



GUIDE TO TACKLING STUBBORN STAINS WITH HOUSEHOLD PRODUCTS

Abstract

The "Guide to Tackling Stubborn Stains with Household Products" offers practical solutions for removing common stains using simple, readily available ingredients found in most homes. From grease and oil to wine and crayon marks, this guide highlights effective DIY cleaning methods that save time and money.

Each section provides step-by-step instructions on using products like baking soda, vinegar, hydrogen peroxide, and rubbing alcohol to treat specific stains. Whether you're dealing with fabric, carpet, or hard surfaces, this guide helps you handle tough stains with ease, ensuring your home stays spotless without the need for harsh chemicals or expensive cleaners.

Getting Started

Before diving into the specifics of stain removal, it's important to understand that tackling stubborn stains effectively begins with the right approach and tools. In this guide, you'll find a variety of household products, such as baking soda, vinegar, lemon juice, and rubbing alcohol, that can be used to treat different types of stains. Start by identifying the type of stain you're dealing with and the surface it's on. Gather the necessary materials and follow the detailed steps provided for each stain type.

Remember, it's always wise to test any cleaning solution on an inconspicuous area first to avoid damage. With a little preparation and the right products, you'll be ready to clean even the toughest stains like a pro!

1. What Are Common Household Products Effective for Stain Removal?

Several common household items can be turned into natural laundry stain removers. They allow you to avoid the harsh chemicals of some commercial stain removers, plus they're often less expensive. Here are seven natural stain remover products that will help you banish stains while effectively keeping your laundry routine green.

Baking Soda

That same box of baking soda that you have in your kitchen cabinet is one of nature's best gifts for the laundry—and it's very inexpensive. It is a perfect green odor remover to keep your laundry smelling fresh and is safe to use on all fabrics, including children's sleepwear.

Baking soda also aids in boosting detergent performance, softening fabrics, and reducing suds for quicker loads in front-load washers.

To use, add 1/2 cup of baking soda to each load along with your detergent. For heavy smells on

clothes, use baking soda and water as a presoaking mixture for the garments, letting them soak overnight in a washer tub or large sink.



Lemon or Lime Juice

Fresh or bottled 100 percent lemon or lime juice naturally bleaches fabrics due to the acetic acid. However, if you spill some on colored clothing, you'll want to remove the juice before it causes permanent discoloration.

Use either type of juice on white fabrics to help remove yellow underarm stains or rust stains. Add 1 cup of lemon juice to the wash when washing your white clothes. Use a paste of equal parts lemon juice, baking soda, and water for tough stains on whites. Scrub the paste on whites with yellow underarm or color stains, let sit for 30 minutes, then wash normally to remove the tinge.

Distilled White Vinegar

Distilled white vinegar is a miracle worker in the laundry room. It is inexpensive, gentle on fabrics, and safer to use than chlorine bleach and fabric softeners. Always choose white vinegar over apple cider or other types because it won't stain fabrics (and it's cheaper).

White vinegar is key to removing yellow underarm perspiration stains and odor, removing mildew stains, and whitening and brightening your clothes. Just adding 1 cup of distilled white

vinegar to the final rinse will leave clothes feeling soft and smelling fresh. You can even use vinegar to clean your washer and help control musty washer odors.

Hydrogen Peroxide

Head to the medicine cabinet for hydrogen peroxide as a good alternative to the much harsher chlorine bleach when you need to whiten clothes. Hydrogen peroxide (H_2O_2) is an oxidizing agent that can be used as a bleach. The 3 percent solution sold in drug stores as a first-aid disinfectant is the best choice for laundry as well. Hydrogen peroxide breaks down into water and oxygen and is a more environmentally safe alternative to chlorine bleach.¹

Hydrogen peroxide works well in removing underarm yellowing and the dye from nail polish, curry, and red wine stains on whites and light colors. Add 1 cup of hydrogen peroxide to the washer drum or in the automatic bleach dispenser before adding the water to brighten clothes. Or, pour undiluted hydrogen peroxide on a stain and let it sit for 10 minutes before washing normally. Always test an inconspicuous part of a non-white item before using it on a stain to see if there is any discoloration.

Not sure if using hydrogen peroxide is the right choice for your fabrics? The Spot Check makes stain removal simple.

