

Pine River Library Program in a Bag: Green Cleaning 101



Why go green?

Green cleaning can mean a lot of things, but the gist of the idea is to use cleaning supplies and methods that are free from toxins, keeping both us and the environment healthy. If you want to try a DIY approach, things like baking soda, vinegar, and lemons can all be used to clean the home surfaces (see below). If you're looking to buy products that are considered green, here's a quick list of things to consider:

- No phosphates
- No chlorine
- No artificial fragrances
- No artificial colors
- Biodegradable or recyclable packaging
- Organically grown ingredients using sustainable farming practices



A few key players

- Baking Soda: deodorizes, scrubs, and cleans!
 - Removes odors: Sprinkle dry baking soda on upholstered furniture and rugs to help absorb odors. Leave for several hours or even overnight then vacuum away.
 - Removes wall marks: Sprinkle a dab of baking soda on a microfiber cloth to gently remove scuffs from wallpaper, painted walls, and woodwork.
 - Deodorize kitchen appliances: Use a solution of one cup of baking soda and two cups of water to remove stains and odors from the microwave and refrigerator.
- Distilled White Vinegar: Distilled white vinegar is one of the most valuable and easiest ingredients for cleaning and has many uses.
 - Cleaning coffee makers: Remove mineral deposits by running equal parts distilled white vinegar and water through the system.
 - Cleaning shower heads: If you can remove your shower head, soak it overnight in distilled white vinegar to remove mineral deposits that are clogging water flow. If the shower head can't be removed, fill a heavy duty plastic bag with vinegar and tape it onto the shower head to soak.
 - Sanitizing dishwashers: Place one cup of distilled white vinegar in a bowl on the top rack of your empty dishwasher and run a wash cycle to help remove stubborn grease and residue that may be running on repeat through your dishwasher.
- Lemons: so much more than food- cleans and polishes with the best of them!
 - Removing stains on cutting boards: Cut a lemon in half and use it to wipe down both plastic and wooden cutting boards. This sanitizes and removes stains. For tougher stains, sprinkle the area with a dash of salt and rub with the cut side of the lemon. Let the lemon juice sit for around 20 minutes and then rinse and dry.
 - Polishing pots, pans, and hardware: To brighten dull aluminum pans, chrome faucets, and cabinet hardware, cut a lemon in half and rub the cut side over the inside and outside of the surface. Do not rinse. Then buff with a soft cloth.

Greening Your Cleaning RECIPES



All-Purpose Cleaner

- 1 cup distilled white vinegar
- 1 cup water
- Strips of lemon zest



Combine the ingredients in a spray bottle. Store in a temperature-controlled space.

Tip: For stains and dried-up messes, sprinkle a dash of baking soda on the area first and then spritz with the cleaner. The fizzing will help loosen the stain so you can wipe it away more easily. This cleaner works great on hard surfaces like counters (except marble counters- the acid can damage the surface).

Toilet Bowl Cleaner

- 2 cups baking soda
- 1 teaspoon essential oil- optional (tea tree, lavender, and pine all have disinfecting properties)
- Distilled white vinegar

In a sealable glass container (essential oils can wear away metal and some plastics), combine the baking soda and essential oil, stirring until the oil is well-distributed. This mix will last for around 30 cleanings.

When using: add one tablespoon of the mixture to the toilet bowl, then pour in 2 cups distilled white vinegar. The solution will fizz- allow it to work until the fizzing stops (or at least 15 minutes), then scrub the bowl with a toilet brush and flush. You can also use this mix to clean sinks and drains.

Garbage Disposal/Kitchen Sink Drain Cleaner

- Baking soda
- White vinegar
- Water
- Ice
- Salt
- One whole lemon

With the drain catch removed, pour a half-cup of baking soda and one cup of white vinegar down your drain. You should hear the mixture fizz.

While the baking soda and vinegar solution is doing its job, boil several cups of water. Carefully pour the boiling water down the drain after the baking soda and vinegar solution has had a few minutes to work.

Fill your drain with ice and add up to one cup of salt over the top. While running the faucet with cold water, turn on your garbage disposal and run it until all the ice and salt are gone.

Add lemon. Finally, cut the lemon into two halves and add them, one half at a time, to the garbage disposal (with the faucet still running). If you know your garbage disposal is finicky about size, you may have to cut the lemon into smaller pieces.

Resources:

- www.thespruce.com/what-is-green-cleaning-1900463
- www.thespruce.com/diy-cleaning-solutions-4799139/

