



The Wellness Word

Simple and Healthy Homemade Solutions

We're becoming more accustomed to reading the ingredient labels on our foods to avoid things like *partially hydrogenated oils*, *high fructose corn syrup*, and artificial sweeteners like *aspartame* and *sucralose*, but what about your other household products? The ingredient labels on everything from beauty care products to cleaners can be just as scary. The chemicals in these products can be harmful to our bodies, our families, our belongings, and our environment. By learning to make your own products using simple everyday items you can minimize the amount of exposure you and your family have to these chemical. This also means dealing with fewer side effects which can be anything from residue buildup on your hair and skin to chemical and hormonal changes in our bodies that have been linked to a variety of diseases and disorders.

Making your own household products also minimizes environmental waste by eliminating the need to buy a new container each time you run out of something. You can buy a few household staples in bulk, and refill old bottles as you make new batches. This can also be very cost effective! For example,

- a 32 oz jug of apple cider vinegar costs about \$6
- a 14 oz jar of coconut oil costs about \$7
- and a 1lb (16oz) box of baking soda costs about \$9

With these 3 products, you can make a wide variety of self- and home-care items! The following pages give ideas for some simple and health homemade solutions.



Baking Soda

1. Ant repellent

- Get rid of them naturally by pouring baking soda on their trails or in their holes.
- You can also mix 1 part baking soda with 1 part powdered sugar to create ant traps. Place the mix on a jar lid or something similar in areas that ants congregate. The sugar attracts the ants and the baking soda kills them.

2. Hair Care

Many claim by switching to this chemical free hair care method, their hair is fuller, shinier, and healthier than ever!

- Start with a baking **soda wash**: Mix 1 part baking soda with 3 parts water (for shoulder length hair, try about 2 to 3 tablespoon of baking soda with 3 times that amount of water) in a small squeeze bottle. Adjust amount depending on hair length.
 - Apply the baking soda and water mixture to dry or wet hair by starting at the roots and working to the ends.
 - Let it sit for 1 - 3 minutes then rinse with warm water.
 - After washing and rinsing with the baking soda mixture, you'll want to apply a vinegar rinse.
- Finish with a **vinegar rinse**: Mix 1 part white or apple cider vinegar with 4 parts water.
 - Massage mixture into hair from scalp to tips
 - Experiment with allowing the mixture to stay in your hair only a few seconds or up to a few minutes. Everyone's hair and scalp are different so ideal times can vary.
 - Experiment with the rinse as well. You can thoroughly rinse your hair or partially rinse, leaving some of the vinegar mixture. Your hair may smell slightly of vinegar as it dries but once dry, the smell will be gone!

3. Skin Care

- Soothe mosquito bites: Stop bites from itching by making a paste out of water and baking soda. Apply it to the bite and swelling and itching should stop right away.
- For sunburn pain: saturate a washcloth with a solution of 4 tablespoons baking soda in 1 quart water. Apply to affected area.
- Ease windburn or poison ivy irritation: Make a paste of 3 parts baking soda and 1 part water and then apply to the effect area. Do not use on broken skin.
- Relaxing baths: Baking soda added to the bathwater has a softening effect on the skin. Add 1/2 cup to a full bath.
- Relieve itchy wintery skin in a bath with 1 cup baking soda and 1¼ cups baby oil in the water.

4. Splinter removal



- Add a tablespoon of baking soda to a small glass of water and soak the affected area twice a day. Many splinters will come out on their own after a couple of days using this treatment.

5. Freshen up quickly

- Take a quick sponge bath with a washcloth dipped in a solution of 4 tablespoons baking soda to 1 quart water

6. Under arm Deodorant

- Simply applying baking soda under the arms is a great deodorizer and for some works better than store bought products. To help the baking soda stick, you can apply coconut oil under the arms first then baking soda on top (see also the coconut oil section for homemade deodorant ideas)

7. Air Deodorant

- You need just four materials: 1) a small glass canning jar, 2) baking soda, 3) a piece of cloth or sturdy paper to cover the jar (which will allow the scent but not the contents to escape the jar), and 4) essential oils of your choice.
- Add 1/2 of a cup of baking soda and 15-25 drops of essential oil to the jar and stir them together. Place the lid and jar covering (cloth or paper) on top and you are ready to go!
- This air freshener is great since it constantly emits a light scent while the baking soda works to absorb any unwanted scents. When you need more scent, just give it a little shake!

