Springtime Cleaning Ideas

The Environmental Protection Agency ranks indoor air pollution among the top environmental dangers, and much of this pollution comes from common cleaning products (or what we’ll call “indoor pollutants”). Effects of exposure to indoor pollutants can include headaches, dizziness, fatigue, and irritation of the eyes, nose, and throat, as well as exacerbated symptoms of asthma and other respiratory illnesses. Long-term effects (following long or repeated exposure to indoor pollutants) include respiratory diseases, heart disease, and even cancer. Luckily, chemical-laden cleaning products aren’t the only means to keep a home sparkly. Non-toxic homemade cleaning products aren’t only better for us; they can also help save us money and protect the environment. Making your own products cuts down on packaging waste and reduces the release of household chemicals that can contribute to air and water pollution. The best news? The majority of the most powerful cleaning products may well already be on our pantry shelves.

First, start cleaning and saving spray bottles you would normally throw out. You can make your own cleaning recipes and put in your repurposed spray bottles. To clean most surfaces:

**Toilets:** For a heavy-duty toilet scrub that deodorizes while it cleans, pour ½ cup of baking soda and about and about ¼ cup of vinegar into the bowl and scrub away while the mixture fizzles. Also, selzer tablets are great for removing stains, just drop a couple in and wait 15 minutes. **Tub and Shower:** Tubs and showers can produce some of the toughest grime, but it’s no match for the cleaning power of vinegar. To get rid of mildew, spray pure white vinegar on the offending area, let it sit for at least 30 minutes, and then rinse with warm water (don’t be afraid to use a sponge if rinsing doesn’t clear away). Alternatively, try mixing together baking soda with a bit of liquid Castile soap, then scrub and rinse. **Non-Stone countertops:** Use a mixture of ½ white vinegar and ½ water. **Stone countertops:** use ½ rubbing alcohol or vodka and ½ water for best results.

**Drains:** For garbage disposals, make ice cubes from white vinegar and put several in and turn on. The frozen vinegar will clean the blades and surfaces, then grind up a half a lemon to leave the disposal smelling fresh and clean. To clean out pipes use a ½ cup of baking soda and 1 cup of white vinegar. Let sit for 30 minutes and then rinse with boiling water.

**Cutting Boards:** All that’s needed to clean and sanitize cutting boards (wood or plastic) is… a lemon! Cut it in half, run it over the surfaces, let sit for ten minutes, and then rinse away. If you need some serious scrubbing power, sprinkle some coarse or Kosher salt over the board, and then rub with ½ a lemon. This works great on oven grime too!

Source (greatist.com/health/27-chemical-free-products-diy-spring-cleaning)

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