

Natural Cleaning Solutions For Your Home

Cleaning is crucial in any home, but regular cleaners take their toll on the environment. Instead, wouldn't it be nice if there was a cheap, effective way to do housework without using harmful chemicals? Fortunately, there is! And most of the items you will need are already in your home.

Lemon Deodorizers

When it comes to natural cleaners, the humble lemon is your best friend. Why use expensive lemon scented fragrances when a real lemon does just as good a job? Simply take a lemon, cut it in half and leave one half with the cut side exposed (preferably in a dish). Not only will this hide odors, you'll get a fresh lemon scent wherever you place it.

Vinegar Spray

Vinegar is highly acidic, which makes it useful for cleaning dirt on a variety of surfaces. More specifically, it's great for cleaning windows and polishing metal. If you have a spray bottle, you can create a mixture that's 3 or 4 parts water and 1 part vinegar. Then, simply use the spray as you normally would – you'll quickly find it's no trouble at all to remove various tough stains around the home.

Peace Lillies

A plant is just a plant right? Wrong – plants having many uses in the home, often acting as natural filters. Not only will you help oxidize the room, plants can absorb some of the harmful agents in the air, making them a great companion to lemon deodorizers. Better yet, try using a peace lily where

possible. Peace lilies are great at preventing mold, and it's always better to prevent a difficult task where possible!

Boiled Potato Water

The next time you boil potatoes, don't throw out the leftover water. This water has a combination of a high temperature and the starchy extracts left from the potatoes. As a result, it's perfect for cleaning silver, whether it's cutlery or ornaments. Just make sure to use it when it's hot. (It can always be reheated, of course.)

Nut Shells

As a more unusual solution, Indian nut shells are great for washing a variety of things. It's no surprise then, that they're often called soap nuts in some parts of the world. Crush around 2oz of shells in a 3-5 cups of water. Bring the water to the boiling point to create a simple soap. This can be used to wash glasses, dishes, counters, and the car! You can even use this soap in the dishwasher, or just add a few of the shells in as they are. You can also put the shells in a bag and throw it in with the laundry.

Baking Soda

If you bake, chances are you have a spare bag or box of baking soda. If you're not planning a cake anytime soon, it makes a great all-purpose cleaner, similar to vinegar. Mix 4 spoons of soda into one warm cup of water for an effective agent, perfect for surfaces and kitchen appliances. As with any cleaning chemical, use it with a cloth or wipe and you'll have no trouble at all. It also works well as a scrubbing agent. Shake it on a surface and use a wet rag to scrub.

Ground Coffee

If you are a coffee drinker, you have the makings of a good dish scrubber. Using an elastic band or string, use your cleaning cloth to make a 'bag' full of coffee beans. The rough texture, combined with warm water and the natural ingredients inside coffee make for an effective scrubbing assistant – perfect for tough dishes!

As an added bonus, you can sprinkle used coffee grounds outside, around the perimeter of your house to repel ants and other insects and you can put coffee beans in plant pots and other areas where pests might gather.

Natural Oils

Various types of natural oils have additional cleaning applications. For example, peppermint, tea-tree, lavender, and even eucalyptus oils all make effective bacteria killers. This makes them ideal for use in the kitchen. Due to their potency, you need only add a few drops of such an oil to a 50/50 mixture of water and white vinegar. On a similar note, the various plant-based oils used in cooking – such as sunflower or olive oils – are great at removing gritty dirt. Add a few teaspoons of salt to these vegetable oils to great a basic paste. Then, simply rinse with hot water and scrub away!

Salt

Salt is, of course, a natural product, and it's course nature makes it great for scrubbing or scouring. This is best used for dishes, as the rough nature of salt helps to break away dirt, yet it won't scratch precious glassware. It also works well on stubborn surfaces, such as wooden counters and the dreaded oven. So don't be afraid to add a little salt when dealing with difficult stains.

Lemon Scrub

Finally, there's one more use for lemons! Aside from being a good spray and deodorizer, you can also use it as a simple scrub. Squeeze and rub a lemon onto your cleaning cloth and then use it as you normally would. This acts just like a cleaning agent – thanks to the acidic, citric nature of the fruit – and doesn't harm the environment.

Conclusion

As you can see there are more than a few ways to keep your house sparkling clean without harming Mother Nature or your family's health. The next time you're ready to reach for a cleaning product, take a look in your shelves first. You might just be pleasantly surprised.

Recommended Reading:

- *Fight Cavities and Gingivitis Naturally With Homemade DIY Oral Health*
- *Total Nutrition – Make your own Homemade Multivitamin and Mineral Formula*
- *Homemade Vitamin C*
- *5 Easy Home Improvements To Make Your Home Green And Healthy*

Sources:

- *Plants That Absorb Mold & Mildew – Garden Guides*
- *Houseplants and Their Benefits- Hub Pages*
- *66 All-Natural Cleaning Solutions- Real Simple*
- *9 Cleaners You Can Make Yourself – Good Housekeeping*