8. Laundry

Baking soda helps to balance the pH of water and can be used to effectively clean, freshen, brighten, and soften laundry.

- After adding laundry to the washing machine, add liquid or powder laundry detergent as usual and then pour one cup of baking soda directly over the clothes.
- Adding baking soda to the washing machine also helps to neutralize the smell of musty towels and bathing suits that have been sitting in the hamper or that smell like chlorine.
- To remove the musty odor from laundry that was left wet in the washing machine for too long, rerun the washing cycle with a cup of vinegar or baking soda to refresh them.

9. Soap substitute

- If soap is too harsh on your facial skin, add a couple of teaspoons of baking soda to a bowl with warm water and rinse your face. Dry immediately and your skin will not only be clean, but also incredibly soft.
- Also, to clean the smell of fish, garlic, or onions off your hands, rub them in a mixture of 3 parts baking soda to 1 part water then rinse with water.

10. Clean windshields

- To clean your windshields from dead insects, use a rag/towel or sponge, wet it a little, and then put some baking soda on the towel/sponge. Add a little more water (enough to make a paste)



then scrub the windshield with the baking soda paste. Keep making more paste/scrubbing as needed, until you've gone over the windshield a couple of times. Rinse with water.

11. Coffee booster

- Hard water can be a real taste killer, so if you want your coffee to be as aromatic as it can possibly be, add a knife point of baking soda to the water for a more true flavor and aroma

12. Clean thermos and bottles

- To clean those hard to reach places in bottles, fill them with hot water, add 2-3 tablespoons of baking soda and let them soak overnight.

13. Shiny teeth

Just as it removes stains from all sorts of surfaces, baking soda is great for removing stains from teeth. (Note: a few sources recommend giving your teeth a break from daily baking soda use so the enamel doesn't break down. However, most sources said they use it daily)

- You can start by simply applying your regular toothpaste to the brush then dipping it in baking soda. Brush as usual, starting with the front teeth where stains are often most apparent
- Make your own toothpaste. Here are 2 "recipes":
 - Water base → Mix 2/3 cup baking soda + 1 tsp fine sea salt (optional) + 1 to 2 tsp peppermint extract or 10-15 drops peppermint essential oil + filtered water (add water in small amounts until a nice paste forms)
 - Coconut oil base → Mix: 6 tbsp coconut oil + 6 tbsp baking soda + 25 drops essential oil (whatever you prefer— may try peppermint, eucalyptus, grapefruit, etc) +1 tsp stevia (if you prefer sweetness—I don't necessarily recommend a sweetener)
 - You can also use just equal parts coconut oil and baking soda



Coconut Oil

Coconut oil is delicious for eating and adds a rich sweetness to dishes, but its uses spread way beyond the kitchen! This oil is solid at room temperature but with just a little more heat, it turns to liquid. If you need it in liquid form, try some of these easy tricks: take it in the shower with you, place it in a bowl of hot water, place it on top of your toaster, coffee maker, place it near the burner you're using on the stove, etc. If you're applying it to your skin, just rubbing a dollop between your hands for a few seconds will be enough to melt it. Microwaving will also melt it but may damage some of the chemical structure of the oil.

