

100

UNEXPECTED USES

FOR

EVERYDAY HOUSEHOLD ITEMS

FROM SALT, VINEGAR, AND
BAKING SODA TO LEMON AND SOAP.



SALT

- Use a pinch of salt as a toothpaste substitute.

- Rub salt on fruit stains while still wet, then put them in the wash.



- To remove mildew spots, rub in salt and some buttermilk, then let dry in the sun.

- If you spill wine or fruit juice on your tablecloth, pour salt on the spot at once to absorb the stain.

- Apply a paste of salt and olive oil to ugly heat rings on your table. Let sit for about an hour and then wipe off with a soft cloth.

- To catch a wild bird easily, sprinkle some salt on its tail.



- Sprinkle salt on a piece of paper and run your sticky iron over it a few times while the iron is hot. You should notice a big improvement next time you use the iron.

- To restore some of the color to faded fabric, soak it in a strong solution of salt and water.

- Discharge evil spells by throwing a pinch of salt over your left shoulder.

- Mix a tablespoon of salt into the water of a vase of cut flowers to keep them fresh longer.

- A mixture of salt and vinegar will clean brass.

- Salt on the fingers when cleaning meat or fish will prevent the hands from slipping.

- To kill unwanted weeds growing in your driveway or between bricks and stones, pour boiling salt water over them.

- When moving into a new house, bring some salt to ensure happiness and peace.

- To treat perspiration stains, add enough water to salt to make a paste, then rub into the cloth. Wait for an hour, then launder as usual.

- Cover spilled eggs with salt, then wipe clean with a paper towel.

- To freshen smelly sneakers (or any canvas shoe), sprinkle their insides with salt. Wait 24 hours for the salt to absorb the odor; shake out the sneakers.

- Pour salt directly onto a grease spill and come back to it later.

- A new broom will last longer if you soak the bristles in hot salt water before using it for the first time.

- Stainless steel can be cleaned by rubbing it with a gritty paste of two tablespoons of salt mixed with lemon juice. Rinse well and pat dry with a soft cloth.

- Rub two to three tablespoons of salt onto the stains inside your glass vases, then scrub clean with a damp bristle brush.

- Gargle with warm salt water (1/4 teaspoon salt to one cup water) to relieve a sore throat.

WHITE VINEGAR

- Bring a solution of one cup vinegar and four tablespoons baking soda to a boil in teapots and coffeepots to rid them of mineral deposits.

- A solution of vinegar and baking soda will easily remove cooking oil from your stovetop.

- Clean the filter on your humidifier by removing it and soaking it in a pan of vinegar until all the sediment is off.

- Vinegar naturally breaks down uric acid and soapy residue, leaving baby clothes and diapers soft and fresh. Add a cup of vinegar to each load during the rinse cycle.

- Saturate a cloth with vinegar and sprinkle with baking soda, then use it to clean fiberglass tubs and showers. Rinse well and rub dry for a spotless shine.



- To remove chewing gum, rub it with full-strength vinegar.

■ For a clean oven, combine vinegar and baking soda, then scrub.

■ **Clean and deodorize your toilet bowl by pouring undiluted vinegar into it. Let stand for five minutes, then flush. Spray stubborn stains with white vinegar, then scrub vigorously.**

■ Clean windows with a cloth dipped in a solution of one part vinegar and ten parts warm water. This works for dirty TV screens, too!

■ **For brunettes, rinsing hair with vinegar after a shampoo makes the hair shine. (Use one tablespoon vinegar to one cup warm water.)**



■ Soak paint-stained clothing in hot vinegar to remove the stains.

■ **To clean a drip coffeemaker, fill the reservoir with vinegar and run it through a brewing cycle. Rinse thoroughly by brewing two cycles with water before using.**

■ To remove smoke odors from clothes, hang them above a steaming bathtub filled with hot water and a cup of vinegar.



■ **Rid your refrigerator and freezer of bad odors by cleaning the insides with a solution of equal parts vinegar and water, then wiping dry.**

■ Apply full-strength vinegar to mosquito or other insect bites to relieve the itching. (Caution: Do not do this if the affected area is raw.)



