Many cleaning products contain toxic chemicals, which can be harmful both to your health and to the environment. With just a few simple ingredients, you can easily replace these expensive cleaners. Keep reading for greener, safer cleaning suggestions that may even save you money!

Tips and Tricks

- Reuse or purchase spray bottles for the window and all-purpose cleaners described here.
- Tear up a worn-out t-shirt for rags instead of using paper towels.
- Old toothbrushes make great scrubbing implements for nooks and crannies!

Shopping Hints

- If you choose to buy commercial cleaning products, there are a number of natural ones available – but the terms “natural” and “green” are poorly-regulated and overused, so be careful!
- For more eco-friendly solutions, we recommend reading up online at Grist: http://www.grist.org/article/possessions-cleaning/
- Even the products in this guide can be manufactured in unsustainable ways. For example, household vinegar can be derived synthetically, from petroleum products, so check your labels!

Contact us!

This publication was brought to you by SEED (“Students Expressing Environmental Dedication”), a res-hall student organization.

Check us out online at: http://students.washington.edu/uwseed/

Come to a meeting. We meet on Thursdays at 5:30 in Poplar 106

Email us at uwseed@uw.edu
**White Vinegar**

**Functions:**
- Has disinfectant properties
- Cleans grime, especially on smooth surfaces—great for mirrors & glass
- Absorbs odors
- Removes mold and mildew

**Suggested Usage**
- Depending on need, dilute with water or use directly for more strength (see below).
- For the toilet bowl, scrub with undiluted vinegar.
- Also spray full-strength onto mold—no need to rinse.
- For general cleaning, pour equal parts vinegar and water into a spray bottle.
- Spray a mixture of 1 tablespoon of vinegar and 2 cups of water to clean windows—dry with old newspaper or a rag.
- Mop floors with a mixture of 1 cup vinegar and 1 gallon of water.
- To clean microwave, microwave a small bowl of vinegar until boiling, then wipe away the loosened grime.
- Soak smelly sponges for a day in vinegar.
- Set a small bowl of vinegar out for several hours to absorb odors or kill fruit flies.

**Baking Soda**

**Functions:**
- For scrubbing and scouring
- Removes stains
- Absorbs odors

**Suggested Usage:**
- Depending on need, use directly, or make into a paste with water for more strength (see below).
- For counters, sprinkle baking soda and scrub with a wet sponge.
- For set-in counter stains, make a baking soda paste with water and let set on the stain for a few hours before scrubbing.
- To clean the oven, mix water into baking soda to make a thick paste, and spread over inside of oven. Scrub off the next day.
- Also great for toilet scrubbing.
- For semi-clogged drains, pour a 1/2 cup of baking soda down the drain (with a small amount of water to wash it down). Let sit overnight, and flush with boiling water.
- To reduce odors, leave an open box of baking soda in the fridge (change every few months), and sprinkle some in the bottoms of waste bins.

**Rubbing Alcohol**

**Functions:**
- Disinfects
- Removes stains
- De-stickifies

**Suggested Usage:**
- Use small amount on cloth or q-tip to clean laptops, keyboards, cell phones, small electronics and CDs.
- Use to scrub off stains on hard surfaces—even permanent marker!
- Also good for window cleaning: Use 1 cup of rubbing alcohol, 1 cup of water, and 1 tablespoon of our friend vinegar. Leaves a streak-free shine!

**Hydrogen Peroxide**

**Functions:**
- A great disinfectant/ mold killer

**Suggested Usage:**
- On toilet seats, flush levers, sink faucets, door handles, etc.
  *note: do not mix with vinegar

**Club Soda**

- An old staple. Right after a spill, pour club soda on the stain and blot with a rag.