



TOPIC OF THE MONTH

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True Green Cleaning

Essential oils for cleaning too!

EWG.org the Environmental Working Group explains that commercial cleaning products can cause numerous health problems including asthma, allergies, birth defects, cancer, and chemical burns. You want to avoid these poisonous products from “scented” cleaners to air freshers to dryer sheets!

A clean environment not a sterile environment is what we want. Sterile environments don't teach our immune systems how fight off germs and bad bacteria. The bacteria in our soil and around our house “vaccinate” us from many illnesses just from being exposed to small amounts of them. Instead of vaccinating with aluminum (among other adjuvants) and fetus cells . . . how about a vaccination with dirt? And many household chemical cleaners not only kill the bad bacteria, but also the good. This is like cleaning with anti-biotics — disrupting the balance of immunity and digestion. Don't kill the good guys . . . and avoid the chemicals. It's easier than you think.

You really don't need clorox, oregano oil works better! Essential oils effectively kill MRSA, e. coli, salmonella, the flu virus, staph, listeria, and pneumonia. They effectively kill bacteria, viruses, and fungi without promoting resistance like anti-biotics do.

Essential oils are relatively easy to obtain, have low toxicity, and degrade quickly in water and soil making them environmentally friendly :)

Some of the best antimicrobials, antibacterials, antiseptic, degreasers, and mold and mildew killers are:

- ॐ Cedar wood oil
- ॐ Cinnamon
- ॐ Clove
- ॐ Eucalyptus
- ॐ Grapefruit
- ॐ Juniper Berry
- ॐ Lavender
- ॐ Lemon
- ॐ Lemongrass
- ॐ Lime
- ॐ Peppermint
- ॐ Pine
- ॐ Rosemary
- ॐ Sweet orange
- ॐ Tea tree (aka Melaleuca)

You can use any of these oils in place of some of my recommended oils. Here is the entire inventory of how I clean my home and studio:



A word on Elbow Grease

As it turns out it is not what we spray on surfaces to clean that does the cleaning it is our effort of wiping . . . think wax on, wax off . . . The most effective mix for removing bad bacteria is a double wipe down method explained below. It is the effect of spraying once and wiping down, then a second time and wiping down each area you are disinfecting.

Disinfectant Sprays (for cleaning the outside of toilets or anything you want to disinfect): Peroxide and vinegar deliver a 1-2 punch that beats bleach without killing us. Interestingly, mixing the two together was not as effective, so first spray peroxide and wipe off, then vinegar with essential oils and wipe off:

- ☪ Dark spray bottle with peroxide only.
- ☪ Spray bottle, filled with white vinegar and 5-6 drops tea tree oil and 2-3 drops clove oil.

For Spray bottles, I like to re-use pellegrino, perrier, or glass vinegar bottles. Their screw caps match up to the screw caps on most sprayers that come from plastic bottles. For storage, I pull the sprayer out and put the lid on. Some essential oils can break down plastic (lemon is one of them) so you do not want your pre-made cleaning products that have lemon in them in contact with plastic for storage. To put the sprayer in the bottle just for use should not be long enough for the lemon to start to break down the plastic.

Toilet Bowl cleaner - dump about a 1/2 cup baking soda into toilet bowl, add a pour of white vinegar, 6 drops lemon essential oil + 2 drops tea tree, scrub with brush.

For tub and other areas that need a scrub:

A little pour of vinegar at the back of the tub so it lightly coats the tub, then sprinkle with baking soda, then give a squirt or two of a plain castille soap (<https://www.mountainroseherbs.com/products/castille-soap-liquid/profile>), and finally drop a couple drops of rosemary or juniper berry, lemon, and clove around your tub. Now the elbow grease ;) Scrub scrub scrub . . . I have a little scrubby washcloth I get at my favorite health food store (in Maui) — anything with a scrubby texture or scrub brush will suffice.

For Mold and Mildew - 1 cup white vinegar + 5 drops clove oil + 10 drops lemon for whitening. Place in a squirt bottle. Clove and vinegar are both excellent mold killers. I spray it on and do a gently scrub when I clean, and once or twice per week after a shower I just spray it around the areas that seem to attract mildew and let it sit. Slowly week after week I have noticed the mildew receding.

Disinfectant Spray - I use this to clean up little messes here and there or doggie mis-haps.