■ **Vinegar takes salt and water stains off leather boots and shoes. Wipe over the stained area only, then polish.**

BAKING SODA

■ Add baking soda to your bathwater to relieve sunburned or itchy skin.

■ **Make a paste of baking soda and water, and apply to a burn or an insect bite for relief.**

■ Clean your refrigerator with a solu-

tion of one teaspoon baking soda to one quart of warm water.

■ **Pour a cup of baking soda into the opening of your clogged drain and then add a cup of hot vinegar. After a few minutes, flush the drain with a quart of boiling water.**

■ To remove perspiration stains, make a thick paste of baking soda and water. Rub paste into the stain, let sit for an hour, then launder as usual.



■ **If you crave sweets, rinse your mouth with one teaspoon baking soda dissolved in a glass of warm water. Don't swallow the mixture; spit it out. Your craving should disappear at once.**

■ Dog odor can be eliminated by sprinkling baking soda on the dog's coat, working it into the fur with your hands, then brushing well. The odorous dirt will come out with the baking soda.



■ **Add a pinch of baking soda to boiled syrup to prevent it from crystallizing.**

■ Tough meat can be tenderized by rubbing it with baking soda. Let stand for several hours before rinsing and cooking.

■ **To remove pesticides, dirt, and wax from fresh fruits and vegetables, wash them in a large bowl of cool water to which you've added two to three tablespoons of baking soda.**

■ A pinch of baking soda added to baked beans will minimize gassy side effects.

■ **Soak toothbrushes in baking soda and warm water overnight to clean bristles.**



■ Gas and oil odors can be removed from clothes by dusting them with baking soda and letting them sit in a trash bag for a few days.

■ **Lay down a barrier of baking soda under sink-pipe openings and along basement windows to keep carpenter ants, sil-**

verfish, and roaches from invading. Roaches eat the baking soda, dehydrate, and then die.

■ A light baking soda paste on a damp cloth will remove bugs and tar from cars without damaging the paint. Let paste sit for a few minutes before wiping and rinsing clean.



■ **Rid plastic high chairs of spaghetti, ketchup, or crayon stains by sprinkling the tray with baking soda. Rub with a damp cloth, then rinse clean.**

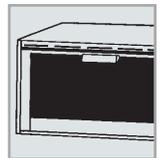
■ To remove stains from your coffee and tea cups, wipe them with a damp sponge dipped in a baking soda paste.

■ **Keep your rubber gloves dry and smelling good by sprinkling baking soda inside them. They'll slip on more easily, too!**

■ Sprinkling baking soda on your front steps will provide traction and melt the ice. Unlike rock salt, kitty litter, or sand, it won't damage outdoor or indoor surfaces or shoes.

■ **Boil two inches of water in a pan with a burned bottom, turn off the heat, then add a half cup of baking soda. Let it sit overnight. In the morning, it will be easy to clean.**

■ Sprinkle a teaspoon of baking soda on the bottom of your toaster oven to eliminate the burned smell from drippings and crumbs.



LEMON

■ **A teaspoon of lemon juice added to boiling rice is said to make it white and keep the kernels separated.**

■ Suck on a lemon to settle an upset stomach.

■ **For a sore throat or bad breath, gargle with some lemon juice.**



■ Clean discolored utensils with a cloth dipped in lemon juice. Rinse with warm water.

■ **Toss used lemon pieces into your garbage disposal to help keep it clean and fresh-smelling.**

■ Use one part lemon juice and two parts salt to scour chinaware to its original luster.

■ **A few drops of lemon juice in outdoor housepaint will keep insects away while you are painting and until paint dries.**

■ Remove scratches on furniture by mixing equal parts of lemon juice and salad oil and rubbing it on the scratches with a soft cloth.

■ **To make furniture polish, mix one part lemon juice and two parts olive oil.**

■ Ink stains can be removed by soaking them in lemon juice.

