



GROW

Home, Garden & Outdoors

A surprising way to make cleaning simple

Wallowa County Chieftain

Wiping away the grime of winter doesn't have to mean launching an attack with dangerous chemicals. As you tackle your daily cleaning chores, take a note from Mother Nature and rely on the cleaning power of a surprisingly effective natural product: vinegar.

During the last century, vinegar has become increasingly recognized as a low-cost and eco-friendly household product. From cooking and canning, to cleaning items indoors and out, homeowners are discovering that this eco-friendly, acetic liquid is as versatile as it is useful.

Despite its strong cleaning power, vinegar does have one downfall: its distinctive odor. You can experiment with dozens of DIY recipes online to overcome this dilemma, or you can rely on a store-bought non-toxic cleaning vinegar. Learn how vinegar can make it easier to tackle common tasks around the house with these hacks and discover more uses for



Courtesy photo

cleaning vinegar at Vinegar-Tips.com.

In the kitchen

- Clean off the blades of a well-worn can opener with an old toothbrush soaked with vinegar to help remove dirt and grease.
- Clean your ice/water dispenser by running vinegar through the system. Flush the vinegar out by running water through the system for 30-60 seconds.
- Rid your dishwasher of mineral buildup by pouring half a cup of vinegar into the reservoir and running an empty

cycle. You can also use vinegar in the dishwasher instead of another glass cleaner to keep your glassware sparkling.

- Renew sponges and dish-rags by placing them in just enough water to cover them. Then add one-fourth cup of vinegar and let them soak overnight.
- Remove dark stains on an aluminum pot by boiling two cups of vinegar. For stained and smelly plastic food containers and lunchboxes, wipe them with a cloth dampened with vinegar.
- To clean a grease-splattered oven door window, sat-

urate it with vinegar. Keep the door open for 10-15 minutes before wiping with a sponge.

- Deodorize the garbage disposal by pouring in half a cup of baking soda and half a cup of vinegar. Let sit for five minutes then run hot water down the disposal.
- Avoid using toxic chemicals where you store food; wipe up spills in the fridge with vinegar.

In the bathroom

- Rid a faucet of lime deposits by tying a plastic bag containing one-third to one-half cup of vinegar around it and leaving it there for two or three hours. Wipe down with a sponge and scrub any remaining deposits with an old toothbrush. The same approach can be used to remove buildup on a showerhead.
- The fizzing combo of vinegar and baking soda can unclog and remove odor from a tub drain. Pour half a cup of baking soda in the drain, then follow with two cups of hot vinegar. Immediately plug the drain with a rag to keep the

bubbles contained for 10 minutes. Rinse by pouring a kettle of boiling hot water down the drain.

- Spray shower doors with vinegar after you've squeegeed the glass — or before you turn on the water — to help release hard water deposits.
- Clean shower door tracks by filling them with vinegar and letting it sit for a few hours. Pour hot water into the tracks and scrub away any remaining film with a toothbrush.
- To make the toilet bowl sparkle, pour in a cup or more of vinegar and let it sit for several hours or overnight. Scrub well with the toilet brush and flush.
- Remove old bathtub decals with vinegar heated in the microwave.

In the laundry room

- Remove coffee and tea stains by flushing the area with vinegar, rinsing and repeating. For wine stains, saturate the spot with vinegar and allow it to stand for several minutes. Then, wash as normal. Tip: For

more delicate fabrics or precaution, test on an inconspicuous part of the garment first.

- Restore yellowed clothing by soaking garments overnight in a solution of 12 parts warm water and one part vinegar. Wash them the following morning.
- Soak new garments in a few cups of vinegar for 10-15 minutes before washing to stop dyes from running in the wash.
- If frequent ironing has left your iron plate dirty, make a paste from one part vinegar and one part salt to scrub it clean.
- Remove scorch marks from an iron by rubbing it with a warm solution of equal parts vinegar and salt. If that doesn't work, use a cloth dampened with vinegar.
- Forgot that you left wet laundry in the machine and it now smells moldy? Pour a few cups of vinegar in the machine and wash the clothes in hot water. Then run a normal cycle with detergent to rinse the clothes.
- Prevent lint from clinging to clothes by adding half a cup of vinegar to the wash cycle.

