

Natural cleaners

About this guide

Cutting back on harsh chemical cleaning products is good for the planet and for your staff and customers. Many conventional cleaning products can present a hazard to both the environment and human health. This guide offers you some ideas and recipes for gentler alternatives that will still get you great results. We challenge you to tell the difference!

Green
Tourism



Why Switch To Natural Cleaners?

Conventional cleaning products often contain environmentally damaging chemicals such as chlorides, ammonia, and phosphates. These chemicals are known to be hazardous to human health, causing irritation and toxicity in some cases. When washed away during cleaning processes they are then introduced into our water systems, damaging the health of our freshwater ecosystems and reducing the quality of our water supply. Here are some of the benefits of switching to natural cleaners:

Reduce your environmental impact:

Homemade cleaners include natural ingredients that don't persist in the environment. This protects the quality of our water systems and doesn't damage aquatic life.

A safer choice for staff and customers:

Natural ingredients are gentler on the skin and less likely to irritate.

Lower costs:

All the ingredients in homemade cleaners are easily available and affordable. In the long term, switching to homemade cleaners can prove to be the cheapest option.

Great results:

Switching to natural cleaners doesn't mean you have to lower your standards. Quite the opposite. They'll give you all the cleaning and disinfectant qualities necessary for your business, just in a more sustainable way.



Get great results using natural alternatives

When you understand a little more about the chemistry of natural ingredients it becomes clear why they do such a good job. Here are some of the top ingredients in natural cleaners.

Lemon juice

Lemon and lime juice is high in citric acid, a mild natural acid that cuts through grease and grime leaving a wonderful fresh smell.

Vinegar

This natural acid is cheap, safe and has many uses. To make your homemade cleaners, white vinegar is the best and cheapest option. However, alternatives such as apple cider vinegar will also work.

Baking soda

This naturally occurring compound has excellent cleaning abilities yet is gentle. Being mildly alkaline, it reacts with acids to produce salt, carbon dioxide and water. It can be used to remove grease, oils and fats.

Essential oils

A few drops of essential oil, such as lavender, tea tree and eucalyptus, add a natural fragrance with germ-busting properties to your homemade cleaners.

Olive oil

Olive oil is an excellent substance for adding shine and gloss to surfaces such as wood and metal.

Glycerine soap

Glycerine soap is a biodegradable environmentally friendly alternative to harsh chemical soaps. It provides the cleaning agent to make laundry fresh while not compromising water quality.

Recipes for natural cleaners

All-purpose cleaner

The perfect multi-surface cleaner for high-touch areas. This mixture will cut through grease, effectively disinfect surfaces and leave a clean fresh scent.

Ingredients:

- 60ml vinegar
- 30g baking soda
- 1l of water
- 20 drops lavender essential oils (optional for scent)

Method:

Mix all ingredients in a large pot/ bucket. Decant equally into two 750ml spray bottles. Store and keep. This method can be easily multiplied or decreased by maintaining the ratios.

Wood cleaner

Great for returning the shine to wooden tables, cabinets and picture frames.

Ingredients:

- 60ml vinegar
- 30ml olive oil
- 1 tbsp lemon juice
- 5-7 drops lavender essential oils (optional for scent)

Method:

Mix all ingredients into a glass spray bottle. Shake well before each use. Spray on wood and rub with microfibre or other soft cloth.

Glass cleaner

This mixture will make your glasses and mirrors sparkle with a simple two-ingredient recipe.

Ingredients:

- 60ml vinegar
- 500ml warm Water

Method:

Combine ingredients into a spray bottle and use to clean glass or mirror with a dry cloth.

Laundry detergent

A natural-based detergent that leaves your laundry clean and fresh.

Ingredients:

- 1kg baking soda
- 500g glycerine soap flakes
- 3 tbsp lavender essential oil (optional for scent)

Method:

Combine and stir together until well mixed. Use 16g per load of laundry.

Sink polish

Ideal for stainless steel surfaces and sinks to leave them sparkling.

Ingredients:

- Baking soda
- Whole lemon

Method:

Rinse the sink and leave it wet. Pour over the top a fine layer of baking soda which will stick to the wet sink and form a paste. Use the paste to scrub the sink with a moist sponge in the direction of the grain of the steel. Leave the paste on and use a lemon half to scrub the sink again (here you are using a lemon half where you would have used a sponge). Wash off the paste to reveal a glistening sink.

Top tips for getting started

Communicate your commitment:

Share your efforts so customers know you're committed to becoming a more environmentally friendly business.

Educate staff:

Evidence shows that education on sustainability provides long-term results as people feel motivated to make environmentally conscious choices. Communicate the reason for your switch to natural cleaners so your staff understand the importance.

Essential oils & plastic:

If you choose to use essential oils in your cleaners, the solution must not be kept in plastic containers. Instead, opt for glass or steel.

Consider storage:

Making up a large batch is often the easiest way to go. Have a plan for how you will seal, label and store your new natural cleansers.

Continue researching:

This is not an exhaustive list, keep an eye out for other recipes and applications for homemade cleaners.