■ **To clean the surface of white marble or ivory (such as piano keys), rub with half a lemon or use a lemon juice and salt paste. Wipe with a clean, wet cloth.**



■ To renew hardened paintbrushes, dip into boiling lemon juice. Lower heat and leave brush for 15 minutes, then wash in soapy water.

■ **To remove dried paint from glass, apply hot lemon juice with a soft cloth. Leave until nearly dry, then wipe off.**

■ Rub kitchen and bathroom faucets with lemon peel. Wash and dry with a soft cloth to shine and remove spots.

■ **Fresh lemon juice in rinse water removes soap film from the interiors of ovens and refrigerators.**

■ Create your own air freshener: Slice some lemons, cover with water, and let simmer in a pot for about an hour. (This will clean your aluminum pots, too!)

■ **Fish or onion odor on your hands can be removed by rubbing them with fresh lemon.**



■ To get odors out of wooden rolling pins, bowls, or cutting boards, rub with a piece of lemon. Don't rinse: The wood will absorb the lemon juice.

■ **Save lemon rinds to deter squirrels and cats from digging in the garden. Store rinds in the freezer during the winter, then bury them here and there just under the surface of the garden periodically throughout the spring and summer.**

■ After a shampoo, rinse your hair with lemon juice to make it shine. (Mix the strained juice of a lemon in an eight-ounce glass of warm water.)



■ **Mix one tablespoon of lemon juice with two tablespoons of salt to make a rust-removing scrub.**

■ Before you start to vacuum, put a few drops of lemon juice in the dust bag. It will make the house smell fresh.

■ **Get grimy white cotton socks white again by boiling them in water with a slice of lemon.**



■ Clean copper pots by cutting a lemon in half and rubbing the cut side with salt until the salt sticks. Rub the lemon onto the metal, rinse in hot water, and polish dry.

SOAP

■ **To recover fine beads scattered from a broken strand, run a bar of moistened soap along the floor to locate and gather them. Wipe dry so that you don't slip.**

■ A drawer will slide more smoothly and quietly if you rub both sides and the underside with a bar of soap.

■ **To lubricate a stubborn zipper, rub soap on both sides while closed; then unzip it and rub soap over the opened teeth.**

■ Protect windowpanes, doorknobs, hardware, glass doors, and switch plates when painting by coating them with soapsuds. Paint spatters will settle on the suds, and both can be washed away together.



■ **A squeaky hinge gets the soap!**

Wedge moist soap between the doorframe and hinge, and work the door back and forth; also rub soap directly onto the hinge.

■ Place unwrapped soap in drawers, closets, and empty suitcases to prevent musty odors.

■ **To make a saw slide more smoothly and easily, coat both sides with bar soap. The cutting edge will go through any wood much faster.**



■ To halt squeaks in floorboards, work a little moist soap into the cracks between the boards.

■ **Loosen a tight ring by rubbing liquid soap over the finger. The ring will slide off when the hand is washed.**

■ To pick up bits and pieces of broken glass safely, rub a damp bar of soap over the area where glass has splintered, then shave off the surface of the soap to which the glass has adhered. Wrap these soap "peelings" in newspaper and discard.

■ **Prevent a watering can from dripping by rubbing moistened bar soap under the lip or spout.**

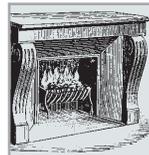


■ To loosen a stiff door lock, lubricate the key by rubbing it with bar soap.

■ **Rub sled runners generously with bar soap for a slicker ride.**

■ Pins and needles will go through material more easily if you first stick them in a bar of soap.

■ **To prepare paper logs for a cozy fire, roll old newspapers tightly into small logs, tie firmly, and soak them in soapy water. Stand them on end to drain and dry.**



■ Planning to cook outdoors? First coat the bottom surfaces of pots and pans with bar soap; soot will wash off with the soap afterward.

■ **To keep eyeglasses from steaming in cold weather, rub both sides of each lens with soapy fingers and then polish.**