



Give Your Home A Detox

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Artificial Fragrances



Do you ever wonder what gives your cleaning products their fresh, clean scents?

Most household cleaners and fragrances are based on petro-chemicals.

Manufactured synthetic chemicals can be highly toxic to humans and the environment and many have not been tested thoroughly.

There is increasing evidence worldwide which links chemicals in our air, water, soils and food to many health problems including infertility.

We have collated recipes for non-toxic cleaning products, and what to look out for in commercial products.



Endocrine Disruptors



Many fragrances are endocrine disruptors as the chemicals in them can interfere with the function of our own hormones because they are structurally similar. These chemicals can affect fertility and have been linked to developmental disorders in unborn babies.

Phthalates

Phthalates are typically found in personal care and household items as plasticisers. They are also one of the fragrance ingredients used as carriers to help make the scent linger, and can be found in nail polish, hairsprays, aftershave lotions, soaps, shampoos, perfumes, and other fragrance preparations. Because these chemicals are not tightly bound to the other molecules in the plastic, they often “migrate,” moving from the plastic and finding their way into our bodies.

Some notable phthalates include dibutyl phthalate (DBP), used in nail polish to reduce cracking; di-2-ethylhexylphthalate (DEHP), used in eyelash glue, and diethyl phthalate (DEP), used as a solvent and fixative in fragrance.

Beware of “unscented” products that often have artificial fragrances added to cover up other chemical smells

Triclosan

Antibacterial products including hand sanitisers and surface sprays usually contain triclosan which has harmful effects for humans and the environment. Long term use of this chemical has been associated with the development of antibiotic resistant bacteria and it also behaves as a human hormone disruptor.

VOCs



Cleaning products often contain Volatile Organic Compounds (VOCs), which are a large group of carbon-based chemicals found in products commonly used in homes, schools and offices.

These liquids or solids can release harmful airborne gases, which, along with their residue, can last for hours or even days after the product has been used.

Cleaning products which contain VOCs and other toxic substances include:

- Dishwashing and laundry detergents
- Aerosol cleaning sprays and air-fresheners
- Toilet bowl cleaners, chlorine bleach
- Rug and upholstery cleaners
- Dry cleaning fluids
- Furniture and floor polish

How chemicals from cleaning products affect our health

VOC's enter the body through inhalation and skin contact and have more impact on the health of asthmatics, the elderly, young children and those with pre-existing medical conditions. Some adverse health effects from VOCs include:

- Eye, nose, and throat irritation
- Allergic reactions and dermatitis through skin contact
- Shortness of breath, chest tightness, worsening of asthma and increased risk of chronic lung disease
- Headaches, nausea, dizziness, fatigue, loss of concentration, memory impairment, long term loss of coordination

Helping Reduce Chemical Pollution

We can all do our bit to reduce the impact of our choices:

- Make your own safe cleaning products which can also save money (*see our recipes on pages 7-10*)
- Purchase refillable containers such as glass spray bottles or jars
- Use the least amount of cleaners that will do the job and reduce the amount of chemicals that enter our waterways
- Buy phosphate-free detergents and products labelled “fragrance-free” not “unscented”
- Use reputable, locally sourced products with biodegradable, naturally derived, and non-toxic ingredients and be aware that there is little or no regulation of the terms ‘eco-friendly’, ‘natural’ or ‘green’
- Have child and pet-friendly indoor plants because they are natural air detoxifiers and reduce carbon dioxide and VOCs
- Remove shoes when you enter the house to reduce toxins from outdoors

Recipes For Non-Toxic Household Cleaners



All Purpose Spray Cleaner

(Not for use on stone, aluminium, cast iron, wood or waxed surfaces.)

Ingredients:

- 1 cup white vinegar
- Your choice of aromatics e.g. Pine-needles, lemon rind, lavender or rosemary

Method:

- Fill a jar with the white vinegar and add your choice aromatics
- Store for at least 2 weeks in cool dry spot
- Strain the vinegar mixture and add an equal amount of water to vinegar mixture
- You can add your favourite essential oils at this stage if you'd like it more scented
- Pour into a spray bottle, preferably glass
- Gently shake to mix ingredients prior to spraying surfaces

Note: Supermarket vinegar (5% acetic acid) reduces most surface bacteria and should be enough for most regular home cleaning



All Purpose Scrub

For sinks, stoves, pots and pans, bathrooms etc.

Ingredients:

- 1 cup bicarb of soda
- 1/3 cup Dr Bronner's castile soap
- A few drops of essential oil

Method:

- Mix bicarb, soap and essential oils into a paste-like consistency, and scrape into a wide mouth screw top jar or other airtight container making sure to leave a couple of centimetres to allow for expansion
- Store in a cool dark place and use within 6 months

Mirror & Glass Cleaner

Ingredients:

- 1/4 cup white vinegar
- 1/4 cup isopropyl (rubbing) alcohol
- 1 tbsp cornflour
- 2 cups water
- Essential oils (optional)

Method:

- Combine ingredients in a spray bottle
- Shake to mix well before each use, to reduce streaking

Toilet Cleaner

Ingredients:

- 1 cup bicarb of soda
- 1/4 cup citric acid
- Essential oils (optional)

Method:

Mix oil and baking soda first, then add citric acid (citric acid fizzes as it cleans).

Note: If storing in a humid place, make a little cheesecloth or stocking sack with rice inside and put in the jar with the powder to absorb moisture.





Recipes For Dishwashing

Easy Dishwashing Liquid

Method:

Mix 3 parts of water to 1 part [Dr. Bronner's Sal Suds](#) and add your favourite essential oils.

Note: Add water first then sal suds otherwise it will bubble everywhere!



Dishwashing Powder

Method:

Mix together:

- 1 cup washing soda
- 1 cup bicarb of soda
- 1/2 cup of salt
- 1/4 cup of citric acid
- Essential oils, optional

You will only need one tablespoon of this powder for a normal wash or two tablespoons for baked on dirt.

Note: Vinegar can be used as a rinse-aid

Tips For Making Cleaning Products



- When mixing and using washing soda, it is advisable to wear gloves
- When mixing citric acid, take care as it can catch your breath
- Label cleaning products clearly and keep them out of the reach of children and pets
- Test a small amount on an inconspicuous area, especially when using acidic ingredients such as lemon or vinegar

If you don't have time to make your own products, then there are some good non-toxic and very effective bio friendly products available. We like:

Dirt laundry liquid- An environmentally friendly laundry concentrate using a pump glass bottle, with refillable (and returnable) packaging, Dirt uses earth and ocean friendly ingredients and essential oils for fragrance.

Thieves Household cleaners- Using plant-based vegan formulas with essential oils, Thieves cleans without harsh or dangerous chemicals.

Enjo - With special fibre cloths, water acts as a solvent to loosen, dissolve and weaken dirt particles, giving chemical-free cleaning.



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