Borax

Borax is a naturally occurring mineral composed of sodium, boron, oxygen, and water. It has no toxic fumes and is safe for the environment. However, borax can irritate skin and should not be ingested.

Borax boosts the performance of any type of detergent in cleaning clothes and removing stains (especially on cloth diapers), softens hard water, and helps control odor. Almost all DIY laundry detergent recipes contain borax.

To eliminate a stain, mix 1 tablespoon of borax with 2 tablespoons of water to form a paste. Spread it on the stain and leave it on for 30 minutes before washing as usual.

Talc

Talcum powder, baby powder, kitchen cornstarch, or plain white chalk are wonderful natural treatments for helping to absorb oily stains. These items can even remove stains if you promptly catch the oil or grease drip on fabric.

Simply sprinkle the oily stain liberally with baby powder, talcum powder, or cornstarch; you can also rub the area with white chalk. Allow it to sit on the stain for at least 10 minutes to absorb the oil; then simply brush away. Later, wash or dry clean the garment following the instructions on the item's care label.

Salt

Simple table salt works in the laundry as a mild abrasive element for stain removal of rust and red wine stains and to absorb liquid stains before they are set. If you have a red wine spill, sprinkle it liberally with table salt. Use the cheapest salt you can find. Let it absorb the liquid, and then brush away before you wash the item. Remember, if you don't wash it out, salt can leave white stains on your fabric.

If you have stains or residue on the bottom of your iron, salt works well as a gentle abrasive. Simply dampen a handful of salt very slightly, and scrub the faceplate of the iron. When the iron is clean, wipe it with a clean damp cloth.

2. What Are The Guidelines For Removing Stains?



Dropping ink on your white shirt, spilling red wine on your favourite dress or getting pollen on your carpet is a nerve-racking experience. It can feel like the countdown is onto clean up the mess, but while speed is essential for removing a stain, it's also important that you don't make it worse.

We've put together this list of the golden rules for stain removal to help you conquer any mess.

1. Act quickly – scrape off solids with a blunt knife and blot liquids with absorbent paper. Never spot-clean any stain with hot or warm water as it can set the stain.

2. Always sponge off protein stains, such as milk or blood, with cold water.
3. Don't over-wet any kind of stain – small, repeated applications work much better.
4. Dab, don't rub – rubbing can spread the stain and damage the fabric. Instead, work from the outside towards the centre.
5. Where possible, place absorbent paper over the stain and work on the underside of the fabric.
6. Don't put salt on a red wine stain. It's a myth! Salt will set the stain permanently into fabric and can damage carpet fibres. For best results, use a specialist product for removing red wine stains, but in an emergency, flush with soda water or sparkling water.
7. Never sponge oil-based stains, such as butter or mayonnaise, with water because it can set the stain. Scrape off any residue, then apply methylated spirits and blot with paper towels. On washable fabrics rub the area with some washing up liquid and wash with biological washing powder. On silk and wool, spot treat with Dr Beckmann Stain Devils Fat & Sauces, then machine wash using a detergent for delicates.
8. Read stain removal product instructions and wear rubber gloves, always test stain removers on a hidden area first, to check the fabric for colour fastness.
9. For most washable fabrics, pre-treat with a stain remover and wash with biological washing powder for best results. But for silk or wool always use a stain remover and detergent specifically designed for delicates.
10. Don't treat a stain on a dry-clean-only fabric yourself, always take it to a reputable dry cleaner and be sure to point out the stain and tell them what type of stain it is.

3. How to Remove Grease and Oil Stains with Baking Soda?

I love trying all kinds of new cleaning products and tools, and I've discovered many favorites through the years, including Scrub Daddy sponges and Safely cleaning spray. And while I love a good single-use tool, as long as it provides value to our family, I'm always looking for home-keeping products that serve more than one purpose.

Multipurpose cleaning products and tools reduce decision fatigue. When it's time to clean a certain space, I like to put all my energy into completing the job and doing it efficiently. Not having to decide which products to use from a large selection of possibilities saves my limited resources for the actual job at hand.