1. Oral Health

This technique called "oil pulling" is used for a variety of health reasons, and also benefits your oral health. Oil pulling helps whiten your teeth, freshen breath, and helps you to maintain pink and healthy gums

- Swish 1 teaspoon of coconut oil in the mouth for 15 minutes. After spitting (never swallow and remember coconut oil is solid at room temperature so spit into the trash can instead of your drain!) rinse mouth. You can also follow with brushing if desired.
- Make your own toothpaste for shiny white teeth: mix equal parts baking soda and coconut oil, then use on your brush as usual
 - See more homemade toothpaste ideas in "baking soda" section including

2. Deodorant

Ingredients:

- 1/4 cup coconut oil, melted
- 1/8 cup cornstarch
- 1/8 cup arrowroot powder
- Optional: Essential oils of choice
- Optional: 1 Tbsp baking soda (some people are sensitive to this ingredient, leave this out next time if you notice a skin rash)

Directions:

- Combine coconut oil, baking soda, cornstarch, and arrowroot in a mixing bowl. When well combined, add in a drop or two of your favorite essential oil. (It also works fine without the oil)
- Pour mixture into an empty deodorant container, or simply pour into a small Mason jar and refrigerate for 15 minutes to harden. Remove from the refrigerator and use as needed.
- If using a Mason jar, you'll have to chip out little pieces and rub them onto your armpit. The deodorant will melt and apply smoothly upon contact with skin. No need to store in the refrigerator unless your home is at a temperature at which coconut oil is liquid at room temperature



3. Skin Care

Coconut oil is a great moisturizer for your skin and boasts many characteristics that help nourish and heal the skin. It has antibacterial properties and can be used as an acne treatment, plus it's a much more natural and affordable solution compared to the expensive lotions and procedures that are available. The antioxidant properties of coconut oil help protect the skin from free radical damage caused by the sun.

- Use like you would use body lotion
- Use as an evening face cream (can also add a few drops of calming essential oils as a mild sleep aid if desired)
- Use as an exfoliator by combining: a 3-to-2 ratio of brown sugar to plain oats and then mix with a dollop of coconut oil and a splash of apple cider vinegar.
- Use as a lip balm for dry or cracked lips
- Rub into your cuticles and nail beds before bed
- Use on bug bites or cuts: When coconut oil is applied to scabs or cuts it forms a thin layer that protects the cut from dust and bacteria. When applied directly to bug bites, it can stop the itching sensation and may also speed up the healing process.
- Soothe your skin as a pre-shave and an after-shave

4. Makeup remover

- Just add a pea-sized amount to your eyes and gently rub it in to take off all eye makeup. It melts away any makeup...even waterproof mascara stands no chance!

5. Hair Care

- For an easy, deep-conditioning hair mask, rub a little coconut oil into your scalp and let sit for 5 minutes (or put on a shower cap and leave overnight). Then wash your hair as normal. This can help soothe dry hair and scalp.
- Fight frizz by placing a small amount of coconut oil in your hands, rub your hands together to liquefy the oil, then lightly smooth over your fly-aways

6. Add some richness to your morning coffee

- Adding a small amount (1tsp-2 Tbsp depending on taste) can add a subtle richness and sweetness to your morning java or tea



Apple Cider Vinegar (ACV)

1. Skin toner to help control acne

- Mix 1 Tbsp of ACV with 1-3 Tbsp of water (everyone's skin is different so depending on your sensitivity you may want to experiment with other ACV:water ratios)
- Pour a little onto a cotton pad and apply it to your skin after cleansing. Wait until the toner has dried and then use whatever other lotions, potions and creams you wish. Do this twice a day or any time you wash your face.

2. Natural Deodorant

- Just mix equal amounts of apple cider vinegar and water and then use a cotton ball and apply it under your arm. You will notice a vinegar smell for a few minutes after you apply it but it fades away quickly.
- You can fill an old roll-on deo stick with the diluted apple cider vinegar. This makes it much easier to apply it on a daily bases.
- This deodorant is good for half a day when applied in the morning. You might need to refresh it during the day.

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 - Let it sit for 1 - 3 minutes then rinse with warm water.
 - After washing and rinsing with the baking soda mixture, you'll want to apply a vinegar rinse.
- Finish with a **vinegar rinse**: Mix 1 part ACV with 4 parts water.
 - Massage mixture into hair from scalp to tips
 - Experiment with allowing the mixture to stay in your hair only a few seconds or up to a few minutes. Everyone's hair and scalp are different so ideal times can vary.
 - Experiment with the rinse as well. You can thoroughly rinse your hair or partially rinse, leaving some of the vinegar mixture. Your hair may smell slightly of vinegar as it dries but once dry, the smell will be gone!

