

# Non toxic alternatives to hazardous household products

The following provides some useful recipes to replace common household cleaners with non-toxic alternatives.



## All Purpose Cleaners

### *Non-toxic Alternative*

*Adjust recipes by increasing or reducing ingredient amounts according to your needs: Vinegar, lemon juice, and ammonia cut grease and oil; baking soda deodorizes; borax disinfects; washing soda cleans, cuts grease, and increases the cleaning power of soap.*

Mix any of the recipes below and dispense from a spray bottle:

**"Fantastic Cleaner"**\* - 1 tsp. borax, 1/2 tsp. washing soda, 2 Tbls. vinegar or lemon juice, 1/4 to 1/2 tsp. vegetable-oil based liquid soap (like Murphy's or Dr. Bronner's), 2 cups very hot tap water.

**Baking Soda** - Dissolve 4 Tbls. baking soda in 1 qt. warm water, OR 2/3rd cup of baking soda, 1/4 cup vinegar, 1/4 cup ammonia, and 1 gallon warm water.

**Vinegar/Cornstarch** - 1/4 cup white vinegar, 1 Tbls. cornstarch, and 2 quarts warm water.



## Scouring Cleansers

### *Non-toxic Alternative*

*Recommended commercial product: Bon Ami is an excellent general purpose scouring powder and is available in grocery stores. Look for products that don't contain chlorine. The manufacture of chlorine produces dioxin, which causes cancer.*

**"Disinfectant Scouring Powder"**\* - 1 cup baking soda, 1/4 cup borax. Mix in a bowl, dampen sponge, and scoop up cleanser.

**Baking soda or Borax** on their own can be stored in a jar with holes punched in the lid. Sprinkle on countertops or in sinks and use as you would a regular cleanser.

**Salt** is an abrasive that can be used to clean countertops or sinks.

**Cream of Tartar** - Rub light stains with a damp cloth sprinkled with Cream of Tartar. (Cream of Tartar also removes hard water marks on pots. Add 1 Tbls. to water and simmer, then rinse and wipe clean.)



## Appliance Cleaners

### Non-toxic Alternative

*Recommended commercial products: Simple Green is excellent at dissolving grease and for use as a general purpose concentrated cleaner. Available at hardware and discount department stores.*

**"Believe It Or Not Oven Cleaner"**\* - Sprinkle water generously over bottom of oven. Cover grime with baking soda. Let sit overnight. Wipe up grease next morning with supermarket green scouring pad. Rinse well. (This works! Use Simple Green for extra grease-cutting power.)

**Ammonia Cleaner** - Preheat oven to 200, then turn oven off. After 15 minutes, place a shallow pan of full strength ammonia (or 1 cup ammonia in a bowl of warm water) in the oven overnight. Next morning, wipe and wash with soapy water or baking soda.

**Salt** - Pour on fresh grease spills. Scrub off after a few hours.



## Furniture Polish

### Non-toxic Alternative

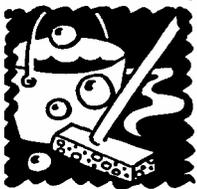
*Commercial furniture polishes may contain naphthas, petroleum-distillates, mineral spirits, and other toxic ingredients. The following substitutes work great and cost little. Always experiment on a small section first!*

**"Wood Cleaner & Polish"**\* - 1/8 cup food-grade linseed oil, 1/8 cup vinegar, 1/4 cup lemon juice. Mix in a glass jar. Rub into wood with soft cloth until clean. Add a few drops of Vitamin E, cover, save leftovers. (Vitamin E is available at drug stores.)

**Olive oil & vinegar** - Mix 3 parts olive oil to 1 part vinegar. Shake well and rub into wood with a soft cloth.

**Olive oil & lemon juice** - Mix 2 parts olive or vegetable oil to 1 part lemon juice. Shake well and rub into wood with soft cloth.

**For scratches** - rub with mixture of equal parts lemon juice and vegetable oil. For water marks, rub with plain white toothpaste until mark is gone.



## Floor Cleaners

### Non-toxic Alternative

*Remove heel marks with a baking soda and water paste, crayon marks with toothpaste, wax buildup on vinyl by soaking and scrubbing with Club Soda.*

**Vinegar and water** - Add 1/2 cup of white vinegar to 1/2 gallon of water and mop. No need to rinse.

**Baby oil** - To preserve linoleum floors, add a capful of baby oil to mop water.

**"Wood Floor Soap"**\* - 1/8 cup vegetable-oil-based liquid soap (like Murphy's), 1/4 to 1/2 cup vinegar or lemon juice, 1/2 cup fragrant herb tea, 2 gallons warm water. Combine ingredients in a pail and mix until sudsy. Wash floor as usual.

**Club Soda** - Polish floors with Club Soda to make them sparkle, or add skim milk to the rinse water.



## Misc. Non-toxic Recipes

### *Non-toxic Alternative*

*Look in your local health food store for other non-toxic cleaning supplies and household products. Even your local grocery store may be stocking non-toxic alternatives. If not, ask for them. They do exist!*

**Drain Cleaner** - Pour 1/2 cup of baking soda down the drain. Add 1/2 cup white vinegar and cover the drain. Pour a kettle of boiling water down after the fizzing stops.

**Coffee Pots** - Remove mineral buildup by boiling equal parts water and white vinegar, OR add 2 Tbls. cream of tartar to the above mixture. Simmer for 10 minutes, then wash.

**Ant Killer** - Mix boric acid powder (purchase from drug store) and apple jelly into a paste. Place small amount in a jar lid near cracks or corners where ants travel. (Boric acid is a natural product but is still toxic if ingested. Keep out of the reach of children and pets.)