

My Favorite Zero Waste Cleaning Resources and Recipes

Things to keep in mind when making your own cleaning products:

1. Each home is different – countertops and other surfaces vary. Make sure to test products on a small, hidden area before using at large!
2. Soap and detergent are different substances. The following website can help you understand the similarities and differences: https://www.cleaninginstitute.org/clean_living/soaps_detergents.aspx
3. Make certain you know the actions of ingredients when mixed - benign products by themselves can become problematic when mixed with other things.

Some Safety Reminders:

- Do not mix Hydrogen Peroxide and vinegar. Together they become peracetic acid, which can be corrosive.
- Vodka is a wonderful alternative to vinegar when making cleaning substances. Just remember, it is highly flammable. Vodka is also a good cleaning agent, but it is not a disinfectant.
- Do not mix castile soap/baking soda/etc. (base substance) with vinegar/etc. (acid substance) – they cancel each other. Remember your chemistry days: **A base + an acid = a salt and water.**
- Some alkaline ingredients like baking soda and sodium carbonate (washing soda) might make irreparable scratches on marble or granite if used improperly – test before you use.
- Vinegar has been known to damage some natural stone surfaces – so test it first.
- Vinegar is reportedly not great for use on aluminum or cast-iron surfaces – supposedly works well for stainless steel.
- Do not premix and hydrogen peroxide with baking soda and store in a closed container – they will react and create a gas that could cause an eruption, make a mess, or spray into eyes/faces.

RECIPES

All-Purpose Cleaner with Lemon - Spray for kitchens/bathrooms

- 2 cups vodka (or vinegar) – If using vodka, the cheapest is fine
- 2 cups water
- 1 teaspoon dish detergent - not soap (I use the eco-friendly bulk dish detergent from Life Unplastic)
- 10-15 drops lemon essential oil

Mix all ingredients in a quart-sized spray bottle. Shake to combine. Spray and wipe on counters, cabinets, sinks, toilets.

Adapted from: <https://www.theprairiehomestead.com/2016/04/essential-oil-cleaning-recipes.html>

Simple Soft Scrub Cleanser

- Baking soda (I buy in bulk from Life Unplastic)
- Dish Detergent - or Castile Soap - (I use the scented eco-friendly dish detergent from Life Unplastic; you can also use scented or unscented Castile soaps if you wish)

Essential oil of your choice - (unless using an already scented soap/detergent)

Stir dish detergent into the baking soda until it is the consistency you desire. (For every 1 cup baking soda, I might add ½ cup+ of detergent.)

Stir in essential oils. Store in a covered container. **(The original recipe calls for castile soap, but I prefer detergent - it does not dry out over time)**

Adapted from: <https://www.theprairiehomestead.com/2016/04/essential-oil-cleaning-recipes.html>

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No Scrub Shower Cleaner -

½ cup white vinegar

½ cup Sal Suds (or any dishwashing detergent according to the original recipe).

Sal Suds is a detergent made by Dr. Bronner's (maker of castile soap) and can be purchased online or at Wards Supermarket. Mix in a spray bottle; spray on tub and tile, let stand a few minutes, scrub a little and rinse. Open a window or put on a fan for ventilation - the vinegar with pine scent of Sal Suds is quite strong. This scrub lives up to its "no scrub" claims. <https://brendid.com/non-toxic-no-scrub-shower-cleaner/>

Deep Clean Toilet Scrub

½ cup baking soda

1/3 cup liquid dish detergent

Approximately 10-20 drops Eucalyptus essential oil

1 cup water

Hydrogen Peroxide - The original recipe calls for mixing this into the recipe. It reacts with the baking soda and creates a gas – add separately or omit.

Mix in a squeeze-type bottle (any leftover bottle will do)

Squirt into the toilet. Scrub and let stand about 20 minutes before flushing.

Adapted from: <https://www.theprairiehomestead.com/2016/04/essential-oil-cleaning-recipes.html>

Homemade Dusting Spray

1 Tbsp natural dish soap or castile soap

15 drops lemon essential oil – or less

2 Cups water

Pour ingredients into a spray bottle and shake gently to combine. Either spray onto surface and wipe clean with a cloth or spray it directly on the cloth and then wipe down the surface.

<http://www.liverenewed.com/2012/10/31-days-to-green-clean-homemade-dusting-spray.html>