Additionally, curating a collection of cleaning supplies that serve many functions makes it easier to shop for, store, and organize them. Rather than being tempted by every new all-purpose

spray in a new scent or another scouring paste that promises the shiniest pots and pans of your life, knowing that you have a solid arsenal of tried-and-true products saves time and money. When it comes to storage, keeping a few carefully selected items that can be applied in various circumstances saves storage space and simplifies organization.

Baking soda and dish soap have so many applications, from absorbing odors in the fridge to making glass sparkle. But one of the best ways to use it is to address greasy spills and stains.

How to Clean Grease and Oil Spills with Baking Soda and Dish Soap

Greasy spills are some of the worst to clean up. If you've ever spilled a bottle of olive oil all over the counter or accidentally tipped a baking sheet full of bacon grease onto your kitchen floor mat, you know the challenges of sopping up a hydrophobic puddle.

One of the best solutions is to sprinkle (or dump, as the case may be) baking soda on the spill. The baking soda absorbs the oil, allowing you to sweep or scoop it up without going through a huge pile of rags or paper towels. Once the majority of the mess is picked up, a spray of Dawn Powerwash is usually all that's needed to penetrate the lingering film of oil so that the surface can be thoroughly cleaned.



How to Clean Grease and Oil Stains with Baking Soda and Dish Soap

Baking soda and dish soap are also the best way to deal with grease splatters on clothing, which can be a common occurrence in the kitchen and even just while eating! Washing and drying clothing that's stained with greasy marks can set the stain permanently, but knowing how to treat the stain before laundering can save your garments.

Again, baking soda and dish soap save the day. A small sprinkle of baking soda rubbed gently into the fabric absorbs excess oil. Dish soap dabbed on afterward and, again, worked into the

fabric gently with the fingers pulls residual oil from the fibers of the fabric. Sometimes jumping straight to the dish soap works sufficiently to get the grease splatters. Dot a bit on grease splatters and allow to sit for a few minutes before tossing in with the laundry.

If my laundry room wasn't adjacent to the kitchen, I'd keep another set of the powerhouse duo of baking soda and dish soap in the kitchen. So often, the simple, classic products are the best multipurpose products you can have around — and that's the case with this grease-fighting pair.

4. The Power of Vinegar: Removing Tough Stains from Fabric and Carpets

Vinegar is a veritable powerhouse when it comes to pretreating stains, softening water and boosting regular laundry detergents. When cleaning fabrics, white distilled vinegar is preferred, but apple cider vinegar works just as well if that's what you have on hand.

This article includes a number of ways you can use vinegar in laundry. We'll start with the basics, but note that none of the tips listed here should be tried with dry-clean-only fabrics.

Vinegar as Fabric Softener

Vinegar can work magic when it comes to washing colored garments and removing stains. Here's how:

- **Colors:** Any colored clothing item that has become dulled can be brightened by soaking it in 1 gallon warm water and 1 cup (237 mL) of vinegar. Follow this with a clear water rinse.
- **Yellowing:** When hand-washing linen, wool or silk, prevent them from yellowing by adding 1/2 cup (118 mL) of vinegar to the rinse water.

Vinegar Removes Stains

Vinegar is a great ally in the fight against laundry stains. Here are a few examples:

- **Coffee and tea:** For coffee stains or tea stains that have set, soak the item in a solution of 1/3 cup (78 mL) of vinegar to 2/3 cup (156 mL) of water, then hang the garment out in the sun to dry.
- **Grass:** Removal of severe grass stains on white clothes can be helped along by soaking them in full-strength vinegar for a half-hour before washing.
- **Gum:** If sticky spots remain after removing a piece of gum from clothing, soak gum stains in vinegar for 10 to 15 minutes. Launder as usual.
- **Ink:** An older ink stain in cotton fabric may be helped by spraying with hair spray. Dab with vinegar to remove the sticky spray.
- **Juice:** Dried red berry juice may be removed from bleach-safe garments by soaking it in a solution of one part vinegar to two parts water. Then wash as usual.
- **Mildew:** A mixture of salt, vinegar and water should remove mildew stains on most fabrics. Use up to full-strength vinegar if mildew is extensive.

- Pretreatment: For synthetic blends or old stains on natural materials, presoak the stain in ammonia before applying vinegar and water.

