Solvent and disinfectant.
OLIVE OIL	Polisher, moisturiser and sealant.
SALT	An abrasive.
TOOTHPASTE	A mild abrasive.
WHITE VINEGAR	Cuts grease, removes stains and is an excellent fabric softener, leaving no odour on your laundry. Also great for cleaning glass and mirrors when diluted in water.



Tips to Help You Clean Your Home Naturally

Where to go?

You will probably find you have many of these basic ingredients in your kitchen cupboards already. All these ingredients and more can be found at your local supermarket or natural food shops.

How much will it cost?

The cost of your natural cleaning products will vary on the quantity of ingredients you buy and how often you clean your home. A tip to natural cleaning is to keep on top of it, rather than letting the dirt and mildew build up. A little elbow grease is also required. Natural alternatives are generally much less expensive than the chemical cleaning products you can buy, with the added benefits of a healthier environment for you and your family to live in. The reduced cost on your health and the environment's is much greater.

Some helpful hints.....

1. To save time and money, buy ingredients in bulk and make your cleaning products in advance. Bulk purchasing will reduce costs and amounts of excess packaging.
2. Make large batches of the recipes and store them in reusable airtight plastic containers and spray bottles.
3. Whilst many natural cleaners are non-toxic, some are still harmful if swallowed. Label all of your ingredients and keep them out of reach of children and pets. Make sure you read the safety precautions on the packaging of all products you use.

Want to know more?

LINKS

Total Environment Centre	www.tec.org.au
Office of Environment and Heritage	www.environment.nsw.gov.au/households
Care2 make a difference	www.care2.com
Safer Solutions	www.saferolutions.org.au

BOOKS

(2003) Tanya Ha	Greenology – How to live well, be green and make a difference
(2004) Angela Martin	Organic Stain Remover – The Natural Way to Clean
(2008) Shannon Lush and Jennifer Fleming	Spotless: Room-by-room Solutions to Domestic Disasters

OTHER WAYS TO FIND INFORMATION

Read books, visit your local library, search the internet, ask your friends, attend a workshop run by your local Council:
Contact Liverpool City Council on 1300 362 170

Acknowledgements: The Green Living Centre, 218 King St, Newtown 2042

