

Introduction

Grandma strived to live as simply as possible, use it up, make do or do without. She never bought into media hype about needing a “special” cleaner for each household task and always stayed clear of products she felt would cause harm to the environment. You could say she was ahead of her time yet found effective, safe solutions to all her cleaning needs. Here you will find simple, affordable, and ecological solutions direct from grandma.

If you have MCS or are just looking to find simple, safe and effective, non-toxic cleaning ideas you’ve come to the right place. Not only will your home become less toxic but you’ll save money too! With simple ingredients, grandma made up her own homemade, affordable, MCS-safe cleaners for pennies.

“The results of toxic overload from use of household chemicals include: birth defects, infertility and miscarriage, cancer (in adults and children), asthma, CNS (Central Nervous System) disorders” (Doerksen, 2001).

Scour Powders

Baking Soda or Washing Soda or Borax

- Use one of the above as you would any scour powder for sinks, pots, and pans.
- For tough pots and pans use fine grade steel wool pads.

Cutting Board Disinfectant

Hydrogen Peroxide 3%

- Pour on cutting board after washing.

References

Bond, A. (1999). Five Easy, Smart Ways of Use Borax in the Home – How – To. *Care2 Healthy Living Channels*. Retrieved on June 13, 2006 from: <http://www.care2.com/channels/solutions/home/1494>

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Gibson, P. (2005). Understanding & Accommodating People with Multiple Chemical Sensitivity in Everyday Living. *Independent Living Research Utilization*.

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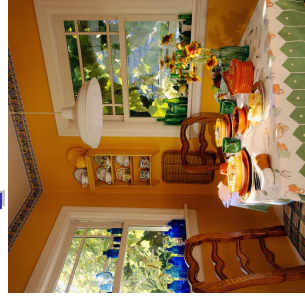
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Grandma’s Cupboard



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Chemicals in Household Products

There are many hidden and dangerous chemicals in common household products that we unknowingly expose our families too each day in our own homes. A few mentioned by Doerksen (1999) include:

“Petroleum Distillates (in lubricants and metal polishes): short-term exposure can cause temporary eye clouding, longer exposure can damage the nervous system, skin, kidneys and eyes.

Ammonia (in glass cleaner): eye irritant, can cause headaches and lung irritation.

Phenol and cresol (in disinfectants): corrosive, can cause diarrhea, fainting, dizziness, and kidney and liver damage.

Perchloroethylene (in spot removers, dry cleaning and carpet cleaners): can cause liver and kidney damage if ingested, is an animal carcinogen and suspected human carcinogen.

Naphthalene or paradichlorobenzene (in mothballs): naphthalene is a suspected human carcinogen that may damage eyes, blood liver, kidneys, skin, and the central nervous system.”

The good news is there are alternatives

Floors

Borax

- 1 Cup Borax to a bucket of hot water.
- Mop as usual. Rinse

Dish Soap

Baking Soda

- Moisten a sponge and dip in baking soda to wash dishes.
- Use a paper towel to wipe grease first.
- Rinse well.

Homemade Dish Soap

- Natural, Unscented Bar Soap
- Water
- Heat mixture and use as you would dish soap.

Automatic Dishwasher Soap

Homemade Dishwasher Soap

- 1/2 cup liquid castile soap
 - 1/2 cup water
 - 1/4 cup white distilled vinegar
 - Baking soda
 - Mix together all ingredients except the Baking soda.
 - Use 1 Tbsp. in each dispenser. Sprinkle a handful of baking soda over dirty dishes and in the bottom of your dishwasher to absorb odors and boost cleaning power at the start
- ### Baking Soda or Borax & Vinegar
- Fill each dispenser with 1/8th cup baking soda or 2 tsp of borax (not both).
 - Pour a capful of white distilled vinegar into the bottom of the dishwasher at the rinse cycle. Lemon juice may be substituted.
 - Warning: Do not use this mixture for fine silver.

Counters, Cabinets & Appliances

All-Purpose Baking Soda Cleaner

- Dissolve 3 tablespoons baking soda in 1 quart of warm water.
- Apply with a sponge.
- Rinse with clear water.

All-Purpose Borax Cleaner

- Put 2 teaspoons of borax in a spray bottle with 2 cups of very hot water. Shake to blend.

Hydrogen Peroxide 3% & White Distilled Vinegar as a Disinfectant

- Apply peroxide full-strength with a sponge or spray from a spray bottle.
- Follow immediately with vinegar in the same application method.
- Rinse food preparation surfaces.

Chrome and Stainless Steel Cleaner (Doerksen, 1999)

- Dip soft cloth in undiluted white vinegar.
- Wipe surface.

Garbage Disposal

Freshener (Doerksen, 1999)

- Grind ice and used lemon or orange in the disposal.

Disinfectant (Doerksen, 1999)

- Mix 1/2 cup of borax (natural mineral that kills mold and bacteria) with 1 gallon hot water.
- Add a few sprigs of fresh thyme.
- Steep for 10 minutes, strain, cool.