A basic mixture of half water and half vinegar as a laundry pretreatment can do the trick with many common stains on clothing. Keep a spray bottle of this in your laundry room. Spray mixture on the stains before washing to give an extra boost.

As you've seen, vinegar can be of great help when it's time to do laundry. You're probably wonder why it's taken you this long to add vinegar to your laundry routine; it's certainly better than buying new clothes.

A Vinegar-Based Rust-Removal and Stain-Removal Paste

Make a thin paste of vinegar and salt, then spread the paste on rust stains in fabric. Lay the item out in the sun to bleach, or apply paste, stretch fabric over a large kettle, and pour boiling water through the stained area.

5. What Are the Best Techniques for Using Hydrogen Peroxide on Stains?



Many people likely have a brown bottle of hydrogen peroxide under their bathroom sink. Long considered a good disinfectant to use on cuts and scrapes—although doctors have walked back that recommendation—it can also be used in many areas of the home to disinfect.

Hydrogen peroxide (H₂O₂) is a chemical compound that acts as an oxidizer. “Hydrogen peroxide is a powerful sanitizer and disinfectant that's nontoxic and environmentally friendly,” says Lisa Sharp, a cleaning expert and the founder of the Retro Housewife Goes Green blog in Oklahoma. “It can effectively kill bacteria, viruses, and mold spores, making it an excellent choice for maintaining a clean home without the use of harsh chemicals.”¹

Here are different ways to use hydrogen peroxide in your home.

In The Kitchen

Clean Grease Off Of Surfaces

Have a baking tray or cooking surface with food residue or grease? Reach for hydrogen peroxide to make cleaning easier. Alex Varela, former general manager of Dallas Maids, recommends mixing hydrogen peroxide and baking soda together until you form a paste. Apply the paste to the area where there is grease or food remnants, and allow it to sit for eight hours. Then scrub away any gunk with a non-scratch sponge.

Remove Stains From Your China

Whether you inherited it from your grandmother, received it as a wedding present, or bought it at an antique mall, your fine china is precious. It doesn't go in the dishwasher. But when your fine white china plates have yellowed from all the family dinners over the years or when tea has stained your cups, hydrogen peroxide is your best friend. Mix a paste of three parts baking soda and one part hydrogen peroxide, and gently rub it onto the stain. Rinse it off and repeat if the mark doesn't disappear.

In The Bathroom

Disinfect Toothbrushes

We may not always consider that these essential brushes need cleaning too. Sharp explains that disinfecting them will help kill bacteria and germs that could be on the bristles.

Ready to disinfect your toothbrush? “Pour a small amount of hydrogen peroxide into a cup or glass, submerge the bristles of your toothbrush in the hydrogen peroxide, let it sit for a few minutes [and then] rinse well when done,” says Sharp. “This helps kill bacteria and germs that may be present on the bristles.”

Toilet Bowl Cleaner

When it's time to clean the bathroom, you likely have a specific toilet bowl cleaner on hand. But if you'd prefer to use a less toxic option or want to streamline your cleaning routine, hydrogen peroxide will work wonders. “Its disinfecting properties make it an effective cleaner for removing stains, mineral deposits, and odors from the toilet bowl,” Sharp says.

And it's easy to use. “Simply pour hydrogen peroxide into the bowl, let it sit for a few minutes, scrub it with a toilet brush, and flush,” says Sharp. “This method helps to keep your toilet clean and fresh without the need for harsh chemical cleaners.”

Grout Whitener

Are your tile and grout in need of whitening? Bring hydrogen peroxide to the rescue. “Its effervescent properties can help remove dirt, grime, and stains from tiled surfaces, leaving them clean and refreshed,” Sharp says.

To get started, make a paste combining hydrogen peroxide with baking soda. Apply the mixture to the grout with an old toothbrush. Let that sit for half an hour before scrubbing in a circular motion, Varela says.

In The Laundry Room

Stain Remover



Let’s face it, there are so many opportunities in your day-to-day routine where stains can occur, whether it’s from your favorite soup, a slice of juicy watermelon, or even sweat or blood. Turns out, hydrogen peroxide is a great stain remover. “Hydrogen peroxide’s bubbling action helps lift stains from fabrics, carpets, and upholstery,” says Sharp. “It can effectively tackle tough stains without the need for harsh chemicals.”

