



GREEN-SCHOOLS STAY HOME - WATER



Idea - Make an Eco-Friendly Cleaner

There are many different types of cleaners you can buy to clean your home. For example, you can buy detergents (break up dirt), degreasers/solvent cleaners (remove grease), abrasives (substances/chemicals that need scrubbing action to remove dirt) and acids (generally used to remove mineral deposits).

Cleaning products can contain many chemicals that can cause health and environmental problems.

For example, if chemicals such as ammonia, chlorine (bleach) and lye etc. are inhaled or absorbed through the skin they can irritate or burn skin and eyes and cause respiratory (breathing) problems.

Most household pollutants are removed from water by wastewater treatment plants before being returned to rivers, streams, lakes, and the sea. However, there are locations in Ireland that have no wastewater treatment facilities and wastewater is released directly into our waters. In these cases the environmental impacts of for example, ammonia being rinsed down drains and flushed down toilets as families clean the house, causes increased plant growth which clogs up waterways and harms the creatures that live in and around it, including humans.

To reduce exposure to unnecessary chemicals when and where possible, you could make a cleaning product using safer household ingredients such as: baking soda, cornstarch, white vinegar, washing soda, olive oil, lemon juice and alcohol.



Make an Eco-Friendly Cleaner



Why not try and make your own cleaner, saving a trip to shops, saving money and helping the environment!

WHAT DO YOU NEED?

- Clean spray bottle and water
- Knife (adult assistance needed if young child involved) and chopping board
- Small jars/dish
- Gloves
- Cups or jug for measuring
- Old newspaper (black and white) or cotton cloth
- Possible ingredients: white vinegar, lemon (sliced/juice), baking soda, fragrant flower petals, lavender sprigs and/or dried herbs, essential oils

WHAT TO DO...

1) Window Cleaner:

- Get a spray bottle and add 1 part white vinegar and 3 parts water.
- You could also add a couple drops of essential oil e.g. lemon grass which blocks the smell of vinegar and is naturally antibacterial.
- Use crumpled old newspaper (black and white) or a cotton cloth to clean.

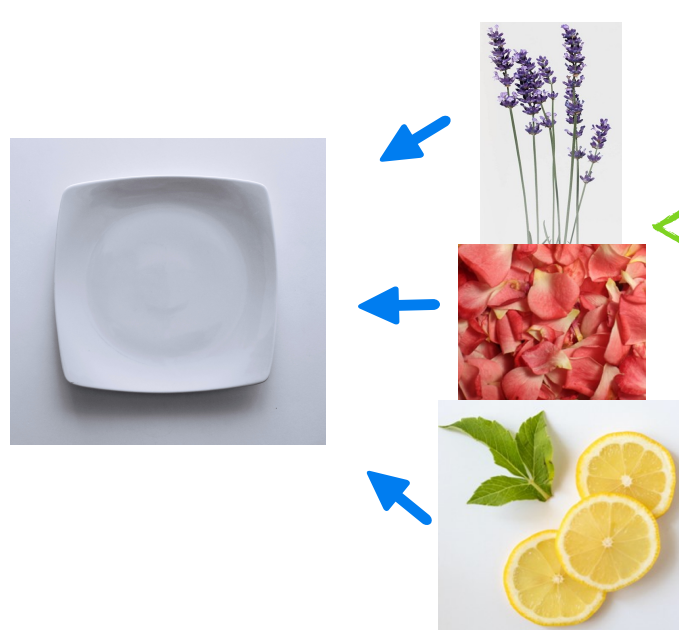
Tips: if glass is really dirty prewash with very soapy water and clean windows on a cool, cloudy day to reduce streaks on drying.



2) Air Freshener:

- Get a small dish and make one of the following:
 - 1) Add some baking soda with essential oils (8-12 drops) (absorbs odors)
 - 2) Add baking soda or vinegar with juice or rinds from a lemon (absorbs odors)
 - 3) Crush up some lemon and place in your bin (help it smell fresher)
 - 4) Add some fragrant flower petals, lavender sprigs and/or dried herbs.

Tips: put out of reach of pets and where it cannot be easily knocked over. **Note:** vinegar scent may be strong at first, but as it evaporates, it'll take the offensive odors with it.



Note: These products can minimise use of toxic substances in your home and reduce water contamination however, results may vary and cannot be guaranteed to be 100% safe and effective. Test products in a small area first, always use caution when using new products and label the cleaner (including date and type).

CONCLUSION...

Did you enjoy making your own cleaning products? Were they effective and do you feel more confident making and using your own cleaners? Would you like to make different types of cleaners? If so, you could go to one of the following websites:

http://www.roscommoncoco.ie/en/Services/Environment/Environmental_Awareness_and_Education/Green-Cleaning-Life-Hacks/All-Purpose-Cleaner/
<https://learn.eartheasy.com/guides/non-toxic-home-cleaning/>
<https://seastainability.com/diy/>

Thanks for taking part,
keep checking back for
more tips, experiments &
activities with
#GreenSchoolsStayHome