

CLEANING SUPPLIES TO HELP YOUR BUDGET (AND MOSTLY “NATURAL”)

RAISING
HEALTHY
FAMILIES

TOOLS IN YOUR CLEANING ARSENAL:



Baking Soda

Use as a scouring agent. Sprinkle in your sink and on any tough spot on a counter or stove, use a damp cloth or your fingers to scrub off. The trick is just a little water, not enough to make sludge. Also works great to clean the ring around the bathtub.



Castile Soap

Use in a foaming soap dispenser about 1-2 Tbs. soap + water to fill the whole thing. Shake before putting top back on. (also in cleaners on next page)

Castile soap is a surfactant, which officially means it helps remove dirt better. However, it's only needed if you are rubbing grime or messes off of a surface. That's why I don't use much in the sanitizing spray. There's always the risk you could get too much soap and create a film.

Vinegar

- Dampen a paper towel or rag with full strength vinegar to eliminate hard water stains. Arrange the rag all around your faucet if there's buildup at the bottom, then let it sit for 10 minutes. At this point, the stains will be mostly loosened, and you can use a cloth or maybe a bit of baking soda to get the rest off. Repeat if needed.
- Use full strength in your dishwasher in place of the rinse agent.
- Dilute ½ cup vinegar to one gallon warm water for mopping, or ⅛ cup in a two-cup spray bottle to keep on hand for cleaning floors or glass. Note: Do not use on natural stone tile or hardwood.



CLEANING SUPPLIES TO HELP YOUR BUDGET (AND MOSTLY “NATURAL”)

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TOOLS IN YOUR CLEANING ARSENAL:



Hydrogen Peroxide and/or Rubbing Alcohol

These will kill some germs – not all of them, this isn't a hospital surgical room, but you'll reduce a lot (and rub off the rest ideally).



Microfiber Cloths

If you hang these to dry after washing, they'll stay absorbent and nice longer. Try to go as long as you can between washes by reusing or just rinsing in the sink.

Hot Tip: Usually microfiber cloths are least expensive in the auto detailing section.



Essential Oils (always optional)

Why try some essential oils?

- To make you feel like you're using a real cleaner. 😊
- They smell good. Lemongrass (or just lemon) is associated with “clean home” scent. Cypress may help reduce musty smells.
- Some can also kill germs, including: orange or other citrus, tea tree, thyme, eucalyptus, peppermint.

BUT this adds expense, so look for inexpensive options or freebies when buying other things or throw it out there to friends that you'll take an oil off their hands if they bought something and never use it (so common!). You do NOT need “therapeutic grade” oils or other fancy terms for cleaning.

HOMEMADE CLEANERS

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Homemade All-Purpose Sanitizer

- 50/50 hydrogen peroxide and water
- 2 drops castile soap
- 10-20 drops essential oil (optional)

To use: Spray on any surface where you want to reduce germs and let it sit for at least 5 minutes. This includes toilets or sink faucets. Use full strength hydrogen peroxide in a sprayer if someone has been sick or in the kitchen for raw meat juices on the counter or knives, cutting boards, and bowls. (I still use the 50/50 after raw meat and I see it bubbling, so I'm happy with that.)

Why cut hydrogen peroxide with water? Straight peroxide is more likely to bleach out your clothes. As long as it bubbles when it hits organic matter (that means something gross) you didn't cut it too much

Skip hydrogen peroxide on fabrics, natural stone, hardwood, electronics, painted materials, or metals that rust easily.

Homemade All-Purpose Cleaning Spray

- 2 drops Castile soap
- Optional 10-30 drops essential oils
- Water to fill the 2-cup spray bottle

To use: Use as you would any all-purpose cleaner. Spray on and wipe off with a rag or microfiber cloth. Safe for nearly every washable surface.

HOMEMADE CLEANERS

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Homemade All-Purpose Bathroom Spray

This would be an alternate to the all-purpose spray with a little bit of sanitizing power – make whatever you have available!

- 2 ounces rubbing alcohol
- 10-30 drops essential oil
- Water to fill a 2-cup spray bottle

To make: Mix the essential oils into the rubbing alcohol first, then add water. Essential oils don't stay mixed with water, so any time they are in one of your home spray bottles, you'll need to shake before spraying.

DON'T use alcohol cleaners on natural stone, hardwood, electronics, plastics, or painted surfaces.

Tip: Always label homemade cleaners so you remember what they are.

Glass Cleaner

You don't need one!

With a good microfiber cloth and just a bit of water to dampen, you can wipe mirrors and glass with the damp part and then use a dry side to shine it up perfectly. My mom used to use newspaper and very diluted vinegar water as a lint-free way to clean mirrors.



SCIENCE GEEK INFO – HOW CLEANING WORKS:

Cleaning

If you're removing dirt, grime, or germs from a surface, you need water and rubbing. Soap makes the water more effective. Cleaning always requires some sort of scrubbing action because you need to actually remove particles from the surface.



Sanitizing

Sanitizing means killing germs, and that takes time. Any sanitizing solution should always have at least a few minutes “dwell time,” which is why most antibacterial soaps don't actually do much, because we rinse them off too quickly.



Disinfecting

Disinfecting is the act of killing ALL the germs, which applies to straight hydrogen peroxide, bleach, etc. Often not needed in a personal home. Requires lengthy dwell times.

Same with antibacterial sanitizers, by the way. The germs aren't killed until it's been on your hands a minute or two. So don't rub on a squirt and go directly to preparing food or feeding your baby.

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Dilute $\frac{1}{2}$ cup vinegar to one gallon warm water for mopping, or $\frac{1}{8}$ cup in a two-cup spray bottle to keep on hand for cleaning floors or glass. Note: Do not use on natural stone tile or hardwood.



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Homemade All-Purpose Cleaning Spray

More Homemade Cleaners

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