4. Wart Remover

- Soak a cotton ball in apple cider vinegar, then fasten the cotton ball over the wart with a Band-Aid overnight. The skin may swell some as it reacts with the solution. However, the wart will fall



off. Once it falls off, the treatment should be continued for a few more days, to make sure the wart doesn't return.

- Note: The wart and surrounding skin may become tender and burn during the treatment. Take a day or two off if it becomes too painful then continue your treatment

5. Soothe sunburnt skin

- Add a cup of apple cider vinegar to your bath, and soak for 10 minutes to eliminate discomfort from sunburn

6. Daily glass of ACV water

- Mix 1 tsp of ACV with 16 oz of water and drink 1-2 times per day, about 15 minutes before a meal
- Every body is different; therefore each person will not experience the same effects. Some potential benefits of regular ACV ingestion include:
 - Assist in weight loss. This can be sipped throughout the day. Data shows some limited, yet significant, weight loss benefits from sustained daily intake of acetic acid (which is a main ingredient in apple cider vinegar).
 - Aid in digestion
 - Help regular blood sugar and help manage diabetes
 - Help manage high blood pressure
 - Decrease muscle cramps and restless leg syndrome

7. Repel flees on your pets

- Mix one part vinegar and one part water and spray on your pets' fur and/or rub generously onto the skin. Saturate the entire coat, and continue every day for a few days to a week.

8. All natural household cleaner

- Toilet: clean your toilets and leave your bathroom smelling like apples! Just pour apple cider vinegar into the toilet, and allow it to sit overnight. This same method works for bathtubs and baby baths as well!
- Dishwashing liquid: as a substitute for dish detergent, mix 1/2 cup of apple cider vinegar with 1 cup water and use as usual in your dishwasher
- Unclog a slow drain: Mix ½ cup of salt and ½ cup of baking soda into a bowl and pour down the effected drain. Next, pour in ½ cup of vinegar. The Apple Cider Vinegar and Baking Soda will react with each other giving off harmless carbon dioxide gas. After 2-3 hours flush the drain through with water.
- Clean hardwood and tiled floors: Add 1 cup of Apple Cider Vinegar to 3.5 liters of warm water. Mop up any excess water from the floor to prevent warping of the tiles or wood.
- Window cleaner: Spray a 50/50 solution of Apple Cider Vinegar and water onto your windows. For really dirty and stained windows use undiluted Apple Cider Vinegar. When the solution has dried wipe clean with paper towels for a smear-free finish.
- Multipurpose surface cleaner:



- *Option 1:* Place the peels of 2-3 oranges in a mason jar. Fill the mason jar to the top with ACV (making sure to completely cover the orange peels), screw on lid, and place it somewhere on your counter where you'll see it each day. Shake your jar up every day and wait for at least a week, 10 days is better. You need to let the oil from the orange peels come out naturally into the ACV. After 10 days has passed, strain your liquid into a spray bottle and you are ready to clean!
 - Hint: Instead of tossing orange peels in the garbage, save them. Simply toss them in a Ziplock bag and put them in the fridge (if you'll use them within a few days) or freeze them.
 - Orange peels (preferably organic) as well as many other fruits have natural antimicrobial properties!
- *Option 2:* A mix of 1 part ACV and 9 parts water will clean just about any surface. You can use this in a spray bottle.

9. Freshen the air

- To combat unpleasant kitchen smells, boil a saucepan containing a solution of 1 tablespoon of Apple Cider Vinegar and 1 cup of water
- To remove the smell of cigarette smoke, spilled beer, vomit, paint etc from a room simply place a bowl of Apple Cider Vinegar on the floor overnight. You can do the same for a car, but don't forget to take the bowl out before you start driving 😊

10. Weed Killer

- Spray undiluted ACV (or white vinegar) on dandelions to kill them without adding unhealthy toxic chemicals to your lawn