But before you start using hydrogen peroxide as your new go-to stain remover, make sure to test it on an inconspicuous area of the fabric to ensure it doesn’t cause discoloration. Hydrogen peroxide can bleach, so you’ll want to avoid using it on colored fabrics. That said, it works great as a brightener for any dingy whites in your laundry pile.

Washing Machine Cleaner

Your clothes aren't the only things that get dirty in the laundry room. Your washing machine can build up soap scum, mold, and mildew over time, and it's a good idea to clean it every once in a while. To disinfect the drum of a front-loading washing machine, add two cups of hydrogen peroxide and run an empty load on the clean cycle.

In The Bedroom

Refresh Bedding

While you can toss your polyester pillows into your washing machine, down and feather pillows are too delicate. Instead, wash them in your bathtub with a mix of water and hydrogen peroxide. You can use a peroxide-and-water solution to spritz and refresh your mattress.

Clean Makeup Brushes

Surprise! You should be cleaning your makeup brushes at least once a month. Make this chore less of a hassle: Mix a solution of one part hydrogen peroxide and one part water, and let your makeup tools soak for a few minutes before rinsing them and letting them dry.

Everywhere Else

Multi-Purpose Cleaner

"Hydrogen peroxide can be used to disinfect countertops, cutting boards, bathroom fixtures, and more," says Sharp. Want to make your own all-purpose cleaner? Mix 50/50 peroxide and water. When your cleaner is ready, you'll want to spray the surface of whatever you're cleaning and then let it sit for a minimum of five minutes.

And if you want a cleaner with a nice scent, Sharp suggests adding a couple of drops of essential oil. But, she cautions, "Just be mindful that some essential oils can be harmful to pets and small children."

Kill Mold

You can also use hydrogen peroxide to fight mold in your home. Spray 3% hydrogen peroxide on the moldy spot, like a shower curtain or bathroom corner, and let it sit for at least 10 minutes. Then scrub the spot with a sponge or brush until it's gone. Flush the spot with water and dry it, so you don't recreate the environment for mold to grow. Note: Mold is an allergen, so before you take it on, put on a mask and eye protection. And if it's a large spot, it's safest to call in a professional to take care of the issue.

6. Rubbing Alcohol Hacks: Clean and Disinfect Surfaces Like a Pro

The cleaning and disinfecting power of rubbing alcohol is unbeatable. It has become one of the most versatile household products for tackling stubborn stains, lingering germs, grime and mould among households in Sydney.

It is a diluted form of isopropyl alcohol, and many experts recommend using only 70 % rubbing alcohol to clean home surfaces. Also, wear a surgical mask and ensure proper ventilation, as the product is highly flammable, posing fire safety hazards. However, with proper care, safety measures, and professional techniques, you can achieve a clean and hygienic indoor environment.

Below are some best tips and tricks for using the magical power of rubbing alcohol to clean and disinfect your home like a pro. Ensure you test the product on an inconspicuous area to prevent further damage.

Let's Get Started!

1. Remove Stains and Grime From Windows



Rubbing alcohol is one of the most effective products for removing stubborn stains and grime. It can help you easily remove bird droppings, pollen, grime, and other nasty marks from your windows.

Prepare a DIY window or mirror cleaner at home by adding equal parts of warm water and rubbing alcohol. Add half a cup of vinegar and pour it into a spray bottle as it can be a great natural window cleaning agent for salty air.

First, remove loose dust and debris from your window frames and sills using a cloth or a vacuum cleaner. Then, spray the cleaning solution and gently scrub the surface with a sponge. Wrap up the process by running a rubber squeegee to achieve streak-free and spotless results.

2. Deep Clean Your Microwave Inside and Outside

Removing caked-on grease, grime and gunk from an oven can be daunting. However, the duo of rubbing alcohol and white vinegar can do wonders. You can also add lemon juice and clean inside and outside your microwave.

You can use an old toothbrush or a sponge to dislodge stubborn stains and achieve sparkling results.

3. Eliminate Fingerprints and Other Stains From Stainless Steel

Trained end of lease cleaning Sydney experts also use rubbing alcohol to remove stains, fingerprints and grime from stainless steel surfaces, like appliances, cabinet hardware, bathroom fixtures, faucets and other surfaces.