Citrus Splash all Purpose spray cleaner:

- ☪ 3/4 cup filtered or distilled water
- ☪ 2/3 cup high-proof vodka
- ☪ 1/2 cup white vinegar
- ☪ 30-40 drops citrus essential oil (sweet orange, lemon, lemongrass, etc.).
- ☪ 30-40 drops tea tree essential oil



Floor cleaner:

- ॐ 1 gallon warm water in a bucket
- ॐ Pour in 1-2 cups white vinegar
- ॐ Add a few drops pine essential oil

Glass cleaner:

- ॐ 2/3 cup rubbing alcohol
- ॐ 1 cup white vinegar.

Put in a spray bottle (I like to reuse my rosewater spray bottles as they just keep smelling like roses :). I like to use old bandanas for windows and mirrors instead of rags. Bandanas leave less fuzzies. Also there are some new wooden fabric type cloths that clean well.

Some have recommended newspaper . . . but I don't get newspapers and the circulars are mostly colored ink these days — I can't feed colored ink newspapers to my worms therefore I would think it would not be good for me to be handling it soaked with rubbing alcohol and vinegar . . .

Dusting spray for wood furniture - This makes your wood furniture beautiful:

- ॐ 2/3 cup olive oil
- ॐ 1/4 cup white vinegar
- ॐ 30-40 drops rosemary, lemon or orange.

Put in a spray bottle, shake before using.

For electronics, screens, keyboards; I buy cheap rot gut vodka and put that in a spray bottle. Just spray and wipe down. Vodka is higher proof (more alcohol) than most rubbing alcohols and less likely to leave behind moisture in your electronics.

A lemon or oil soaked cloth gets rid of tarnish on silver ware.

In my Rainbow vacuum I put a few drops of lemon, or the legends, aka thieves, aka on guard blend; Eucalyptus, rosemary, clove, cinnamon, and lemon. Makes the house smell good and kills 99.9% of all bacteria :)

Grocery list for cleaning products:

Gallon of vinegar
Big box of baking soda
Essential oils; clove, a citrus, rosemary, tea tree, pine
Hydrogen Peroxide
Rubbing Alcohol
Cheap high proof vodka
2/3 cup olive oil
Castille Soap

And a reminder: **Fragrance is one of the most toxic air pollutants in your house.**

Fragrance does not need to be identified on an ingredients list other than to say "fragrance" which is most often a toxic chemical cocktail of several harmful chemicals. You want to avoid



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bringing anything with fragrance into your house. **One of the biggest users of fragrance are dryer sheets and fabric softener. Read on for some solutions. And diffuse oils instead of spraying toxic chemicals into your indoor air!**

A side note on Laundry — Your clothes may contribute to your chemical sensitivity.

Dryer sheets are one of the worst offenders.

Warning! Using fabric softeners and dryer sheets may be dangerous to your health! Fabric softeners leave a residue on your clothes that does not wash off.

Manufacturers are not required to disclose their ingredients. They develop their fragrances by mixing chemical cocktails to produce a scent without any regulation for consequences of exposures. They only have to identify fragrance on the label. Nothing else. **Any label that reads fragrance do not buy or use.**

Researchers have looked at the chemicals released by dryer sheets and fabric softeners in 2011. They found over 25 different air pollutants — include known cancer causing agents such as benzene and acetaldehyde.

How to Get Rid of Static Cling

- ॐ Use cotton instead of polyester! Nylon and Rayon are the two most static-y materials.
- ॐ Get a clothesline :) or use wooden drying racks
- ॐ Wool balls
- ॐ Remove your clothes from the dryer before they are completely dry. Moisture helps reduce static cling.

Here are some homemade recipes for Fabric softeners and dryer sheets from Marcela.com

Homemade fabric softener

Combine 6 cups of white vinegar, 1 cup of baking soda and 15 to 20 drops of essential oil in the scent of your choice in a large bowl.

Once the combination has stopped foaming the oil should not be floating on the top of the liquid and won't stain your clothes. Pour the liquid into a glass container and use up to 1 cup in your fabric softener dispenser in your washing machine with each load.

Homemade fabric softener crystals

You can also make your own fabric softener crystals at home by combining essential oils of your choice with Epsom salts in a glass jar. Once you've made the crystals, combine them with 1 cup of baking soda and 6 cups of white vinegar in a glass jar. Add the vinegar slowly. This liquid will separate, so shake each time before pouring out half a cup for your laundry.

Homemade dryer sheets

If you prefer dryer sheets, or want to use both, you can use the same fluid to make reusable sheets. Simply soak clean washrags in the fluid and wring out the excess. Next hang the washrags until they are completely dry. Toss one in the dryer with your clothes; use up to 10 times before you have to get a new one.

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