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Combating warm-weather bugs

Tips to prevent pest-related illness and irritation this summer

Wallowa County Chieftain

With temperatures rising and homeowners heading outdoors for picnics, parties and gatherings, insect-induced risks are fully in-season. With disease-carrying bugs buzzing around, it's time to take the proper steps in protecting your lawn so that you can enjoy living life outside to the fullest and get the most out of your backyard this summer.

Warm-weather bugs, such as fleas and ticks, offer risks that include irritating bites and Lyme disease, which is transmitted by deer ticks and is typically accompanied by fever, headache, fatigue and a skin rash. If left untreated, Lyme disease can cause nervous system damage. Ticks can often be found in heavily

wooded regions and naturalized areas with tall, unmowed grass and other plants. Pets and families should be aware of tick problems in these areas if left untreated.

Fleas also are a problem for pets if left undetected. Fleas thrive in warm, dry periods of summer and can be difficult to control. Other lawn pests including chiggers, ants and spiders can be an irritation for families playing in their yard.

Taking proper preventive measures can help protect your family and your yard from these and other nuisance pests. The National Pest Management Association and the Centers for Disease Control recommend the following tips:

- Clear tall grass and brush.
- Mow frequently and keep leaves raked.
- Remove vegetation or trash from around any source

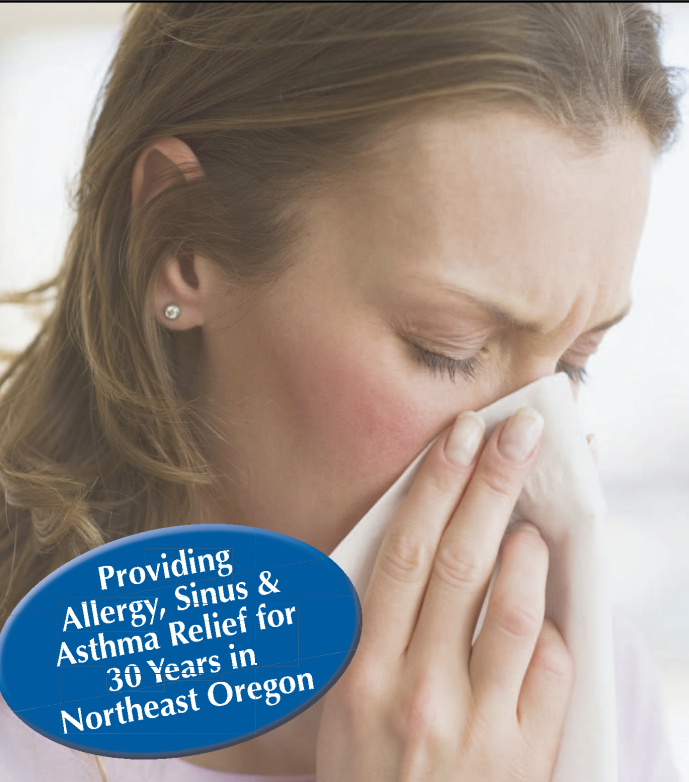


Courtesy of Getty Images

of standing water that cannot be changed, dumped or removed.

- Screen windows, doors and other openings with fine mesh and keep doors and windows shut to prevent entry.
- Have pets treated for flea and tick control and keep them on a regular regimen.
- When outdoors, use an insect repellent containing DEET, picaridin or oil of lemon-eucalyptus on exposed skin.

Concerned homeowners should also consider contacting an outdoor pest control professional who can help reduce exposure to fleas, ticks and other pests, decreasing the risks for pest-borne illnesses.



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