To clean your stainless steel surfaces, soak a clean, lint-free cloth in diluted rubbing alcohol. This will help you achieve sparkling results before the tenancy inspection.

4. Get Rid of Nasty Smudges and Marker Stains

Strong cleaning products and an abrasive scrubbing tool are required for permanent marker stains and smudges. Create a DIY solution by adding concentrated 70 percent rubbing alcohol. It works great on hard surfaces like wood furniture, laminate countertops, painted walls, etc. Damp a cloth in rubbing alcohol and gently blot the area. Do it from the outside and blot towards the centre to prevent further smudging of stains. Re-blot with a clean cloth to transfer the stain without causing damage or discolouration.

Professionals also use magic erasers while performing a budget end of lease cleaning Sydney to clean walls, furniture and other hard surfaces as it won't leave scratches behind.

5. Rubbing Alcohol is an Effective Degreaser

Grease buildup on countertops, cabinets, cupboards and stovetops can ruin the overall look and feel of your kitchen. So, use 70 per cent rubbing alcohol to clean grease-laden surfaces effectively. Mix it with warm water to dampen a sponge. Now, gently scrub the surface using your hands.

You can also use an old toothbrush to clean the kitchen's toughest spots and other tight spaces, such as door tracks and cabinet crannies.

6. Deep Clean Your Plush Couch

A soft, comfy, and delicate couch takes a lot on a regular basis. It may look dull and dirty due to accidental spills, pet stains, and grime. To restore its pristine look and shine, read the cleaning code and follow the right methods for stain removal.

You can use rubbing alcohol as a water-free cleaning agent. Spray it directly on the surface and gently brush it with a soft-bristled tool. This will leave your upholstery furniture clean and shiny.

Tip: Do a patch test before applying it to the affected area. This will prevent discolouration or damage.

7. Kill Lurking Germs From Your Kitchen Sponge

Dirty kitchen sponges are the prime source of disease-causing germs and microbes, such as E. coli or STEC. It is important to disinfect them regularly to ensure a healthy and hygienic indoor environment.

You can soak your kitchen sponge in rubbing alcohol for an hour. This will kill lurking bacteria and refresh your sponge at an affordable price.

8. Disinfect All Your Electronic Gadgets/Devices



You don't need expensive disinfectants to clean your contaminated laptops, earphones, computers, keyboards, mobile phones, headphones and other electronic devices. Since these are laden with germs, make sure you practice good personal hygiene and stay away from potential health hazards.

To clean these delicate gadgets, spray rubbing alcohol on a lint-free cloth and wipe all your devices individually. The product will dry instantly and leave no streaks behind. Isn't it magical?

9. Banish Bad Odours

Use powerful isopropyl alcohol to neutralise musty and unpleasant odours in your home to promote fresh air. It is important to identify the source of the smell, as it could be mould infestation, humidity, or other key factors.

After that, prepare a DIY solution by adding 1 cup of rubbing alcohol, 2 cups of water and 10 drops of lavender or eucalyptus essential oil into a spray bottle.

You can spray the solution on targeted areas, including carpets, countertops, kitchen cabinets, bathrooms, etc. This will leave a fresh and pleasant odour in your home.

However, you always have an option to hire experts for a quality end of lease cleaning Sydney before the final rental inspection. They follow a pre-approved checklist to keep your rental property in top shape and help you get full bond back without any disagreement.

Wrapping up

Rubbing alcohol has multiple uses in your home. It can help you clean surfaces, tackle grease, disinfect contaminated surfaces and much more. You can use this cleaning agent with all the safety measures in mind to maintain a tidy and germ-free abode.

Bottom Line

Tackling stubborn stains doesn't have to be a daunting task when you have the right household products and techniques at your disposal. From baking soda to rubbing alcohol, everyday items can be powerful allies in keeping your home clean and stain-free. The key is understanding how to use these products safely and effectively for different surfaces and types of stains. With a little patience and proper care, you can restore your items to their original condition and maintain a cleaner, fresher environment without resorting to harsh chemicals.

This guide provides simple, effective solutions that are not only budget-friendly but also eco-friendly.

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