

## Other useful resources to help you make greener choices:

Household Products Database – Health and Safety Information on Household Products  
<http://householdproducts.nlm.nih.gov/>

Green Seal  
[www.greenseal.org](http://www.greenseal.org)

National Center for Healthy Housing  
[www.nchh.org](http://www.nchh.org)

Consumer Reports  
[www.greenerchoices.org](http://www.greenerchoices.org)

American Association of Poison Control Centers  
[www.aapcc.org](http://www.aapcc.org)  
Poison Control Center number: 1-800-222-1222

Recipes and information adapted from the book *Green Cleaning for Dummies*  
by Elizabeth B. Goldsmith, PhD. (ISBN: 978-0-470-39106-8)

### NOTE: Homemade Pesticides

We do not advise making homemade pesticides or other pest control products.  
For more information about less-toxic pest control, please contact us:



Pennsylvania IPM Program at Penn State  
501 ASI Building

University Park, PA 16802

Phone: 814-865-1896 • Email: [paipm@psu.edu](mailto:paipm@psu.edu)  
<http://www.paipm.org>

Pennsylvania IPM Program in Philadelphia  
Philadelphia School and Community IPM Partnership  
Penn State Philadelphia Outreach Center  
111 N. 49th St., Ste. KN3-100, 3rd Fl. North  
Philadelphia, PA 19139

Phone: 215-471-2200 Ext. 109 • Email: [pscopic@psu.edu](mailto:pscopic@psu.edu)  
<http://www.pscopic.org>

#### The PA IPM Program:

*A safe, effective, economical and environmentally-friendly approach to managing pests. Empowering individuals and communities to safely manage pests through education and training. Providing education and training for: Healthy Homes, Healthy Schools, Healthy Communities, and Healthy People.*

# Greener Cleaner Recipes

**“Many conventional cleaning practices add to environmental damage by using energy, wasting resources, and polluting the Earth.”**

- Elizabeth Goldsmith, PhD

The Pennsylvania Integrated Pest Management Program  
Philadelphia School & Community IPM Partnership



Every day decisions impact our health and the environment. Making cleaners at home can be safer, more economical, and just as effective as store bought brands. Before you start, take the following into consideration:

### Precautions to take when making, using and storing homemade cleaners:

- Keep all cleaning solutions up high, in a locked cabinet and out of reach of children.
- Clearly label containers used for storing cleaners.
- Don't store cleaners in reused food/beverage containers.
- Make only enough for immediate use if recipe includes perishable items such as lemon juice.



**Neutralizing with acids or alkalines:** These cleaning agents work as a function of the pH level (7 = neutral; 6 or less = acid on the pH scale; 8 or higher = alkaline on the pH scale). For example, if you spill something that is acidic such as tomato sauce, the best cleaner is one that neutralizes the acid - an alkaline agent such as salt or baking soda. It is handy to know which agents are acids and which are alkalines.

#### Acids:

- Lemon Juice
- Hydrogen Peroxide
- White Distilled Vinegar

#### Alkalines:

- Baking Soda
- Borax
- Cornstarch
- Cream of Tartar
- Salt

## Recipes:

### Window, Glass and Mirror Cleaner

**Yield:** 4-1/2 to 5 cups

1/2 to 1 cup white vinegar  
4 cups cool water

Mix all ingredients in a spray bottle. Label the bottle. Spritz solution on surface and rub with newspaper or white paper towel until dry.

### Air Freshener

**Yield:** 2 cups

1 teaspoon baking soda  
1 teaspoon vinegar or lemon juice  
2 cups water

Mix all ingredients in a spray bottle with a fine mister. Label the bottle. Mist the air gently, particularly near the source of odors.

### All-Purpose Cleaner

**Yield:** 4 cups

4 tablespoons baking soda  
4 cups water

Mix all ingredients together in cleaning pail or spray bottle. Label the bottle. Spray surfaces and wipe with soft cloth or sponge.

#### Variations:

- Mix 1/4 to 1/2 cup white vinegar and 4 cups water in spray bottle. Spray on surface, wait 30 seconds, and wipe away.
- Mix 2 tablespoons liquid castile soap, 1/4 cup baking soda, 1/4 cup vinegar and enough water to fill a spray bottle. Spray on cloth, mop, or directly on surface.



### Toilet Bowl Cleaner

1/4 to 1/2 cup of white vinegar (undiluted)  
Baking Soda

Sprinkle sides of toilet bowl with baking soda and allow to stand for a few minutes. Pour in vinegar and let stand for 15 minutes (the combination will fizz and bubble.) Scrub with toilet brush and flush.



### Carpet Spot Remover

**Yield:** 1 cup

1/4 teaspoon of clear, plant-based dishwashing liquid  
1 cup warm water

Mix all ingredients together in spray bottle. Label the bottle. Spritz the mixture on the spill. Blot to dry.

#### Variation:

- For strong-staining spills, mix 1 cup vinegar and 1 cup warm water. Dab mixture on stain and blot dry.

#### Tip:

Never use laundry detergent because some contain bleach and may alter the color of the carpet. Avoid dishwashing liquid with antimicrobial and antibacterial ingredients.